

**Submission
No 23**

INQUIRY INTO DENTAL SERVICES IN NSW

Organisation:

Name: Ms Helen Knight

Telephone:

Date Received: 16/05/2005

Theme:

Summary

6-5-2005

THE DIRECTOR STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES,
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
SYDNEY 2000
9230 3078

RE: INQUIRY INTO DENTAL SERVICES IN N.S.W.

DEAR SIR/MADAM

I am writing to make a Submission
as part of your Inquiry

- (A) As I or anyone I know is unable to gain access to my local Dental Service nobody knows anything about the quality of care.
- (B) I know many people who require Dental care & Treatment, I believe the Dental Service in N.S.W. is so inundated with People attempting to find Treatment that the Staff have given up & hope all People seeking any Dental Treatment will simply Fade Away. I believe they have absolutely no Idea how many People need care & Treatment
- (C) Obviously "THE STATE GOVERNMENT" is in no way providing nearly enough Funding for Dental Services to eligible People. as

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(c) for the impact of Private Health Insurance, it is obvious to me & anyone with half a Brain, that anyone who is eligible for Public Dental Services cannot possibly afford Private Health Insurance. Most of these people are trying to survive on Centre link money & can't afford Health Insurance of any kind unless they give up such things as Food, Paying for Accommodation & Energy Bills etc.

These eligible People also cannot ever pay a Private Dentist.

(d) As far as I can see & to my knowledge in a large Rural Town the access to Public Dental Services is non-existent, & I believe is no better anywhere.

(E) The Public Dental Service workforce is absent except for a few employees, who are barely able to cope with the children who need Dental Treatment, who must be attended to first. Therefore Adults have absolutely no chance of access, due to lack of State Government Funding.

(F) Preventive Dental Treatments, Initiatives & Fluoridation is extremely important. However for many People seeking Dental Treatment it is far too late for this. At the time these People need Treatment

(F) They are probably in their 40s, 50s, 60s or 70s & as children had little or no Dental care & no fluoridated water.

(G) I will tell you my experiences which dragged on for 6 months & was like a Horror Story. I developed an Abscess. I sought assistance from Orange Dental Clinic, where I failed to get an Appointment. I was at the time Full Time Carer for my 92 year old Father. I resorted to buying an eye dropper & a Bottle of Brandy, which eased the Pain for 4 months over the Christmas break the Pain returned with a vengeance; I was in Agony so bad that my arms were shaking & I felt sick, I again visited the Dental Clinic, which was supposed to be open for Emergencies, at the Front Desk I was told there was no Dentist there; so I went to the Emergency Department at Orange Base Hospital, where I was given Anti-Biotics & Pain Killers. I finally got to see a Dentist at the Orange Dental Clinic about 2 weeks later, the Dentist sent me for a Full Mouth X-Ray & gave me more Tablets. & made an appointment for a Month hence. They rang me about a week before my Appointment Date & cancelled it. I am with Rural Dental Action Group, who have approached the Minister for Health about the lack of Dental Care

(6) a Treatment. In my personal case, I was lucky & Dear Friend gave me enough money to get my teeth all fixed. However the cost to the Tax-Payers for getting nowhere & no Treatment cost approximately:-

	\$ - c
VISIT TO EMERGENCY	= 50 - 00
VISIT TO DENTAL CLINIC (to sit in chair)	= 50 - 00
FULL MOUTH X-RAY	= 100 - 00
SUBSIDISED MEDICINES	= <u>20 - 00</u>
TOTAL	= \$220 - 00

Surely if the Government funded Dental Services for Eligible People properly, I would have gotten some treatment for \$220. Jonathan Pearlman from Sydney Morning Herald did an article which included my experiences, published on 15th FEB. 2005.

I am quite prepared to give evidence of my experiences to your INQUIRY if needed.

H Knight

HELEN KNIGHT