

Submission
No 184

INQUIRY INTO DENTAL SERVICES IN NSW

Organisation:

Name: Mr John Gibbins

Telephone:

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Theme:

Summary

SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

20 JUN 2005

RECEIVED

The Standing Committee On Social Issues
Legislative Council, NSW Parliament
Macquarie St, NSW 2000

RE: The Inquiry By The Standing Committee On Social Issues Into Dental Health

12 June 2005

Dear Chair

I am a recently retired academic of the University of Sydney who had been involved with educating students in the Faculties of Medicine, Dentistry and Science for the past 40 years.

Over that period, I have seen the provision of dental health care in NSW advance from an impossible battle against rampant tooth decay with its devastating consequences for general health, through dramatic amelioration of the problem with the introduction of fluoridation of public water supplies to the sophisticated treatment available with the development of modern scientifically based treatment options.

Throughout, the Dental Faculty of the University of Sydney has been instrumental in providing the basis for these improvements that have contributed so much to the quality of life of the citizens of our state.

Degradation in the availability and erosion of the standards of education of the future practitioners of the dental profession based on perceived short-term financial constraints has been slowly eroding the capacity for provision of dental health care recognised as among the best available in the developed world. Continued erosion has the potential to destroy the gains so hard-won over the past half century.

Of particular concern is the increasing lack of dental services in rural areas that is a direct consequence of the increased pressure on dental services in the metropolitan areas. I am personally aware of people in relatively large, but remote towns who are unable to access a dentist, despite being able to pay for the service.

As a citizen of NSW, I view the degrading state of dental health service and education with great concern for the future, and I welcome the Upper House Inquiry into what is rapidly becoming a neglected area of health care in our state.

Sincerely



John R. Gibbins
Reader (Retired)
Department of Pathology
The University of Sydney