

Submission  
No 105

## INQUIRY INTO DENTAL SERVICES IN NSW

**Organisation:**

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**Telephone:**

**Date Received:** 3/06/2005

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**Theme:**

**Summary**

SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

3 JUN 2005

RECEIVED

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

**Re: Dental Enquiry**

Following are my suggestions for improving Dental services in NSW.

**1. How to increase the number of Dentists in Country Areas.**

Quarantine places in the Dental Faculty so half of the HECS funded Dental places go to students who went to primary school outside the Sydney Metropolitan area.

I know ten people working in country or regional areas as health professionals including Dentists. All but one went to primary school outside Sydney. Having grown up in the country they know the benefits of living outside Sydney. About half have returned to the place they grew up and the other half have moved on to other areas. All of them trained or worked for a time in Sydney.

It could be checked if this would be worthwhile by finding out who is currently servicing country areas and where they grew up. This could easily be done by asking Dentists what the postcode was where they went to primary school, and what the postcode is where they work now, when they register each year with the Dental Board.

**2. Improve the work environment in Country areas.**

Large Clinics need to be set up in about four country areas eg Queenbeyan could service a very large area within a two hour drive. Most people would travel if only they could get treatment. By establishing a large clinic there could also be specialists present who could guide younger Dentists and provide full services. Dentists could have a social life in Canberra and they would not lose their skills as they do in smaller clinics where they can only do limited procedures. Offering the option of a day a week of Private Practice would also help Dentists to retain their skills.

**3. Psychology + Education needed for Prevention**

It seems a percentage of the population do not look after their teeth. Any education campaign needs to address the fact that this group probably believes, to quote psychologist Martin Seligman, "Nothing I do matters, so why do anything".

  
Louise Kenny  
cc Arthur Chesterfield Evans