

INQUIRY INTO DENTAL SERVICES IN NSW

Organisation: Retired Associates of the PSA
Name: Mr William Hall
Position: Chairperson
Telephone:
Date Received: 2/06/2005

Theme:

Summary

25 May 2005

The Director
Standing Committee on Social Issues
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Attention: Ms Jan Burnswood

Dear Sir/Madam

The Retired Associates of the Public Service Association are writing to express their concerns regarding the appalling state of affairs with dental health in NSW and Australia.

Examples are as follows:

- Children as young as four years of age have dental cavities the size of a grain of rice and have to endure a minimum of one year of pain before they receive treatment at a public hospital.
- Pensioners suffering terrible tooth pain have to douse the infected tooth with spirits ie brandy to obtain relief. They also have to carry out their own dental repairs eg using superglue to fix broken dentures.
- An individual had to remove part of a broken tooth with his own pliers.

This situation has arisen because these people cannot afford to pay for private dental treatment. As a result there are huge numbers of people on public hospital waiting lists. This situation is compounded by the fact there are extremely few public dentists in NSW.

The solutions are:

- The immediate reinstatement by the Federal Government of funding for public dental health programs. The funding should be directed towards the elderly, children and people with very low incomes and the disabled.

The funding should be directed towards dental care and certainly not towards cosmetic work eg capping.

- Restoration of funding for dental training programs.
- Dental care must be included in the Medicare program. Under the Medicare program children, the elderly and people on low incomes are able to obtain medical care from doctors who bulk bill. Dental care should also be available under a bulk billing system.

We thank you for this opportunity to make this submission.

Yours faithfully



fr WILLIAM (Bill) F HALL
Chairperson
Retired Associates of the PSA