

INQUIRY INTO DENTAL SERVICES IN NSW

Organisation:

Name: Ms Vanessa Causer

Telephone:

Date Received: 1/07/2005

Theme:

Summary

The Inquiry Into Dental Services
The Standing Committee On Social Issues
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney, NSW 2000

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

Dear Sir/Madam

I have decided to write to you about the declining rate of dental health in the Bega Valley Shire .I have worked in the public dental service for 23 years now .The last two and a half years at Pambula Community Health Service .I was uprooted from my permanent job in the Eurobodalla as a dental therapist by a forced transfer .This was the only option by a health service desperate to fill a long term vacancy.

In my time here the Public Dental Officer position has been largely vacant .I am supervised remotely by a number of part time Dental Officers in a number of Dental Clinics throughout the region .This is most disadvantageous to myself and my clients.

We are awaiting dental clinic renovations and extensions .Our clinic cannot house two teams of operators with its current layout . If the Dental Officer position is filled then they must work elsewhere in a private clinic in the aboriginal service in a neighbouring town .Funding for our renovations is used elsewhere because finances are perilously low.

Merimbula/Pambula is a resort holiday town .It's not terribly expensive to live here and the Dental Officer position offers rural incentive payment , yet we cannot fill the full-time position.

Some of the local Private Dental Practices have a seven month waiting list for consultations , this makes many people desperate for emergency appointments . The aging population are often hardest hit as they develop simple denture problems ,they cant eat as well ,loose weight then their whole health declines.

Waiting clients often become abusive increasing the stressful burden on existing staff .Clients and staff start to feel the hopelessness of the situation brought on by increasing waiting lists, lack of water fluoridation in the region , lack of infrastructure in public Dental Services , no increase in staffing with increases in local population.

Yours Sincerely



Vanessa Causer
Senior Dental Therapist