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Health Minister must not succumb to the ‘Sham and Scam’

The latest advice from the Australian Health Prudential Authority (APRA) which shows medical devices costs are not a justifiable reason to increase premiums, supports Australian Dental Association views that premium hike demands of some private health insurers are driven by profits rather than providing comprehensive care to patients.

Coupled with the results of a survey by the Medical Technology Association of Australia, which showed 73% of people surveyed supported forcing health insurers to use a portion of their profits to keep premiums down, the Australian Dental Association (ADA) is calling on the Health Minister Greg Hunt to keep pushing insurers to rethink their demands.

“These APRA results show that costs are reducing for health insurers in many areas of their business,” said ADA President Dr Carmelo Bonanno. “The ADA has repeatedly demonstrated that the same situation is occurring with extras policies.

“Yet patients are experiencing more restrictions on what is and isn’t covered when it comes to their policies while their rebates are not increasing.

“Rebates have not kept pace with inflation, yet consumers continue to pay more for their extras policies premium. It simply doesn’t make sense to have extras anymore,” he added.

“The ADA calls on Greg Hunt to insist insurers keep premium increases to a minimum next April so as to provide better value for money to customers, which will stem the flow of people not renewing their policy.”

Last year the ADA released a report outlining a model which could replace health insurance for general treatment in the primary care setting, similar to the model that exists in Singapore.

The report ‘[Saving For One’s Care](#)’ demonstrates how putting money into a savings account could work equally as well for many consumers.

“I, and many other dentists are advising our patients to either move to a not for profit fund or put their money into a savings account instead where they will be able to gain interest and not lose any unspent funds at the end of each year,” added Dr Bonanno.

For interviews with ADA President Dr Carmelo Bonanno, contact Federal Media Advisor Jenny Barlass on 0484 869 086.

