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‘Walk the Walk’ don’t just ‘talk the talk’, BUPA

Dentists call on private health insurer BUPA to put their money where their mouth is following recent commentary by their Managing Director, Dr Dwayne Crombie, in Esther Han’s article on Health Insurance published in the Sydney Morning Herald (Jan 3).

“We welcome BUPA’s call for transparency in healthcare” stated ADA President, Dr Hugo Sachs, “and look forward to BUPA leading by example and publishing their rebates for dental services so the Australian public can make informed financial decisions.”

The Australian Dental Association (ADA) has been calling on the Australian Government to strengthen their private health insurance reform measures by introducing legislation that would compel health insurers to not only publish their rebates, but also ban private health insurers from applying discriminatory rebates which disadvantage many policy holders who don’t have access to BUPA contracted providers. Legislating to stop discriminatory rebates is a recommendation that came out of the findings from the recent Senate Inquiry into the value and affordability of private health insurance and out-of-pocket medical costs.

Also included in the Senate Inquiry Report was a recommendation for the Government to require intermediaries who run private health insurance comparator services and websites to disclose any commissions received from private health insurers services provided to consumers.

In Ms Han’s article, Dr Crombie suggests that comparator websites are ‘diverting \$200 million a year from healthcare to their own bottom line’. The ADA advocates that money would be better spent on increasing rebates to patients.

“Improving transparency around rebates would contribute to true competition between private health insurers and better value for Australians,” Dr Sachs concluded.

The ADA has developed its own comparator website for the dental component of extras policies which is freely available at www.time2switch.com.au

Interviews available with ADA Federal President, Dr Hugo Sachs

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