

Brief submission

Outsourcing of the medicare payment system will result in a loss of jobs within the public service and is contrary to the governments mantra on jobs and growth. Private companies will be under no obligation to create jobs within Australia and could instead rely on overseas workers to manage this system. Having worked in the health industry over more than 35 years I have seen the benefits of medicare to provide access to healthcare. Maintaining medicare with local access to support and service staff is imperative particularly for elderly and vulnerable people who may not have access to internet or computers to conduct their business online. Consistently we see the government engaging in contracts that initially appear to be a cost saving but, as the private sector is all about making money, over time the costs rise and these are passed to the consumer.

For the quality of Private Health care, a separate but pertinent issue, I consider the quality of services in the Private System to be substandard, particularly in rural areas and the private system relies on the quality care and expertise provided within the public system to step in when things go wrong. Increasingly we see that the wealthy are given preferential treatment and earlier access to care. I want to see equity of access to services. The government should continue to fund a quality service accessible to all. I would prefer to pay an increased medicare contribution than pay money to a private health insurer for a service I don't want or need and which affords me no real choice in my community anyway. I want adequate funding for public health services and access determined by need, not the capacity to pay and jump the queue. My husband should not have to wait 2 years for the same surgery that his brother in law had done in 2 weeks (because he can pay up front). This is with the same surgeon but waiting on a public bed.

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