



**Australian
Competition &
Consumer
Commission**

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12 July 2012

Mr Francis Sullivan
Secretary General
Australian Medical Association
PO Box 6090
KINGSTON ACT 2604

Dear Mr Sullivan

Re: ACCC Senate report on private health insurance

Thank you for your letter dated 18 June 2012 in relation to the correction of your position regarding the publication of medical benefits schedules by health insurers.

I understand you are concerned that a sentence on page 22 of the 2010-2011 ACCC Senate Report on private health insurance does not accurately reflect your submission of 1 September 2011.

When drafting the Report, my staff took the whole of your submission to mean that publication of schedules by health insurers would 'reduce the onus on doctors to communicate the costs of hospitalisation to patients' as those costs also depend upon the hospital and the insurer. That is, things would be easier if other parties whose inputs affected the cost of hospitalisation provided greater information to assist the provision of informed financial consent.

While the sentence on page 22 could have been more carefully worded, in my view, it reflects the tenor of your submission and is not intended to cast any aspersions on the AMA or doctors.

For this reason, I would be happy to publish a notice on the ACCC website (where the Report is located) to draw readers' attention to your clarification and to point out that the AMA considers the publication of schedules 'would better position consumers to have an informed discussion with their treating medical practitioner'.

With your consent, I would also like to publish your letter dated 18 June 2012 and any subsequent correspondence, to provide readers with context regarding the correction.

This along with your original submission of 1 September 2011, available at our website, would ensure that readers fully appreciate your position.

I look forward to your agreement to the publication of the notice and the publication of your correspondence on the ACCC website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Nigel Ridgway', with a stylized, cursive script.

Nigel Ridgway
Group General Manger
Compliance Operations