



australian
mental
health
consumer
network

22 June 2005

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Adjudication Branch
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

On the 31st of May 2005 the Australian Mental Health Consumer Network held a small focus group to find consumers views on Canberra After Hours Medical Locum Service (CALMS) application for authorisation of a capped fee arrangement in its provision of after hours primary medical care in the ACT.

After discussion with members of The Network members came up with the following concerns:

1. Cost for concession and low income people is still too high for people if they have to pay up front,
2. It is demeaning to have to ask for the Drs. Goodwill and discretion
3. We feel that people wont go if they don't have the money.
4. Look at having Medicare on line and you pay the gap but some people don't even have that,\
5. Are they trying to divide the people into the haves who can go to calms and the have-nots who go to accident and emergency?
6. Would this downgrade accident and emergency?
7. Also people assume that everyone has a credit card.
8. Where is the duty of care if someone is turned away because of inability to pay?
9. Would be all right if you could afford to pay and rather then wait you could make an appointment.
10. Are education of the community as to what it is ok to go to A&E and what is not. A&E has access to X-rays etc?
11. Would this mean consumers or people on pensions receive a 2nd rate service?

If you require any further information do not hesitate to contact our office on the avenues provided below.

Sincerely

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Chair
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