

To whom it may concern,

I write to bring to your attention the feelings of the Anaesthetic Department at SJOG Murdoch in Perth WA, towards the proposed formation of a health service buying group to be operated by the Honeysuckle Health and nib health funds.

This is a step towards US-style managed care with nib as a 'for-profit' health fund which has shareholders as a major consideration.

This is not an arrangement that we support as a group, and we hope that it is not an arrangement that St John's will endorse or support as an organisation.

As a group of clinicians working at Murdoch, we are strongly opposed to this. We have grave concerns about:

- The potential for 'managed care' to damage the foundations of Australia's world class healthcare system
- The lack of choice that this will lead to for patients, who will be limited to a subset of doctors within a closed and controlled network
- The removal of freedom around clinical decision making for clinicians working within such arrangements
- The real possibility that large health insurance companies will be in a position to dictate how and where patients are to be treated

Additionally, we know from the experience in the US that these arrangements lead to:

- The potential for 'managed care' to hand far too much power and influence to 'for-profit' organisations
- The movement of control of health care standards away from trained medical professionals, the patient advocates, to those with solely commercial interests (including non-scientific insurance officers, compliance officers and executives)
- The potential to change the funding and delivery of healthcare in Australia that is currently the envy of the world
- Spiralling health care costs
- The removal of significant amounts of money in profits from frontline health care
- Significant increase in clinician burnout and mental health issues, which are already growing following the recent covid experience, and the flow-on impact for patients

We believe that a 'for profit' organisations like Sigma, should not be allowed to shape the future of Australian health care and hope that our concerns and that these sorts of arrangements will not be entertained by the ACCC moving forwards.

Kind Regards,



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At the request of the Department