

Submission by Private Healthcare Australia-27 June 2024

Private Healthcare Australia (PHA) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) re St. Luke's Medical and Hospital Benefits Association's (St Lukes) application for authorisation to enter into and give effect to certain pricing arrangement provisions in agreements with dental practitioners via the St Lukes Gap Free Network. St Lukes' proposal is likely to result in a significant public benefit of increased access to price certainty for preventive and diagnostic dental services, and this outweighs any potential public detriment. Providing consumers with price certainty for dental care is enormously beneficial for consumers, particularly during a cost-of-living crisis that is causing an increasing number of Australians to reconsider or forego healthcare due to concerns about cost. If authorisation is granted, members are guaranteed price control on certain services through participating dental providers.