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The Government's refusal to fund basic dental care for older Australians is costing them dearly in good oral health, while also wasting millions of taxpayer dollars from unnecessary hospitalisations of seniors. The Australian Dental Association (ADA) has found a staggering 16,000 seniors were admitted to hospital for urgent treatment of painful dental issues in 2022-23 - and that figure is expected to rise to 22,630 by 2027-28, representing a 42% increase from an already unacceptable level. It's a health trend that worsens by the year, said ADA President Dr Chris Sanzaro, and while Governments of all persuasions deny that the mouth is connected to the rest of the body and oral health doesn't need additional funding, this shocking treatment of our most vulnerable at the hand of politicians is only going to worsen. We wouldn't treat our kids or even our pets like this so why is it OK to wilfully ignore the mouths of seniors and other vulnerable Australians? The ADA finds it baffling at best and sadistic at worst. To resolve this issue, the ADA is urging the next Australian Government to introduce a Seniors Dental Benefits Schedule to support older Australians to maintain their oral health. Key findings from ADA research and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) data: Potentially preventable dental hospitalisations for Australians aged 65+ increased from 10,495 in 2016-17 to 15,959 in 2022-23. (1) Based on the 7.24% a year increase across that period, hospitalisations are projected by the ADA to reach 22,630 by 2027-28, a 42% increase (from 2022-23 to 2027-28). (2) Potentially preventable hospitalisations like these represent not only a burden on our healthcare system but also reduced quality of life for our aging population. We should prioritise access to regular dental check-ups and preventative treatments to reverse this trend. The projected increase in hospitalisations has implications for healthcare resource allocation. It also highlights the need for greater public awareness of the importance of oral health in older age and access to dental treatment. This grim picture is replicated at state level: in NSW, there were 3,721 potentially preventable hospitalisations of seniors for dental conditions in 2021-2022. In other states the data is harder to access or is non-existent, save for Queensland where there are 207 over 65s per 1,000 people (or around one in five from that age cohort) hospitalised every year for a dental condition. The digitised Schedule allows you to search quickly by keyword or item number. Launch Ask questions, give advice, share your knowledge and learn from other ADA members. Launch Access advisory support, contract review services, templates and policies. Access and complete your CPD Online. Become well aware of your obligations. Launch If you're looking for a role, browse positions available Australia-wide. Launch The ADA National Digital Library is here to connect you with a world of dental knowledge. Launch Designed to provide you with the latest news and information about the dental profession. Launch The official journal of the ADA, containing manuscripts on research, clinical developments, clinical opinions and more. Launch HR, Industrial Relations and Workplace Health and Safety resources. Launch Ensure your practice is fully compliant with internationally-recognised health standards. Launch Browse practices for sale and great range of second-hand dental equipment. Launch Ask questions, give advice, share your knowledge and learn from other ADA members. Launch The digitised Schedule allows you to search quickly by keyword or item number. Launch Expert clinical advice on prescription and non-prescription medicines. Launch Your authoritative members-exclusive guide to medicines information, provided by a highly regarded clinical pharmacist. Launch This publication, which members receive on joining, provides up-to-date prescribing information for dental practitioners. Launch Special offers on a wide range of goods & services at prices only available to members. Launch Dental practices, like other organisations providing health services to children, are required by law to adopt appropriate procedures for creating a child-safe environment. Launch Effective ADA SA lobbying has resulted in revision of a recent EPA determination requiring practice owners to provide radiation badges (PRMDs) for all personnel. Launch Electronic prescriptions form part of the broader national digital health and medicines safety framework. They enable the prescribing and dispensing of medicines without the need for a paper prescription. Launch

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