



Healthcare at Home Australia

Submission to the review of the funding arrangements for Chemotherapy services

Healthcare at Home Australia is pleased to provide this submission to assist the Australian Government on this issue.

Healthcare at Home Australia (HaH) is an innovative, specialist provider of quality home infusion, injection, and medication management services for patients with chronic or life threatening diseases.

The provision of chemotherapy infusions and injections for patients at home, rather than in hospital, is a key product in our suite of services and has been designed to provide people with cancer an additional choice regarding where and when to receive their treatment. The HaH home chemotherapy service reduces the impact of cancer treatment by:

- i. eliminating the burden of travel for patients and their carers;
- ii. reducing the time they spend attending infusion clinics;
- iii. enhancing the efficiency and capacity of the private and public health systems; and,
- iv. putting into practice the National Health Reform Agenda's call for services to be provided as close as possible to home.

Our contracts with health funds preclude the passing-on of additional chemotherapy supply charges to either the health funds or to patients. Nor is it commercially viable for HaH to absorb the extra charges of \$40 - \$100 per infusion, and any requirement to do so would prevent us from continuing to offer patients with the option of being treated at home.

While HaH has not yet refused a patient referral, without a satisfactory resolution to the chemotherapy funding arrangements, HaH will necessarily cease providing home based infusions for private cancer patients effective December 2013.

The provision of chemotherapy at home brings many benefits to patients, their families, and workplace productivity. Research shows that patients who are treated at home are less at risk of acquiring infections, report better quality of life and show improved distress scores.

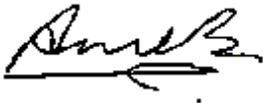
HaH supports a transparent and sustainable funding model which ensures cancer patients can continue to receive their therapy in a safe, timely and affordable manner. Viability and sustainability of each business involved on the cancer service delivery chain is central to providing patients with a range of choices regarding their cancer treatment, and is essential in spreading the cost of cancer services between the public and private health sectors. While cross-subsidisation across multiple service streams is common in many business models and sectors, it is unreasonable for a change in funding arrangements in one part of the service chain to be imposed without regard to the upstream and downstream effects, and ultimately patient choice.

26/07/2013

There is no provision in the current private health funding arrangements for providers of services to absorb additional costs passed on by pharmacy service providers. Without timely resolution of this issue, HaH, and potentially many other private providers of cancer treatment services, will have no option but to withdraw their services.

HaH provides permission for this submission to be made publically available, and welcomes the opportunity to provide further information or respond to questions if invited.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Bowe', with a horizontal line underneath.

Amanda Bowe

Chief Executive Officer

Healthcare at Home Australia

26th July 2013