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PATIENT REBATE CUTS FOR DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING – CORRECTING THE RECORD

Australia’s diagnostic imaging (DI) providers have moved to correct misrepresentations being made in the ongoing debate around the Federal Government’s \$100 million cut to Medicare rebates for DI services.

Dr Christian Wriedt, President of the **Australian Diagnostic Imaging Association**, said he was “disappointed that diagnostic imaging seems to have become caught in the crossfire in this debate.”

“Repeated claims by the Government that bulk billing has only increased by one per-cent are simply incorrect in terms of DI,” he said.

“In fact, the Government’s own statistics show the bulk billing rate in DI has increased by more than 10 per-cent since 2009.

“It’s also important to note that the Medicare bulk billing incentive is not a corporate subsidy, it’s a patient rebate – so the people who are going to be most impacted are patients.

“The assumption that patients will be bulk billed when the Government is reducing their rebate shows a lack of insight into the cost of operating and running a practice – particularly when combined with the built-up impact of 17 years of no indexation of Medicare rebates for DI.

“In fact, in 1998 the patient rebate for a CT scan of the head was \$171.25. In 2015, it is \$165.80.

“We have been at pains to work with the Government through the MBS Review to address some of the inefficiencies in the system and we remain open to doing so. But we are completely opposed to the measures released in the MYEFO.”

Department of Health Annual Medicare Statistics (2008-2015) show the bulk billing rate in DI has increased from 66% to 77% since 2009.

	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10	2008-09
Australia	76.9%	76.0%	74.8%	73.9%	72.7%	69.5%	66.1%

MEDIA

For other information or interviews, please contact Phil Martin at Michels Warren PR on 0418 817 876