

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Exemptions](#)
Subject: [SPAM] AA1000542 – Honeysuckle Health – submission
Date: Thursday, 10 June 2021 9:25:14 AM

With respect to the Honeysuckle proposal, I join the tidal wave of opposition and strongly urge you to deny its approval.

1. This proposal acts to effectively insert an investment banker in the relationship between a patient and their doctor. A patient wants autonomy over their healthcare choices (as occurs currently). A doctor is trained and oath bound to have best patient care as the core of all decisions. A businessman has core motivation to ensure best profit, shareholder satisfaction and personal performance bonus. There is no place for the businessman/corporation in the patient-doctor relationship.
2. Australia currently has the most successful medical system in the world. A fine balance of public and private medicine, A system of patient choice and great medical care. Look at the success of our system to date. World's best cancer management results. World's best heart disease outcomes. World's best COVID response. This new proposal sends us down the American Managed Care pathway. Look at the disastrous US medical system. Poor people have no care. Rich are overserved. Focus is of course on corporate profits to the detriment of patients and the whole system.
3. I have worked in the US system. It is deplorable. Managed Care- Honeysuckle employees in the middle of medical decisions to the patient's detriment and the care provider's frustration. I can give you a real life example of a 3 year old with an infected sinus leading to an eye abscess. The medical team, of which I was part requested an urgent CT scan and then surgery as we were very worried about the child losing its vision in the eye. But the Managed care corp refused to approve the cost of the CT scan as they had a protocol that said that the child had not had (cheaper) IV antibiotics for 24 hours. This led to a large delay while the doctors had to argue with the Honeysuckle equivalent fund. This led to a delay of 7 hours by which time the child's vision was significantly compromised and a simple procedure became a major operation in the middle of the night and the child suffered a prolonged recovery and was very lucky that sight returned.
4. Such a managed care contract system will completely disrupt the current public-private healthcare system in Australia. As a surgeon who works in both, I can assure you that this will occur. The time we spend working in the public system caring for the complex and less privileged patients is balanced by the autonomy of my private practice. Financially the time working in the public system is loss making, not compensating for the costs of concurrently running a medical practice. If this balance is upset the VMO system will collapse severely effecting the public system. Also, the imposition of Honeysuckle like managed care will send patients in droves to the public system, especially the complex and less privileged, overwhelming the system (as in the US). This will have a hugely detrimental effect on patient care, the safely net of the public system and doctor training. I urge you not to break a working

system.

5. Think of who would sign on to this managed care contract model. Most likely those doctors that are underemployed. It is a race to the bottom for corporate greed in the healthcare sector.

This is a critical time for the ACCC to prevent the debacle of managed care coming to Australia. Think of what for you, your children and grandchildren's healthcare dictated by corporate avarice. Would you want your grandchild to see a surgeon that their trusted family doctor recommends based upon known clinical excellence, or for their care to be dictated by the cheapest option demanded by a bonus driven businessman? What model of care do you want? This is the choice you are making now. Stop Honeysuckle now.

Sincerely

A/Prof David Lowinger FRACS
Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery
Senior VMO Sydney Children's Hospital
Conjoint A/Prof UNSW