

Psychiatrists condemn MACC project

**National Association of Practising Psychiatrists
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A private health fund sponsored project known as MACC (Measures of Appropriate Clinical Care) is the pathway to health care rationing President of the National Association of Practising Psychiatrists, Dr Gil Anaf, said today.

Dr Anaf said "We have already seen restrictions on the ability of privately insured patients to obtain coverage for psychiatric conditions. Medicare rebates for long term psychiatric care have also been rationed."

"The Australian public is being made to accept an inferior health service where more and more people will have to do without treatment."

"This MACC project has been subsidised to the tune of \$300,000 by the Australian Health Insurance Association, its Committees were weighted with insurers, and it seeks to change the way medicine is practised in order to cut costs" Dr Anaf said.

"There is ample evidence that the Government and the insurers are out to ration health care. Just look at how rebates for long term psychiatric care were summarily axed in 1996, look at other Government sponsored projects like the Integrated Mental Health trials. The MACC is just another ploy along the same path".

"These moves are nothing more than managed care initiatives. They all have one thing in common - to cut costs and ration treatment."

"Psychiatrists have been warning of the dangers of introducing a rationing system such as the US managed health care system since the 1996 Federal Budget cuts."

"We see the MACC Project not as a way of insuring appropriate care but as a way of creating an underclass of untreated patients based on monetary considerations only and this goes against the Australian ideal of a fair go" Dr Anaf said.

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