



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Health Care

SPEECH

Thursday, 27 November 2014

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Date Thursday, 27 November 2014
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Questioner
Speaker Brodtmann, Gai, MP

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Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (13:42): There are now three competing versions on the future of the \$7 co-payment, as reported today. They range from benching it, modifying it and pursuing it through regulation. While chaos and confusion reign supreme in the Abbott government, one thing is clear: universal health care is part of our social fabric, part of our DNA, and Australians and Canberrans are strongly opposed to any changes.

The Abbott government's plan to undermine universal health care with Medicare and PBS co-payments will affect every Australian, particularly those who can least afford it. In my electorate of Canberra that means the clients of the Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service. Earlier this year the clients, staff and friends on Winnunga signed a petition to say no to the government's proposed changes to Medicare and the PBS because the changes are unaffordable and unfair. Clients of Winnunga simply do not have \$7 to pay each time they visit a doctor or \$5 for each prescription. They often have complex health problems that require multiple scripts and visits to the doctor every month.

Winnunga services clients from Wollongong to Wodonga, from Wagga Wagga to Batemans Bay. So I would hope the member for Eden-Monaro, Hume, Riverina and Gilmore are listening because it is your constituents who rely on the services of Winnunga. It is your constituents who have signed this petition. Labor will fight to protect universal health care for all Australians in the interests of fairness and good health policy. *(Time expired)*