



**(For Immediate Release)**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**ABSENCE OF NATIONAL DENTAL SCHEME FOR SENIORS AND  
LOW-INCOME PERSONS CAUSING LOTS OF PAIN**

The Superannuated Commonwealth Officers' Association (SCOA), which has many low-income constituents, is most concerned that neither the Gillard Labor government nor the Coalition has mentioned public dental health or the need for a National Dental Scheme for seniors and low-income persons during the election campaign.

SCOA's Federal President, Dr Annette Barbetti, said: "I am surprised at the inaction and lack of commitment, given the situation continues to deteriorate, with the number of persons on dental waiting lists, including SCOA constituents, now some 700,000. Of particular concern is the non delivery of the National Dental Scheme promised by Rudd Labor prior to the 2007 Federal Election."

Dr Barbetti said: "Given the impact of poor dental health on a person's general health, including the link between dental disease and some medical conditions such as heart disease and digestive problems, it is most disappointing that such low priority has been afforded public dental health and the need for a National Dental Scheme by the Government and the Opposition."

Dr Barbetti noted that SCOA's concerns were also being highlighted by other peak bodies, including the Australian Medical Association, the Australian Dental Association, the Oral Health Alliance, the Australian Health Care Alliance, the Australian Council of Social Services and the National Seniors Association.

"Now is the time for Federal level action to significantly reduce the size of the dental waiting lists and treat persons needing dental care with compassion," Dr Barbetti said.

SCOA is a not-for-profit member organisation which represents close to 500,000 people nationwide.

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Contact: Dr Annette Barbetti, Federal President  
Phone: Ph 02 6241 4579, Mobile 0407 262 404  
Email: [barbaj@grapevine.net.au](mailto:barbaj@grapevine.net.au)