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Dental body sinks teeth into private health policies

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DENTISTS want federal government action to ensure private health insurers can't hide behind hidden policy conditions. The Australian Dental Association is urging for tougher laws to provide more transparency, saying there is confusion and uncertainty around private health insurance extras.

"They sign up for policies believing these will make medical and dental care more affordable but say they don't know what's covered," association president Chris

Sanzaro said.

"The policy small print doesn't even cover what's included and what isn't - hidden 'business rules' from insurers deny claims at the time they're needed."

The association has spoken out after Private Healthcare Australia welcomed a move for specialist doctors to be obligated to disclose fees on the government's Medical Costs Finder website.

Private health insurance premiums were rising at a higher rate than dental

fees, he said. A 3.73 per cent increase in private health insurance premiums was announced by Treasurer Jim Chalmers from April 1.

Private Healthcare Australia said there was no evidence health insurance premiums were increasing at a higher rate than dental fees. CEO Rachel David said dentists should offer to publish their fees for their five most common services on their websites, but had not agreed to do so to date.