

Our company provides clinical and wholesale services to the allied health industry, primarily in Prosthetic and Orthotics and podiatry services.

We have seen a lack of funding increase over the last 10-15 years in the Aids and Equipment program, and a large increase in the patients requiring this funding. Approvals have blown out to over 5 months now which is not ideal when a patient has a life threatening ulcer which can lead to amputations and create a much larger financial burden to the community.

Our industry is very clinical, technical and time based and patients cannot be expected to wear the same pair of shoes all day every day for over a 12 month period. Stroke patients are also forced to wait over 5 months to receive Ankle Foot orthosis and Knee ankle foot orthosis which can dramatically increase their rehabilitation time frame.

We feel funding needs to be increased so the waiting period can be reduced and that Prosthetists and Orthotists should also be able to be prescribers for these devices as the prosthetic and orthotic course is a national bachelor of applied science course along the same lines as Physiotherapy, podiatry, occupational therapy, speech therapy etc. We firmly believe in an acquittal process to stop patients getting ill fitting devices and the practitioner still getting paid for work which does not benefit the patient.

Another issue we feel needs to be looked into is the fact that in Victoria Amputees cannot choose their Prosthetist. They are UN able to visit the prosthetist of their choice as funding for prosthetic limbs is only available through the artificial limb scheme, which we agree with but this is limited to hospitals. Private prosthetists like me are unable to get funding for our amputee patients even though we are qualified. Why can't private prosthetist see amputees, privately and take pressure off the public hospitals and if an acquittal process is still in place where a medical officer has to acquit the leg being made before funding is signed off on. If this acquittal process is in place, this would enable any qualified prosthetist to see amputees and allow the amputee to choose whom they want to see. Having the acquittal process in place will stop the system being corrupted, as if the patient does not get the desired results then funding will not come through until the prescription criteria's are satisfied.