


# Several highly-frustrated dentists in the deeply-troubled Smiles Inclusive group say they lost all access to their company email accounts this week

**Being locked out of company emails is the latest drama for a number of the remaining dentists in the embattled Smiles Inclusive group**

Anthony Marx, The Courier-Mail

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It seems that a number of the remaining dentists in the deeply-troubled Smiles Inclusive group have just about reached their wits end.

Several of these highly-frustrated practitioners tell us they lost all access to their company email accounts at about midday Tuesday.

When they rang the IT provider, a mob called Mercury IT based at Arundel, the dentists were told bills had gone unpaid and to talk to the Smiles head office in Burleigh.

A top gun at Mercury IT declined to comment on Wednesday but a spin doctor for Smiles, chaired by David Usasz, blamed the outage on “operational issues” and said service was restored early Wednesday.



 Smiles Inclusive chairman David Usasz

The dentists, trading under the Totally Smiles banner, also told City Beat that multiple suppliers have frozen their credit because accounts are overdue.

This has forced them to ration equipment or try to scrape by without essential medical goods.

“I’ve had a supplier chase me for an account overdue since October for dental materials,” one practitioner said.

The Smiles spokesman maintained that practices had the supplies and reports they needed. “Our key suppliers continue to provide consumables to all of our clinics and we are in discussions with them about reducing supply chain costs,” he said.


## TOOTH DECAY

These latest dramas are just more of a seemingly endless stream of woes besetting the loss-making company, which had 52 practices when it floated in April 2018 after raising \$32 million from investors.

While a bruising civil war no longer tears apart the board, Smiles has gone through three CEOs since listing, the CFO just bailed out earlier this month and a chief commercial officer departed late last year.

Shares, issued at \$1 but now languishing at a mere 3.5 cents, have remained suspended for the past three months because a deadline to file audited half-year accounts came and went.



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Despite a “turnaround plan” and modest capital raising, the turmoil has proved too much for some, with 16 dentists announcing in April that they were jumping ship. They alleged the company was insolvent.

Earlier this month, Smiles secured a bridging loan from NAB to help it stay afloat.

But its financial problems predate the COVID-19 disaster, which forced the temporary closure of most practices in late March as the company acknowledged that it could not pay dentist commissions or two weeks of staff wages. Some rent payments also went into arrears.

Smiles, which suffered a jaw-dropping \$31 million net loss in the last financial year, has forecast a continuation of negative cash flow and been subjected to repeated “please explain” queries from the ASX.