



20 March 2019

Committee Secretary
Education, Employment and Small Business Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

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Please find attached a submission endorsed by the Board of Queensland Fitness, Sport and Recreation Skills Alliance on the *Health and Wellbeing Queensland Bill 2019* (Qld) being considered by the Queensland Parliament's Education, Employment and Small Business Committee.

All enquiries can be directed to me as Executive Chairman. QFSR Skills Alliance would also be happy to appear before the committee to answer any questions it may have about this submission.

Yours sincerely

PHIL REEVES
Executive Chairman
QFSR Skills Alliance

Inquiry into Health and Wellbeing Queensland Bill 2019



Submission to the Queensland Parliament Education,
Employment and Small Business Committee

Health and Wellbeing Queensland Bill 2019

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Our Vision

Our vision is that industry operates at maximum effectiveness, through a workforce that is skilled to meet the needs of the industry.

Our Mission

Our mission is to assist industry to achieve workforce development related outcomes 1) strategically by serving as a forum for industry stakeholders to identify issues and associated solutions to industry workforce development challenges, and 2) operationally by undertaking workforce development related projects and offering enterprise and sector/industry level products, services and advice.

We attempt to achieve this mission by:

- providing advice to and working with government to deliver the annual workforce development plan on behalf of the fitness, sport and recreation industry throughout Queensland
- supporting and encouraging industry networks to collaboratively work together to identify, influence and implement solutions to workforce development needs and challenges
- collecting information from industry on issues, needs and trends, and reporting this information to both government and industry
- brokering and undertaking projects that support workforce development in the industry
- developing workforce planning and development products, services and information to assist industry to effectively attract, develop and retain its workforce
- providing advice to training organisations, industry and government on industry training needs, products and expectations.

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OVERVIEW

The Queensland Fitness, Sport and Recreation Skills Alliance (QFSR Skills Alliance) supports the *Health and Wellbeing Queensland Bill 2019* (Health and Wellbeing Bill) and the vision of the Queensland Government to establish a health promotion agency.

Our support is in recognition of the government's objectives to improve the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders, reduce risk factors associated with chronic disease and reduce health inequities. We believe these are worthy objectives and in keeping with our own desire to contribute to the physical activity, social inclusion, mental health and job readiness of Queenslanders.

QFSR Skills Alliance believes Queensland needs a health promotion agency which can help connect government support for fitness, sport and active recreation with health outcomes, policy and objectives.

Our proposed concept of the government-sector relationship in fitness, sport and active recreation is to integrate the delivery of physical activity opportunities with achieving the Queensland Government's *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities* strategy and the objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Bill.

Central to our submission is the belief that government support for fitness, sport and active recreation should be tied to measurable health, social inclusion and employment outcomes and that a trained and skilled workforce exists to operate the sector.

QFSR Skills Alliance

As the industry-wide peak body for workforce development of the fitness, sport and active recreation sector in Queensland, QFSR Skills Alliance works closely with industry-specific peak bodies, industry organisations and associations, employers and individuals to ensure we are the voice of the industry in relation to skills and training needs and other workforce development issues. This includes working with the Queensland and Australian governments and other services skills organisations.

As the sector's peak body for workforce development, QFSR Skills Alliance is committed to ensuring there is a trained and qualified workforce with up-to-date skills to provide fitness, sport and active recreation opportunities where and when they are required. Proper workforce development assists industry to attract and retain workers. In the fitness, sport and active recreation sector this applies to both paid employees and volunteers. We are keen to see the role of our industry's workforce increasingly being part of the Queensland Government's vision for all areas of the economy and social life of the State.

Linkages with *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities*

We believe that a vibrant and successful fitness, sport and active recreation sector, inclusive of all Queenslanders, can be a powerful vehicle for personal and social development with enormous potential for increased participation. QFSR Skills Alliance also sees the sector as able to assist the government to achieve its priorities across a range of portfolios in the *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities* areas.

To make this vision a reality and to assist Queenslanders to increase their participation in physical activity and enjoy all the benefits, fitness, sport and active recreation need to be integral to the vision of the proposed Health and Wellbeing Queensland agency.

Charter

Health and Wellbeing Queensland's (HWQ) charter should include:

- Establishing a 'Get Active Queensland' concept as a program or entity (similar to the Victorian Health Foundation: see more below) or in some other structure within HWQ
- Creating and coordinating a network of place-based, local area participation solutions across Queensland through *HWQ Local Plans*
- Helping Queenslanders find and connect with organised and informal participation opportunities for fun, health, social and economic outcomes
- Marketing and promotion of healthy lifestyles through physical activity
- Creating partnerships with industry bodies and/or organisations in the sport and active recreation, health and community sectors to enable the delivery of *HWQ Health & Activity Plans* (see below) and to focus on data collection and data sharing

- Helping deliver Queensland Government programs and services through flexible, on-the-ground sport and recreation tools
- Promoting the fitness, sport and active recreation sector as a major contributor to the Queensland economy and a high-quality employment and voluntary sector in its own right
- Working with the range of peak bodies, state sporting organisations, clubs and networks to help manage participation growth across Queensland through capacity building and cooperation in the sector
- Ensuring a trained and skilled sector workforce is in place to support the expected increased levels of participation

Example: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

Our proposed Get Active Queensland concept is inspired by the success and longevity of the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation established under the *Tobacco Act 1987* (Vic).

The objectives of the Victorian foundation include:

- to fund activity related to the promotion of good health, safety or the prevention and early detection of disease
- to increase awareness of programs for promoting good health in the community through the sponsorship of sports, the arts and popular culture
- to encourage healthy lifestyles in the community and support activities involving participation in healthy pursuits
- to fund research and development activities in support of these objects.

Its functions are specified as providing grants for activities, facilities, projects or research programs, including providing sponsorship of sporting or cultural activities, and to keep statistics and other records relating to the achievement of the foundation's objectives. The foundation is also required to *'consult regularly with relevant Government Departments and agencies and to liaise with persons and organisations'* relevant to its work.

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, governed by a board appointed under section 21 of the *Tobacco Act 1987* (Vic) is responsible to the State Minister for Health. It performs its functions and exercises its powers subject to any guidelines or directions on any matter determined by the Minister for Health after consultation with the Minister for Sport.

In Queensland, we propose a similar arrangement where the Minister for Sport may be consulted to recommend a number of members of HWQ. This would entrench the inclusion of representatives of physical activity, funded by government through the sport portfolio, in HWQ. Further information on the operation of the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation is available at <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/>.

HWQ Health & Activity Plans

It is envisaged that General Practitioners participate in the roll-out of Health and Wellbeing Queensland through the active ‘prescription’ of physical activity as part of an individual health plan for a patient. To provide GPs with confidence in doing this, we believe a suite of pre-approved physical activity services be available to respond to prescriptions given to members of the public as part of a *HWQ Health & Activity Plan*. A physical activity prescription would enable the holder to access subsidised and coordinated *HWQ ‘Get Active’ Services*.

HWQ Local Plans

Health and Wellbeing Queensland should focus on the creation and coordination of local area networks of physical activity participation opportunities, through *HWQ Local Plans*. The local plans would be delivered by HWQ Community Activity Facilitators who would act as a point of referral for all fitness, sport and active recreation activities available in communities, as well as developing solutions to local participation barriers. Through these local plans and networks of physical activity opportunities, the foundation could assist government and partner organisations to deliver structured physical literacy, multicultural, employment, disability and social inclusion programs.

Data collection and data sharing

An important focus of Health and Wellbeing Queensland would be to develop partnerships across the health, community, fitness, sport and active recreation sectors, to implement a significant data management service. The data management service, which should be

industry-led, is needed to inform state and local government funding and facility delivery and as a valuable measurement tool to justify expenditure on physical activity.

With reliable and current data on participation in physical activity, available freely to government and the public, we foresee a range of benefits including club-level sustainability and sponsorship, data-driven decision making on facility development and funding programs and real-time options for medical practitioners to include in *HWQ Health & Activity Plans*.

LINKAGES WITH OUR FUTURE STATE: ADVANCING QUEENSLAND'S PRIORITIES

The fitness, sport and active recreation sector can claim to be involved with and able to contribute to a number of priority areas of the Queensland Government's *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities* strategy.



GIVE ALL OUR CHILDREN
A GREAT START

Give all our children a great start

Fitness, sport and active recreation contributes to this priority through the social and community benefits linked to participation which include improved social behaviour, social cohesion, increased self-esteem and confidence. Early childhood development, nature play and encouragement of early take up of sport and active recreation all contribute to better personal and health outcomes.



KEEP QUEENSLANDERS
HEALTHY

Keep Queenslanders healthy

Fitness, sport and active recreation contributes to this priority because regular participation in physical activity directly leads to reduced obesity and rates of heart disease, better management of diabetes, and improved mental health through preventative health measures such as the contribution of exercise and movement. Physical activity helps tone and strengthen the body, which is particularly beneficial for healthy ageing.

Fitness, sport and active recreation empowers, inspires and motivates Queenslanders as well as helping provide a better work/life balance. These benefits include greater social cohesion and inclusion which are significant contributors to reducing pressure on the health system. It can also help build social relationships which can reduce feelings of loneliness, improve quality of life and have positive effects on mental health.



Keep communities safe

Fitness, sport and active recreation contributes to this priority

because participation in sport and active recreation creates positive alternatives to offending, antisocial behaviour and crime. Particularly powerful in preventing crime and building resilience of at-risk young people, sport and active recreation provides life skills (such as teamwork, confidence, and awareness of the damage caused by violence and substance abuse).

Be a responsive government

Through its suite of *Advancing Queensland* agendas, the Queensland Government has demonstrated its determination to set itself a vision to achieve for the State. QFSR Skills Alliance advocates that fitness, sport and active recreation in the delivery of core government services, especially in the areas of health, education, employment, training and communities, should be included in the agenda.



The sector sees the further emergence of digital delivery of government services as an important means to increase participation in fitness, sport and active recreation amongst Queenslanders. Particularly through local, place-based coordination of participation opportunities that are being delivered on the ground, Queenslanders will be able to use government service delivery to create healthier lifestyle opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION 1: PRESCRIBE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AS PART OF INDIVIDUAL HEALTH PLANS

Our Future State: Advancing Queensland Priorities:



Fitness, sport and active recreation make a vital contribution to the lifestyles of Queenslanders, including physical, health and social benefits at individual, community and economic levels. Evidence shows that fitness, sport and active recreation directly leads to reduced obesity and rates of heart disease, better management of diabetes, and improved mental health through the preventative health measure of physical activity.

Physical activity helps strengthen the body and promote flexibility and movement and empowers, inspires and motivates Queenslanders as well as helping provide a better work/life balance. These benefits are particularly beneficial for healthy ageing and are significant contributors to reducing pressure on the health system. It can also help build social relationships which can reduce feelings of loneliness, improve quality of life and have positive effects on mental health.

Encouraging and supporting Queenslanders to become and stay active requires a focus on fun, ease of access and marketing of the lifelong benefits that physical activity delivers. QFSR Skills Alliance's vision of Health and Wellbeing Queensland is of an agency that is deliberately intended to introduce a new system of community-centric coordination of physical activity opportunities. This place-based system would also specifically target groups in the community who are under-represented in physical activity, including seniors, people with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multicultural Queenslanders, women and unemployed people.

As we build the network of HWQ Community Facilitators it will be vital to ensure the fitness, sport and recreation sector workforce (professional and volunteer) is properly trained in areas of cultural awareness, age awareness, disability and mental health competence as well as possessing the skills to manage increased participation and increased organisational capacity needs inside fitness, sport and recreation organisations.

Consideration should be given to introducing a qualification in nature play which is expected to continue growing in popularity for encouraging children to become physically literate. Creating this network of facilitators and ensuring the capacity of the sector workforce to be ready to support increased participation, as well as appropriate marketing, is fundamental to encouraging and supporting Queenslanders to get moving earlier and keep moving for longer.

A potential Queensland Government *HWQ Passport* could provide eligible participants with access to up to \$500 per annum of approved *HWQ 'Get Active' Services*. These services would be pre-approved by HWQ (and relevant industry bodies) and be available for General Practitioners to 'prescribe' to members of the public as part of a *HWQ Health & Activity Plan*.

Upon referral to approved providers, eligible participants could redeem vouchers or value provided through their passport towards the cost of activities. It is recommended that *HWQ Passport* eligibility should be based on the *Get Started* voucher program, but extended to include people who hold a valid Centrelink Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card. Each program would operate independently, with the *Get Started* program being a junior version of the *HWQ Passport* program.

RECOMMENDATION 2: PROVIDE FACILITIES TO SUPPORT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Our Future State: Advancing Queensland Priorities:



CREATE JOBS
IN A STRONG ECONOMY



GIVE ALL OUR CHILDREN
A GREAT START



KEEP QUEENSLANDERS
HEALTHY



KEEP COMMUNITIES
SAFE



BE A RESPONSIVE
GOVERNMENT

In addition to the undoubted health benefits that fitness, sport and active recreation provide to individuals, it is also a strong contributor to the social health of wider communities. This occurs through the building of interpersonal relationships, development of social skills, improved confidence and happiness in individuals.

Whilst fitness, sport and recreation are undoubtedly powerful means for creating connected communities, there are many dimensions as to why equality of access and participation require attention. Barriers to participation in physical activity do not only include access to programs or facilities, but include diverse needs relating to income, employment, health, gender, age, culture and confidence, amongst other practical issues such as transport, clothing/equipment and life experiences.

QFSR Skills Alliance suggests a renewed focus on empowering people to have the choice to be involved in physical activity and the variety of ways they can do so is needed as part of how fitness, sport and active recreation can improve social inclusion. This is multi-faceted and requires:

- an intentional focus on social inclusion in the charter of Health and Wellbeing Queensland
- support, through education and training, for the physical activity workforce and volunteer base to intentionally focus on social inclusion

- localised assistance for fitness, sport and active recreation organisations to create and maintain practices that are welcoming, respectful, accepting and understanding of individual needs and preferences
- the empowerment of organisations, through capacity building, to deliver excellence in ‘customer service’ to participants
- encouragement of diversity, innovation and adaptability in the delivery of incentive programs (with an emphasis on increasing and maximising the use of existing facilities and opportunities in local communities)
- using fitness, sport and active recreation providers to deliver employment-readiness programs and social inclusion programs for people who are unemployed, women, multicultural and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders, people with a disability and other target groups less likely to be participating in the community
- recognition of age-appropriate and gender-appropriate environments that allow people to be more comfortable in their chosen activity (for example, fitness centres report that older Queenslanders enjoy working with mature trainers who understand the ageing process)
- an injection of new money into a community-centric delivery model of fitness, sport and active recreation participation opportunities

The proposed Health and Wellbeing Queensland agency should be structured as a network of HWQ Community Facilitators who create individualised participation solutions for communities across Queensland. HWQ Community Facilitators would develop local physical activity plans for their area which will include a range of participation opportunities for multiple sections of the community.

For example, the facilitator would be equally involved in connecting young people with organised sport opportunities as they would be in assisting older residents to find activities that suit their age and ability and are delivered in an age-appropriate way (i.e. access to fitness centres during off-peak times where mature trainers are intentionally being provided for this cohort).

Equally important in encouraging and supporting Queenslanders to be involved in physical activity is access to vibrant, and useable, places and spaces.

Two long-standing issues are easily identified:

- Community access to school facilities
- Lighting of fitness, sport and active recreation places and spaces

The sector has long been advocating for increased access to school facilities for community sport and active recreation opportunities, however the issue remains extremely difficult to resolve. Until the Department of Education commits to making school sport facilities available for community use by including Key Performance Indicators in school principal's employment contracts to force a shift in culture, public access to publicly owned facilities to support public participation in physical activity will remain stifled by the refusal of schools to be model citizens in their communities. This massive untapped resource (more than 1230 state schools in Queensland) currently remains unacceptably under utilised.

A HWQ Lighting Up Queensland program, using physical activity for health as the catalyst, is an opportunity to deliver a major legacy item by the new agency. Through such a program, the installation of lighting at sporting fields and active recreation spaces, including schools where public access is permitted, could dramatically increase available space for participation opportunities outside of daylight hours.

A cost benefit analysis, to consider potential increased use of a facility, venue flexibility, additional income, risk and safety considerations and operating and maintenance costs, would be required before funding allocations are made for lighting projects from HWQ.

RECOMMENDATION 3: ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOBS THROUGH INCREASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Our Future State: Advancing Queensland Priorities:



CREATE JOBS
IN A STRONG ECONOMY



BE A RESPONSIVE
GOVERNMENT

The fitness, sport and active recreation sector makes a direct economic contribution to Queensland through both large-scale and local sport and racing events, regular meets and events, eco-tourism and adventure tourism opportunities and the employment of almost 50,000 people across the various industries of fitness, sport and active recreation.

Investing in facilities and spaces obviously creates jobs through the economic activity of construction and ongoing management and maintenance. Investing in a community-centric network of facilitators, coordinated by Health and Wellbeing Queensland, and an appropriately trained and skilled sector workforce to support enhanced participation, will vastly reshape Queenslanders' attitudes towards physical activity. Growing participation in fitness, sport and active recreation will also create jobs through infrastructure and facility development, increased numbers of trainers, coaches, instructors and administrators to manage the growth, coordination of local place-based participation strategies and attracting private sector investment.

Additionally, Health and Wellbeing Queensland could provide assistance, support and encouragement for Queensland sport and active recreation festivals and events, generating additional economic activity for the State.

SUMMARY

QFSR Skills Alliance believes the intention of the Health and Wellbeing Bill, currently before the committee for consideration, should be supported to enable the Queensland Government to establish a health promotion agency known as Health and Wellbeing Queensland (HWQ).

We believe HWQ should have a dedicated focus on physical activity as part of its operations and have suggested a 'Get Active Queensland' concept, inspired by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, to be embedded within HWQ.

As stated at the outset, our support for the Health and Wellbeing Bill is in recognition of the objectives to improve the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders, reduce risk factors associated with chronic disease and reduce health inequities. We believe these are worthy objectives and in keeping with our own desire to contribute to the physical activity, social inclusion, mental health and job readiness of Queenslanders.

QFSR Skills Alliance believes Queensland needs a health promotion agency which can help connect government support for fitness, sport and active recreation with health outcomes, policy and objectives. We believe government support for fitness, sport and active recreation should be tied to measurable health, social inclusion and employment outcomes and that a trained and skilled workforce exists to operate the sector.

It is the opinion of QFSR Skills Alliance that a Health and Wellbeing Queensland agency, with a dedicated 'Get Active Queensland' focus, is the right model to promote the measures and activities required to improve the health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders.

CONTACT INFORMATION



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