

## Pharmacy Business Ownership Bill 2023

**Submission No:** 48  
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Committee Secretary  
Economics and Governance Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane Qld 4000

18/01/2024

Via: [EGC@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:EGC@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: Committee inquiry into the Pharmacy Business Ownership Bill 2023**

I'm a pharmacist owner in Queensland and I still have concerns about the above-mentioned Bill despite repeated previous suggestions and feedback to Queensland Health. While some of my concerns have been addressed, which has been welcomed, it is still not enough, and I encourage further consideration by the committee.

The current version of the Bill does not adequately define what a pharmacy service is. The definition is too narrow and is limited to dispensing and compounding of medicines only. This is not an accurate reflection of the services that we provide and means that, for example, where the dispensing of a medicine is considered a pharmacy service, the provision of counselling about that medicine, is not. Where the purpose of the Bill is to describe who may own a pharmacy business, a specific definition of what constitutes a pharmacy business (through definition of the kinds of services my pharmacy provides) must be offered as part of the Bill.

While I acknowledge that the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act needs to be updated and modernised to include a Pharmacy Council, it shouldn't be at the expense of modifying its key foundations being:

- Only a pharmacist can own a community pharmacy business
- The number of community pharmacies owned by a pharmacist capped at five and
- Prohibition on the right of another person to control a community pharmacy

The structure of the council membership as it is currently stated is less than ideal. The council is an industry body that has the potential to be weighted inappropriately, where industry experts may be significantly outnumbered. There must be a majority of pharmacy business owner members to ensure that the council is able to function as intended.

The current definition in the Bill refers to a supermarket as a 'premises' which suggests that it can only exist in a physical location. With the likely increase of online supermarket businesses due to rapid changes with technology, the definition of a supermarket needs to be updated to ensure it is uniquely defined as selling food, beverages, groceries, and other household items. Having clarity of what a supermarket's primary purpose is sets it apart from a pharmacy business and is in the best interests of our patient's healthcare.

The definition of material interest is still lacking. Including terms such as '*legal*' and '*beneficial*' would provide clarity and align with practices in other parts of the country. Specifying that an interest includes the right to receive consideration would vary based on the profits of the pharmacy and would address any potential doubt. A failure to appropriately define a material interest means that interests that are not expressed in the current definition may not be able to be deemed unlawful interests.

The community has high expectations of pharmacy and the services provided in Queensland, and I believe the proposed changes still don't meet those expectations. I am proud of the work pharmacists do for our patients and the wider community, so I encourage you to consider my concerns.

Thank-you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Sincerely,

Kyril Raniga

A solid black horizontal bar used to redact the signature of Kyril Raniga.