



11th July 2018

Committee Chair
HCDSFDVPC
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Kidney Health Australia
National Office / Victoria
125 Cecil Street
South Melbourne VIC 3205
–
GPO Box 9993
Melbourne VIC 3001

T: +61 3 9674 4300
info@kidney.org.au

The Australian Kidney Foundation
Trading as Kidney Health Australia
ABN 37 008 464 426 I Charity No. CH 0614

Patron-in-Chief
His Excellency General
The Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC
(Retired)

Patrons
Lady Margaret Brabham
Mr Normie Rowe AM

Dear Sir/Madam,

I'm writing on behalf of Kidney Health Australia to state our position on the issues before the current inquiry into pharmacy in Queensland.

Kidney Health Australia is a national not-for-profit organisation dedicated to helping people with kidney disease, with a view to improving their health outcomes and quality of life, and that of their families and carers.

Our concerns centre on the questions concerning pharmacy ownership which have been put forward by the inquiry. Kidney Health Australia is supportive of the current model of community ownership of pharmacies in Queensland, and in every state of Australia.

Our constituents are often elderly, and they regularly suffer from multiple comorbidities. They require specialised attention, care and advice on the medications, and the interactions between these medications. They also need preventative care, such as blood pressure and blood glucose monitoring. These specialised needs necessitate individual and careful attention, which we do not believe they would adequately receive at a corporatised pharmacy. Our experience with community pharmacists gives us confidence that they provide the service and care people living with kidney diseases require.

We are also very concerned about ensuring access to a variety of medicines for our constituents. Kidney diseases are complicated conditions requiring a variety of pharmaceutical therapies. We are concerned that in a deregulated environment, pharmacies which are operated solely for the profit of corporate shareholders may be disincentivised from carrying the range of medicines our constituents may require. Access to medicines is of particular concern in rural and remote Queensland, where pharmacies may even disappear in a deregulated landscape.

Finally, we believe that changes to the laws governing ownership may break down the important relationships pharmacists have built with our constituents over many years. With pharmacists no longer owning their own businesses, there may be higher turnover in pharmacies, making it harder for people living with kidney disease to build strong relationships to ensure continuity and quality of care. The holistic approach to care that we have witnessed in community pharmacies may be at risk, as patients become simply retail customers for corporate stores.

Changes in the law in Queensland will be viewed by other states, so the burden on this inquiry is significant. We believe that this committee must summarily reject deregulation of



ownership laws in Queensland, to protect the community pharmacy as an important health destination for those suffering with kidney disease, and countless others.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lisa Murphy'.

Lisa Murphy
Interim CEO
Kidney Health Australia