

Health, Community and Disability Services, Domestic and Family Violence Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Mr Hansen,

I recently found out about this inquiry, and I'm writing to express my concerns as the owner of a pharmacy in a rural area in Queensland.

I have been the owner of Central Qld Day and Night Pharmacy for 11 years. We offer the Rockhampton community a destination for all things health and wellbeing, particularly when a GP is too expensive or difficult to see. Our pharmacists and assistants are very knowledgeable, providing customers with expert health advice and assistance. Our team is very passionate about pharmacy, always going above and beyond for our customers.

I understand the government is looking to establish a Pharmacy Council, and I think this is a good idea. We need a local body to oversee and manage pharmacies – like they do in every other Australian state. But I am concerned what any changes to the laws around pharmacy ownership would mean for my pharmacy and my patients in Rockhampton.

Businesses like mine are already struggling. But, we are health care providers and do a great deal for our communities. I am sure large corporations wouldn't provide the sorts of services my pharmacy does, because many of those services are not profitable, they are simply acts of kindness, compassion and goodwill.

Allowing non-pharmacist owners in the sector will threaten the existence of community pharmacies like my own. Pharmacies are utilised for so much more than just dispensing medications. The extra services we offer our customers keeps our community healthy and out of GPs and hospitals. Rural and remote communities, like mine, need these health services that a local pharmacist provides.

As a result, I feel strongly that the scope of services pharmacists are allowed to provide should be reviewed. I need to be able to provide more services to my community, as I really am the most accessible health professional in Rockhampton. For instance, being able to vaccinate people of all ages would be invaluable. This service would be particularly valuable at peak flu times, freeing up other services such as GPs and emergency waiting rooms.

Please support us in meeting the health needs of our patients, by establishing a pharmacy council, allowing pharmacists to provide more services and stopping the deregulation of ownership. Pharmacies are incredibly important to rural and remote communities, so help us to give every rural Queenslanders a healthier life.

Regards,

Kylie Becker

Owner of TWCM Day & Night Pharmacy Rockhampton