



12 July 2018

Committee Secretary  
(HFDSDVPC);  
Parliament House  
George Street  
**BRISBANE QLD 4000**

Email: [pharmacy@parliament.gov.au](mailto:pharmacy@parliament.gov.au)

Dear Committee Secretary

### **Inquiry into the establishment of a pharmacy council and pharmacy ownership in Queensland**

Since 1985, Parkinson's Queensland Inc has helped thousands of Queenslanders in their journey with Parkinson's and related disorders, not only in the early stages after diagnosis, but throughout the condition's progression. We are a charitable organisation that provides individuals, families and the health, aged and disability sectors with information, support and education for people living with Parkinson's, Dystonia, Multiple System Atrophy, Progressive Supranuclear Palsy, Essential Tremor and Restless Leg Syndrome.

Our core business is assist research into finding a cure for Parkinson's and to improving the quality of life and health outcomes for those who have been diagnosed as well as those who are impacted.

Parkinson's is a progressive neurological condition that affects people from all walks of life. It is quite common, with more than 70,000 Australians, including over 17,000 Queenslanders (24.3%) diagnosed with Parkinson's. The average age of diagnosis is 65 years, with 82% at age 65 and over, however younger people can be diagnosed with Parkinson's too. 32 Australians are diagnosed every day—that's more than one person per hour! Parkinson's can affect adults of any age. Approximately 18% of those diagnosed are of "working age", or under 65 (over 12,000 persons)

Approximately 3% of those diagnosed are under the age of 40 (over 2300 persons). Over 8,500 are in care facilities. There are more than 11,500 new cases diagnosed each year.

There is no cure.

It is not easy to diagnose Parkinson's. There are no laboratory tests (such as a blood test or brain scan), so it is important that the diagnosis is made by a specialist, such as a neurologist. The specialist will examine for any physical signs of Parkinson's and take a detailed history of symptoms. Unfortunately, the lead time to gain access to a specialist can be 6-9 months in Queensland.

Parkinson's Queensland's interest in this Inquiry is improving the life quality and well-being key aspect of any person living with Parkinson's and the important role of played by their local community pharmacist in their health journey. We also recognise the need for an open mind on change.



It is the local pharmacist who knows the person who is diagnosed with Parkinson's well. Importantly, they also know the patients' carers and families. It is the pharmacist who will notice changes in condition largely because they see the patient regularly. It is a very personal and often a generational relationship.

The local pharmacist is an integral part of the patients' healthcare team.

Parkinson's Queensland Inc supports the current model of pharmacy ownership.

We know from our members and those within the support network of the diagnosed that it is the pharmacist rather than the general practitioner, who is often the first point of contact for those affected by Parkinson's. It is the pharmacy team that is able to spend more time with the patient, that listens, observes, and is able to respond quickly. We are very conscious of the role of the local pharmacist plays in rural and remote communities where healthcare options are limited.

People living with Parkinson's often tell us of the high level of trust they have in their local pharmacist. This is especially so with carers whose needs are often sacrificed in favour of the diagnosed. A common situation with carers; especially in the 'bush'. Who cares for the carer?

A factor often lost sight of is that the advice, counsel, guidance, and patience extended to the Parkinson's community, carers and families, is the majority of the unseen care given by pharmacists comes at no cost to the patient, family or governments.

It is essential for Parkinson's Queensland to work with all involved with the patients' healthcare team; particularly pharmacists. We also recognise local pharmacies form an integral part of the world class health system through which all Queenslanders benefit.

PQI goes about its business providing an essential link between the community and support services to ensure those living with the day-to-day and long term challenge of Parkinson's and related disorders can face the future with confidence and independence. Without a sound, local, and trusted pharmacy network that also reaches into rural and remote communities; that link fails.

Parkinson's Queensland Inc supports the current model of community pharmacy ownership and the establishment of a Pharmacy Council in Queensland as is the case elsewhere across Australia.

We look forward to learning the outcome of this inquiry in due course.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Hindle', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mark Hindle ED, FAHP, FFIA, CFRE, JP(Qual)  
Chief Executive Officer  
**Parkinson's Queensland Inc.**