

12 July 2018

Committee Secretary
HCDSDFVPC
Parliament House, George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000



Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to provide a brief submission regarding the **Inquiry into the establishment of a pharmacy council and transfer of pharmacy ownership in Queensland.**

Pharmacists play a key role in primary health care. In many instances they are the first health professional contacted by an individual with a health concern. Due to their role in delivering Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme medicines, pharmacists practising in community pharmacies also frequently come into contact with individuals who have mental health conditions, making them an important partner in the delivery of mental health services.

The Queensland Alliance for Mental Health (QAMH) is supportive of the consideration of establishing a pharmacy council in Queensland. We note Queensland remains the only State that does not have an independent administration authority. There are many worthy reasons why creating such a council would have a positive impact on service provision, including:

- Having an independent regulator to consider ownership and registrations; and
- Providing specialist knowledge into prevailing trends and appropriate responses.

Pharmacists play an important role in monitoring and engaging with individuals who access medications to assist with their mental health. As highlighted by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, pharmacists may undertake a number of activities to support consumers and carers in the monitoring and treatment of mental illness, including:

- Providing advice to encourage medication adherence;
- Medication supply services;
- Reviewing medication; and
- Providing lifestyle support and advice.

For these reasons, QAMH does not support any regulatory changes which have the potential to impact the number of local, community pharmacies. We recognise that local pharmacies play an integral role in the provision of mental health services in the community, particularly in rural and remote settings. Any potential moves to deregulation should consider the wider impacts, including whether such a change would improve the availability and provision of services to the community.

Thank you for your consideration of this brief submission.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kris Trott', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Kris Trott
Chief Executive Officer

"Strong, inclusive and resilient mental health communities."