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Mr Rob Hansen  
Committee Secretary  
Health Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Mr Hansen,

**RE: Inquiry into establishing a pharmacy council and pharmacy ownership in Queensland**

As the proud owner and operator of a pharmacy in Blackall, I am writing to offer my opinions on the current parliamentary inquiry into the pharmacy sector in our state.

I operate the only community pharmacy in Blackall, so my community relies heavily on me for their medications, as well as for advice, referral and, from time to time, treatment of minor conditions.

One of the most pressing issues raised by this inquiry is the scope of practice of pharmacists. In rural communities, where access to healthcare is limited, pharmacists need to be empowered to practice to the full scope of their training and ability. In Blackall, many locals struggle to get an appointment at the GP, so it would be a significant benefit if I was allowed to dispense a month's worth of medication in an emergency, where a patient doesn't have a script. This would better ensure continuity of medication. I also believe I could better serve my community if I was able to conduct a full range of screenings, including screening for diabetes, lung disease and STIs.

While an expanded scope would help me to play a larger role as a primary healthcare professional in my community, the committee's review of ownership regulations worries me. In my many years as a community pharmacist, I have seen this issue reviewed time and time again. The model we have now protects community pharmacy, and works well for patients. I believe that were ownership deregulated, patients would be the ultimate losers. As a pharmacist who owns his own pharmacy, the buck stops with me. I have clinical accountability for the medicines I dispense and the advice I give out. I can also change my business to reflect the unique needs of my community. This wouldn't be the case if a corporation took over my pharmacy.

Rural communities rely on pharmacies as an essential part of the health safety net. People can come to me for free advice, and I am in a position to see health issues before they become serious, as I see most of my customers more frequently than their GPs. I believe that if a corporation owned my pharmacy, the sort of care and concern that I give to my patients wouldn't be there.

I believe this committee was set up to look into the possibility of setting up a pharmacy council in Queensland. While I am supportive of this move, I am shocked that the committee is looking again at deregulation. We need to put this matter to bed, because I believe the current restrictions on ownership serve our communities, and our health system well.

Regards,



Ian Kinsey

*Owner, Ian Kinsey Outback Chemist*