



11 July 2018

Committee Secretary
HCDSDFVPC
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane
Qld 4000

Dear Mr Hansen

Re: Inquiry into the establishment of a pharmacy council and transfer of pharmacy ownership in Queensland

I have been made aware of the abovementioned inquiry and I write to submit my views on issues within the terms of reference of this inquiry.

I support the establishment of a Pharmacy Council to bring Queensland in line with other jurisdictions in terms of issuing a licence for pharmacies. I am aware that some applicants use complex franchise-style business structures to try and find ways around meeting the requirement that only a pharmacist can own a pharmacy. I am sure big business corporates would love to own pharmacies but their priority would only be bottom line profits.

I have been a pharmacist and pharmacy owner in the Lockyer Valley for the last 10 years and my first responsibility has always been to provide high quality pharmacy services. My pharmacy team know most of our customers and we are often seen as a first point of call to provide advice, referral and support services. We don't just dispense medication. We provide dose administration aids so patients can manage their medication and stay in their own home for longer. We do home deliveries, provide nursing home services, diabetes services, health programs and immunisation services. Deregulation will threaten my pharmacy. I wouldn't be able to offer some of these free services and this will increase the health burden on the medical centres and the local hospital.

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I employ approximately 25 staff including pharmacists and pharmacy assistants and my pharmacy forms a vital part of the local economy.

I pay my staff well above the award rate depending on length of service, experience and qualifications. Some staff has worked for me for 10 years. I work in the pharmacy full time and have the support of a great team. I have an open door policy and value any input from my team. Big box warehouse pharmacies pay their staff just the award rate to control the wages bill. Staff morale in those types of pharmacies is usually low because staff is treated as just numbers and they have no real say in anything.

I don't believe Australians want to see supermarkets, pharmaceutical companies and other big corporates owning pharmacies. Supermarkets would like to get a share of the pharmacy industry and cause the demise of many small businesses. Supermarkets own service stations, sport clubs and have gambling licences. They sell liquor and cigarettes and they want to be become a health destination? How absurd!

Our industry is made up of thousands of small businesses and has adapted and changed to meet the needs of patients who live everywhere from our large cities to small rural and remote communities. Under this structure pharmacists remain, and have always been, the most accessible of all health professionals.

If pharmacy ownership laws were changed, I think many unintended consequences would result. My main concern is that my community pharmacy continues to be able to support the local community. I request that the committee considers the important role of pharmacies and recommend against deregulation.

Why fix a system which isn't broken?

Kind regards

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Pharmacist / Proprietor

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