

10 July 2018

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

I wish to inform the committee of my views as a pharmacy owner in one of Queensland's regional centres.

As a joint owner of a Good Price Pharmacy Warehouse in Mackay, I believe several of the changes being considered by this committee would have a significant impact on my business, on my customers, and on the health of people in my community and communities like mine all over Queensland.

I would like to address the question of deregulating pharmacy ownership first. I believe the current rules preserve the role of the community pharmacist as both a dispenser of medicines and a healthcare provider. Having a pharmacist involved in business decisions made in a pharmacy ensures that they are governed by clinical expertise and concern. It also means that pharmacies are owned by small business people who are connected to their communities and can respond to the local health issues they see and involve local people. This means choosing different kinds of free programs to offer out of the pharmacy, and knowing which customers need additional assistance or clinical oversight.

I strongly urge the committee to reject deregulation. Pharmacies should be owned by independent pharmacists. It is an essential part of ensuring they function as quality health care providers first, and retail destinations second.

I also urge the committee to consider recommending pharmacists be able to offer the whole scope of services we are trained for. Pharmacists can and do contribute so much more to healthcare, particularly in communities in regional areas where other health services are often more difficult to access. The Vaccination program is just one example. While people in Brisbane may not have trouble getting in to see a doctor, people can often wait a long time for an appointment in the regions. That's why we need to allow pharmacists to dispense one month's worth of supply in emergencies. The three days supply we are permitted to provide is just not good enough. I also think we could do more screening for diseases. Pharmacies are visited regularly, and are often accessible 7 days a week, so opening them up to provide more health services would drive better outcomes for patients, in my opinion.

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A pharmacy council is a good idea for Queensland. We need better regulation, and a body that can coordinate with the government to implement health policy through pharmacies. Our sector is ready to do more, and a pharmacy council could facilitate this.

I hope that you will consider these views when making any recommendations on deregulation, which I believe would result in worse outcomes for the community in Mackay. Please also consider recommending a full scope for pharmacists, we can do so much more to serve our communities.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David Aprile'.

David Aprile

Joint Owner, Good Price Pharmacy Warehouse Mackay

PO Box 5090, Mackay. Q. 4740

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