

Kirsty Harris

Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry

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

As a pharmacist recently returned from living overseas, in a country where the pharmacy ownership model has been deregulated, allowing for the excessive growth of large corporate chains, I would like to put forward my concerns on the above topic of pharmacy ownership.

Having two young children abroad, as well as a chronic health condition requiring multiple medicines, I had the opportunity to visit multiple pharmacies in North America. All of which, were large and corporately owned.

The level of care I received was not that of a personal nature. The location of the dispensary and design of the store, as well as (I believe) the work pressure placed on the pharmacist, meant most times, I never saw the pharmacist on duty. The pharmacist was well and truly removed as the face of the pharmacy. This has negative consequences upon the pharmacy profession with public trust and confidence ultimately hindered.

How can primary health care be delivered safely and efficiently if you do not know your customer? How can a slight deterioration in a patient's health be noticed and acted upon, by means of initiating patient discussion and/or referral to another health professional if that patient doesn't exist, to you?

While large corporate pharmacies can offer sometimes more affordable medicines, this benefit is largely offset by the lack of individualised patient services.