

Health, Community and Disability Services, Domestic and Family Violence Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Via e-mail – pharmacy@parliament.qld.gov.au

July 10th, 2018

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

As a practice nurse in our community, including running the Coordinated Veteran Care Program I am concerned about the possibility of a big business takeover of community pharmacies in Queensland.

As a Veteran Care Program Nurse Coordinator, I am constantly utilising our pharmacies many services. I ring for advice, organise urgent Home Medicine Reviews and would organise free home delivery for an urgent script at least once a fortnight. I worry that a Big Business would not make my patients somewhat irregular needs a priority.

I have seen the important contribution that pharmacists make to their local communities, and I believe that any deregulation of the laws around the ownership of these pharmacies could cause these pharmacies to be bought out, or simply forced to shut their doors. I want the current system, where our local pharmacy owner has health outcomes as their business priority and is backed by their professional ethics and priorities. Big business would have as a focus shareholders and bottom line profit.

I am also the President of the Yeppoon Lioness Club, a very strong community group focussed on supporting our local community through service and funds. A lot of our fundraisers rely heavily on donations for our prizes. As a club we have found the local business owners to donate generously, again and again. Big business is very reluctant to help in our charity events in any way.

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) is too important a piece of public health policy to place in the hands of corporates.

I understand that if pharmacy ownership laws were changed many unintended consequences would result.

Communities rely heavily on the health services provided by community pharmacies.

While I understand there are other matters before the inquiry, my main concern is ensuring that community pharmacies continue to be able to support their communities.

I request that the committee consider the important role of pharmacies and recommend against deregulation.

Regards,

Leah Grice RN
Yeppoon Family Practice
Yeppoon Lioness Club