

Committee Secretary  
Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic  
and Family Violence Prevention Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane Qld 4000

2 June 2017

Dear Committee Secretary

**Re: The establishment of the Healthy Futures Commission Queensland Bill 2017**

Northern Queensland Primary Health Network (NQPHN) wish to congratulate the Committee on the establishment of the Healthy Futures Commission Queensland (the Commission) to support the adoption of healthy lifestyle behaviours among Queensland children and families. NQPHN strongly supports the development of the commission in Queensland, and believes that a state-wide organisation to provide leadership, collaboration, and strategic direction has the potential to have great impact on improving the health of Queenslanders.

In recent years in northern Queensland, we have seen noticeable fragmentation of health promotion services and a lack of state-wide strategic direction. The establishment of the Commission provides an opportunity to provide leadership and strategic direction for health promotion in Queensland through an integrated systems approach. NQPHN encourages the Committee to broaden the approach of the Commission, and to work in setting a clear vision for improving the health of Queenslanders. This should be done with consideration to align all stakeholders in working collaboratively – such as Local Government, Primary Health Networks (PHNs), and Hospital and Health Services – to reduce potentially avoidable hospital admissions through health promotion and prevention strategy.

PHNs across Australia are working to reduce fragmentation and duplication of services. We are in a suitable position to be a conduit to engage between the health sector and community sector, and be involved in facilitating localised health promotion and prevention action. PHNs have strong existing relationships with General Practice, allied health, nurses, practice support and managers, Hospital and Health Services, universities, and community-based organisations, and with appropriate support and state-wide direction, will be strong local advocates for health promotion in their regions.

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NQPHN is committed to improving health and wellbeing across northern Queensland through population health and health promotion approaches. NQPHN is investing in Health Promotion Coordinators, located in four locations across our catchment, to coordinate and deliver on the strategies aligned with our latest population health needs assessment. NQPHN feels that the Commission can provide support and strategic direction for these roles, who will be positioned at the interface between health and community. The Commission can help them work collaboratively with Local Councils and other organisations to deliver community-based health promotion action through systems-based approaches and encourage the role of all sectors in improving health – not solely health services.

One of the best ways to ensure a strong, effective health system is to have a strong, integrated primary health system at its centre. This will help overcome key challenges such as fragmentation between state and federally-funded services, complexities in funding, governance, and reporting, poor coordination of service planning and delivery, and system inadequacies such as workforce shortages and misdistribution. Creating shared service agreements between all levels of government and PHNs is the first step in creating a stronger primary health sector, and ensuring we are all working together to improve the health of Queenslanders.

I would value the opportunity to discuss the potential role of PHNs such as Northern Queensland Primary Health Network in shaping and supporting the work of the Healthy Futures Commission Queensland.

Yours sincerely,



Robin Moore

Chief Executive Officer  
Northern Queensland PHN

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