

**Queensland
Government****SOUTH WEST HOSPITAL AND HEALTH SERVICE**

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Committee Secretary
Health, Communities, Disability Services, and
Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee
Parliament House
George St
BRISBANE QLD 4000



Dear Committee Secretary

I write to provide a submission to the Healthy Futures Commission Queensland Bill 2017.

Firstly, I commend the Queensland Government for pursuing and investing in a new approach to address the significant challenge of inequitable health outcomes across our state.

Broadly, the purpose and direction of the Commission in the Bill appear valuable. However, the Commission's effectiveness in shifting the disadvantage we see across many communities and groups in Queensland will largely depend on the application of the legislation, in terms of the strategy set and overseen by the Board. For example, the specific and unique role of the Commission beyond the plethora of existing health promotion functions and agencies, in "contributing to reducing health inequality" is hard to understand in this draft legislation.

In 2015 the South West Hospital and Health Service established a community health project called the Harmony Opportunity Pride Empowerment (HOPE) Project. HOPE focuses on the social determinants underpinning health and social outcomes for young people in two of Queensland's most remote and disadvantaged communities - Charleville and Cunnamulla. The project team has two dedicated staff who lead these two communities to foster productive and proactive relationships between local people and all tiers of government, government agencies and the community and not-for-profit sectors to collectively better support young people to reach their potential. The South West Hospital and Health Service's experience has shown that a 'place-based' approach, driven by the community is an effective way to overcome cross-portfolio challenges and siloed work practices; but that it takes considerable time and personnel to establish trusting partnerships, let alone see a shift in health outcomes.

Based on this experience I recommend that the functions be redrafted to explicitly reference the Commission's role in stewarding an approach to health promotion and service delivery that empowers and connects community members directly with all levels of government, government portfolios, the community and not-for-profit sectors.

Also based on the South West's experience, I am concerned that the success of the Bill as currently drafted relies heavily on the ability of the Commission's staff to find and maintain an effective balance between building strategic partnerships, with garnering a practical understanding of the nuanced challenges and opportunities within individual communities across the state. The

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challenge the Commission will have in developing effective strategic and operational plans and subsequently prioritising the allocation of its relatively few staff should not be underestimated.

While I acknowledge my background is not economics, I am unsure of the evidence base underpinning the requirement for at least 55% of the Commission's funds being paid out in grants. Internationally, there is increasing evidence around governments' investing in social enterprises and loans as a more effective way of building sustainable and locally owned solutions to health and social problems. I encourage greater consideration of this evidence prior to committing to the Bill as currently drafted.

In terms of the governance structure, I do not believe the requirements around board composition are detailed enough in the current Bill. Reflecting on the success of Healthway in Western Australia and VicHealth in Victoria, their boards are required by law to have a breadth of expertise including arts, health, sport, marketing, sport, as well as the traditional business, law and finance expertise. Introducing more prescriptive board membership requirements is one legal mechanism to ensure the Commission's leadership supports the formation of truly collaborative and innovative partnerships across sectors and portfolios.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my submission.

Yours sincerely



Glynis Schultz
Health Service Chief Executive
South West Hospital and Health Service
15/6/2017