



Chair
Health and Community Services Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000
Email: hcsc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Ruthenberg

Health Practitioner Registration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012
Dental Technicians

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on the Health Practitioner Registration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012.

The Queensland Consumers' Association (the Association) is the peak body for consumer groups in Queensland. The Association is a member of the Consumers' Federation of Australia, the peak body for Australian consumer groups. The Association is writing to you regarding a matter which is of significant concern to the organisation.

The Association notes the decision of cabinet to cease the registration of Dental Technicians. Dental Technology currently has a presence in current Federal policy priorities and it would be consistent for the profession to be included at a future date within the framework of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, until this can be achieved Dental Technology should continue to be regulated within Queensland.

There are many reasons why registration should continue:

- Along with these other professionals, dental technology is an internationally recognised allied health profession. Dental Technicians are a *well defined professional group* with *consistent recognition of qualifications* and a *strong research base*.
- The profession of dental technology has a substantial practitioner base and is growing rapidly. With existing significant numbers of dental technicians and ongoing growth of the profession there is surely an increased potential risk to public safety arising

from working in an unregulated environment. Most members of the public would not be aware that the overwhelming majority of appliances supplied and fitted by our dentists are manufactured by dental technicians and these same dental technicians are responsible for the choice of the appropriate materials and alloys that are used in these appliances.

- Protecting vulnerable people is an important key to health service delivery. The association members are aware that there are consistent practice standards across Australia which define professional activities and enable action against those who use inappropriate techniques, methodologies or dental materials. Dental Technicians construct appliances that are inserted into human mouths, thus any failure on the part of a dental technician to observe proper material selection controls could cause serious or permanent harm to the public.
- A Dentist is totally dependent on the quality of an appliance supplied by a Dental Technician.

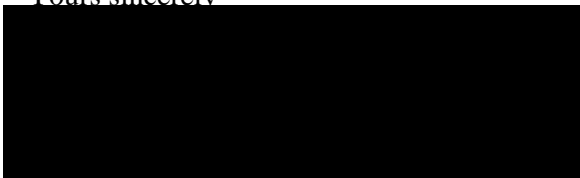
Creating a consistent multi-disciplinary environment across the health professions is essential so clients can expect all members of a health care team to operate in the same regulatory environment. Whether they are nurses, doctors, physiotherapists, occupational therapists or dental technicians, registration provides the means by which practitioners can be held accountable for their actions. This gives client's confidence in the credibility of the team and its service.

Criminal history screening is one example that clients might reasonably expect to apply across all health disciplines.

We feel all of these factors make a compelling case for the continued regulation of Dental Technicians in the interests of protecting patient health and safety, and ensuring high quality standards within this profession.

If you have any queries with regard to this recommendation, please contact the Secretary as shown above on the letterhead.

Yours sincerely



Cherie Dalley
President
Queensland Consumers Association
24 / 01 / 2013



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Health and Community Services Committee
Parliament House
George Street
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Dear Mr Ruthenberg

Health Practitioner Registration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012
Speech Pathology

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on the Health Practitioner Registration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012.

The Queensland Consumers' Association (the Association) is the peak body for consumer groups in Queensland. The Association is a member of the Consumers' Federation of Australia, the peak body for Australian consumer groups. The Association is writing to you regarding a matter which is of significant concern to the organisation.

The Association notes the decision of cabinet to cease the registration of Speech Pathologists. It is the Associations recommendation that Speech Pathologists should continue to be registered. Speech Pathology currently has a presence in current Federal policy priorities it would be consistent for the profession to be included at a future date within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme we feel that until this is achieved Speech pathology should continue to be regulated within Queensland.

There are many reasons why registration should continue:

- Speech pathology is recognised internationally as an allied health profession. Speech pathologists are a *distinct professional group* resulting in significant improvements in ethics and science of speech pathology employing high standards and research.

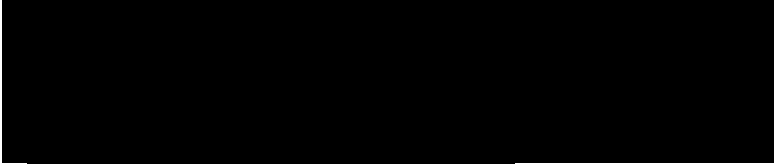
- With existing significant numbers of speech pathologists and the ongoing growth of the profession there is an increasing potential risk to public safety arising from working in an unregulated environment. Consistent multi-disciplinary environment across the health professions is essential so clients can expect all members of a health care team to operate in the same regulatory environment, whether nurses, doctors, physiotherapists, occupational therapists or speech pathologists. This gives client's confidence in the credibility of the team and its service.
- Criminal history screening is another example that clients might reasonably expect to apply across this health discipline.
- Speech pathologists work with many vulnerable clients. Protecting vulnerable people is key to health service delivery and children, elderly and chronically ill who struggle to speak and swallow are highly exposed to the risk of a speech pathologist abusing their position of power and trust.
- Having recency of practice requirements is critical to maintain a competent and effective workforce supporting vulnerable people. The association members are aware of the need for consistent practice standards across this state which define professional activities and to enable action against those who use inappropriate techniques and methodologies. Regulation has clearly contributed to a safe, high quality health care for the public.

Speech pathology has a presence in current Federal policy priorities and it would be consistent for the profession to be included in the future within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

We feel all of these factors make a compelling case for the continued regulation of Speech Pathology in the interest of protecting patient health and safety, and ensuring the continued high quality standards within the profession in Queensland.

We feel all of these factors make a compelling case for continuing the regulation of speech pathology within this State.

If you have any queries with regard to this recommendation, please contact the Secretary as shown above on the letterhead.



Cherie Dalley
President
24/01/2013