

03 August 2012

Health and Community Services Committee
Parliament House
BRISBANE QLD 4000



Submission 23

Dear Sir or Madam,

Re: Submission to Inquiry into palliative care services and home and community care services in Queensland

Care Connect is a major community services provider operating in New South Wales, Queensland (federal services only) and Victoria with more than 400 staff and assisting more than 7,000 clients annually.

We are pleased to endorse current initiatives to innovate the service system such as:

- COAG HACC – Aged Care changes
- Elements of the Living Longer, Living Better aged care strategy
- The National Disability Insurance Scheme

In Queensland, services such as HACC and Transition Care have traditionally been 'closed' to new providers and often managed through government agencies. While we understand the desire to limit service providers to a manageable number, this historic approach has regrettably prevented Queenslanders from accessing services from some of Australia's largest and most innovative organisations. Care Connect has the experience, size and expertise to deliver many of these services and would welcome an opportunity to tender for such services as current contracts expire.

As a not-for-profit community case management and care services provider, we advocate for greater involvement of the private sector in the delivery of such services for:

- Greater flexibility
- Greater cost-effectiveness
- Expertise in effective case management

There are excellent opportunities at this time to create new structures for service provision, to provide greater efficiencies for services that reduce hospital reliance and provide greater in-home services and support.

Care Connect also delivers transition type care programs – such as COMPACKS and SAFTE in New South Wales - to assist in hospital avoidance and transition out of hospital to home. We would appreciate the opportunity to contribute to reviews and restructuring for these types of services in Queensland, for the benefit of the Queensland Health budget as well as the well-being of clients/patients.

Research consistently shows that more than 90% of people wish to remain in their own home for as long as possible, preferably their entire lives. As such, the service system must be able to

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respond to this preference and provide the level/depth of care that individuals may require in their home.

Queensland has traditionally funded basic services such as personal care, domestic and allied health services. However, there is little recognition or funding allocation for more complex issues [e.g. squalor & hoarding; chronic diseases] or for complex case management for long term sustainability.

Care Connect is a specialist case management organisation. Our person-centred service model is based on international research and best practice in person centred services. Our organisation provides services across 82 separate state and federal funding streams and provides complex community services tailored to the needs of each individual we support. Most importantly, our support for complex services in the community is not only more cost effective than inappropriate acute care or residential admissions, but it is the overwhelming preference of Australians.

As we strive to simultaneously improve services and reduce health costs, Care Connect has proudly introduced its innovative *iCareConnect*® remote support service. Unlike many telehealth systems that rely on primary care intervention and monitoring, *CareConnect*® uses a low cost case management approach to support clients in the community while improving their access to other web based services.

At Care Connect, we believe that substantial benefits could be delivered for all Queenslanders, at reduced cost, by:

- Increasing competition and innovation by opening up home and community care services to bids from significant out-of-state providers.
- Piloting approaches like complex case management in areas such as cancer survivorship, chronic disease, transitional care, mental health and homelessness.

For further information, please contact Vikki Hine, Marketing and Business Development Associate on 02 9830 8900 or via email at vhine@careconnect.org.au.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Ostrowski
Chief Executive Officer