



## Australian Natural Therapists Association Ltd.

*ANTA – It's Your Choice, Naturally*

ABN 68 000 161 142

24<sup>th</sup> June 2013

Mr Trevor Ruthenberg MP  
Chair  
Health and Community Services Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Ruthenberg

Re: Health Ombudsman Bill 2013

The Australian Natural Therapists Association Ltd (ANTA) would like to thank the Health and Community Services Committee for inviting ANTA to make a submission on the Health Ombudsman Bill 2013.

ANTA is a national natural therapy association which accredits and represents the interests of professional practitioners trained in the following disciplines:

Acupuncture (registered)	Aromatherapy
Ayurveda	Chinese Herbal Medicine (registered)
Counselling	Homoeopathy
Myotherapy	Musculoskeletal Therapy
Naturopathy	Nutritional Medicine
Oriental Massage	Remedial Massage Therapy
Shiatsu	Western Herbal Medicine

It is noted the Health Ombudsman Bill 2013 covers individuals both registered and non registered including health service organisations and will apply to ANTA members practicing in Queensland.

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***ANTA MEMBERS RECOGNISED PROFESSIONALS***

In general, ANTA supports the objectives of the Health Ombudsman Bill 2013 as outlined in the explanatory notes which are congruent to the objectives of ANTA.

It is also noted the main objectives of the act will be achieved by establishing a transparent, accountable and fair system for effectively and expeditiously dealing with complaints and other matters relating to the provision of health services.

ANTA believes the primary role of the Ombudsman is to resolve complaints impartially and expeditiously through consultation and negotiation. Our experience over more than 50 years shows the vast majority of complaints can be resolved expeditiously through consultation and negotiation and ANTA recommends the important elements of consultation and negotiation should be included in the Health Ombudsman Bill 2013.

Under the proposed Bill the Ombudsman has substantial powers which include taking immediate action to suspend, imposition of a condition and prohibition orders in relation to both registered and non registered practitioners.

Whilst ANTA supports implementation of processes to protect the public, ANTA believes any decision to take immediate action against a practitioner should be subject to review by a panel of experts with experience relating to the field of practice of the practitioner prior to the implementation of any action against the practitioner and prior to any reviews by QCAT.

The stated objectives of the Health Ombudsman Bill 2013 of transparency, accountability and fairness should be applied to both the practitioner and the public to ensure a fair and equitable outcome/resolution and ANTA recommends words to this effect should be included in the Bill.

The Health Ombudsman Bill 2013 should be based on the right of every individual, practitioner and entity to natural justice.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Brian Coleman.

Brian Coleman  
Executive Officer