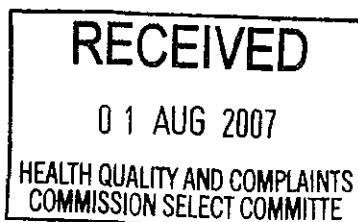


Submission no. 5



Mr. Peter Lawlor
Chair
Health Quality and Complaints
Commission Select Committee
Parliament House
George St
Brisbane Qld 4000

Professor Judy Searle
Main Beach

30th July 2007

Dear Chair

I write in my capacity as former Chair of the Queensland Maternal and Perinatal Quality Council. It was because of my dealings with the Commission, and particularly the Commissioner, that I resigned from this position in December 2006. Therefore this submission is made in a private capacity.

The major issues that I encountered in these dealings with some staff in the Commission was disrespect for the work and expertise of the Quality Council members, an ignorance of the rigor required to audit quality in this discipline and a sense of a bullying culture within the new organization. They did not offer any strategic or operational support for the functions of the Quality Council and thus my resignation and cessation of the work of the Council. There were no longer mechanisms to continue monitoring functions, mandatory reporting and provision of quality recommendations.

The Quality Council attempted to work with the Commission in the early stages and had established strong relations with Ms Susan Branson. She was very supportive and worked hard to understand the functions on the Council. We found out at some stage that she had been removed from this post very abruptly. We also became aware of many other staff changes within the Commission.

The Commission, in its previous form, clearly served a strong complaints handling role but now lacks expertise and relevant stakeholder understanding to take up the broader brief of quality monitoring and enhancement.

There are many committed health care providers in Queensland who are committed to high quality health service delivery and monitoring. All work done by the Quality Council members was pro bono. The Council members were clearly disenfranchised in this process and have little confidence and support for the Commission in an extended role beyond complaints handling.

I would support return of health quality monitoring to Queensland Government agencies and the Commission to return to independent complaints handling.

Thank you for this opportunity to contribute to this review.

Kind regards

Judy Searle