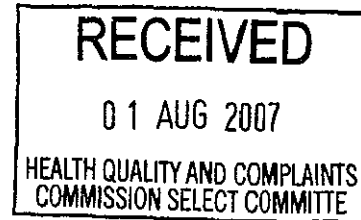


Warrego Electorate Office
PO Box 945
ROMA QLD 4455
Telephone (07) 4622 8888
Within Electorate 1800 814 479
Facsimile (07) 4622 8777



Howard Hobbs MP
Member for Warrego
Shadow Minister for
Local Government, Planning
and Sport

Mr Peter Lawlor MP
Chair
Health Quality and Complaints Commission
Select Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000



31st July 2007

Dear Mr Lawlor

I wish to advise the Select Committee of a serious flaw of the Health Quality and Complaints Commission, which I and my constituents have had first hand experience.

The Health Quality Complaints Commission has advised my office that they will not accept third party complaints from Members of Parliament. My constituent was unable to submit a written complaint due to his medical condition and gave me written authority to advocate and discuss his medical condition. However the Complaints Commission would not accept his complaint, which I sent to them on his behalf, further delaying and frustrating my constituent who was suffering depression and pain.

A significant issue arises when the patient passes away whilst awaiting treatment from the Health System. The refusal of the Commission to accept third party complaints in this circumstance is not acceptable, as a dead person cannot make a complaint.

The Health Quality Complaints Commission currently discriminates against people who are ill or injured, suffering depression or are unable to read or write and who live in isolated areas. In many cases these people may have no-one to help them and are often overwhelmed by the thought of having to make an official complaint about a Health Service that should have helped them. Understandably they turn to their local Member of Parliament for assistance but because the Health Quality and Complaints Commission cannot take complaints from a third party we are all further frustrated.

If the Health Quality and Complaints Commission is to be serious in reviewing and improving the quality of health services across Queensland then surely it needs to be available to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our society.

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The frail, aged and infirm members of our society need all the assistance they can get to access the best possible health service our society can provide. Individuals and their families need to be confident that everything possible is being done to ensure that the standard and quality of all health services in Queensland is being fairly and thoroughly monitored.

I recommend that the Health Quality Complaints Commission be able to accept third party complaints from Members of Parliament where written consent is given by the individual or the individual's next of kin.

I trust you will take this matter into consideration in your review.

Yours faithfully

Howard Hobbs MP
Member for Warrego
Shadow Minister for Local Government, Planning and Sport.