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HEALTH QUALITY AND COMPLAINTS  
COMMISSION SELECT COMMITTEE

Email: [selectcommittee@hqcqcc.com.au](mailto:selectcommittee@hqcqcc.com.au)  
Telephone Home: 07 3222 2222

Work: 07 3222 2222  
Work Fax: 07 3222 2222

30<sup>th</sup> July 2007.

The Research Director  
Health Quality and Complaints Commission Select Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane Q4000

Dear Sir or Madam,

I make a submission to the Review of the performance of the Health Quality and Complaints Commission (HQ&CC) and the Health Quality and Complaints Commission Act 2006 in a private capacity.

When the HC&CC, evolved out of the Bundaberg Inquiry, what I read and heard in the media lead me to believe that at last there would be an independent, objective impartial complaints process outside the Queensland Health Department.

However my complaint (Appendix 1) dated 1<sup>st</sup> December 2006 was not dealt with by the HQ&CC in a timely, impartial or objective manner. I wrote on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2007 (Appendix 2) as I had not had any response to my complaint. I was verbally informed by telephone that the HQ&CC could not deal with my complaint as the HQ&CC did not deal with individuals only systems. This was confirmed by letter 21<sup>st</sup> February 2007 from the HQ&CC. (Appendix 3)

I then received an email, that I printed off from [ken@hqcqcc.com.au](mailto:ken@hqcqcc.com.au); General Manager, Northern Area Health Service. (Appendix 4) My complaint had been referred back to the very system I complained about for internal consideration. The email gave a patriarchal pat to my concerns which were dismissed without any further communication or discussion. My concerns were internally brushed aside with haste and hope that I would retire soon. This internal response simply confirmed the systems inability to acknowledge that the harm occasioned to me in Gin Gin in 1990 was ethically and professionally wrong.

The HQ&CC's inability to be an independent objective impartial complaints commission demonstrates that once again bureaucracy has ensured in the writing of statutory law that the status quo of power and control remains undisturbed. Does the HQ&CC really think that the system presently in place would have enabled the concerns about Dr Patel to be investigated given that he is an individual and not a system?

Systems are devised by people for people. People are not perfect neither are systems. Systems are only as ethical and responsible as the people who administer the system. For example Napoleon and Hitler had good systems, the trains ran on time but time proved that they were neither ethical or professional people.

The system did not and has not questioned the harm occasioned to me at Gin Gin. The system went to great length's to ensure that it won. My unrelenting eight hours of cross examination by a Queens Counsel (QC) demonstrated this intent.

This health system forgets its core business is the treatment of the sick and to do no harm. Everything else is secondary to this central reason for the health systems existence.

Health is not dollars /budgets.

Health is not bureaucrats and ambition.

Health is not systems or programs.

Health is not the medical industry or Doctors.

Health is not protecting the system from legal liability.

It is about clients, patients, consumers, taxpayers, you and me, people who bleed who are frail, imperfect, vulnerable and die. Without these people we would not need a health system. For health is a private matter with a public consequence.

I have made submissions to both The Bundaberg Commission of Inquiry and the Foster Queensland Health Systems Review.

Given my experience I firmly believe that the health system needs an independent impartial objective complaints mechanism separate to the Health Department and free from political interference. A structure that is able to problem solve to clearly articulate the complaint and determine outcomes without fear or favour in a ethical and professional manner.

Yours sincerely,

Teri Lambert. JP(Q)