



17th July, 2017

Review Secretariat
Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation
The Australian Government Department of Health

Dear Professor king, Bill Scott and Jo Watson

I wish to make a submission to the Pharmacy Remuneration & Regulation Interim Report expressing my distress and strong rejection of the proposed option (Option 3-4) for homoeopathic products not to be sold in PBS-approved pharmacies.

Do we live in a democratic society or not? Do we have the freedom of choice to seek health care appropriate to our needs and beliefs or not?

This Option directly contradicts the basic criteria of the Review's strategic vision: that is, it is not 'forward thinking', does not 'encourage innovation' and it is inconsistent with 'adapting to the changing needs of the Australian public' – who want greater access to medicines of *their* choice, NOT LESS.

I have regularly treated myself and my family with homoeopathic medicines for many years now and will continue to do so for many years. I have found the homoeopathic medicines of enormous benefit and without negative side-effects where mainstream medicines have the ability to harm. I know what works for my family and we should have a right to choose. Homoeopathic products have been available in pharmacies for years without evidence that they create risk or harm to a patient's health' – a view based on speculation and not evidence.

Australians are discerning people who spend their money wisely. Around a million Australians use homoeopathy, not by error of judgment but because, like me, they find that it works and with far less side-effects than mainstream options. A true democracy protects the rights of its citizens to choose and access the style of healthcare and medicines they want and need.

I am unaware of any cases of harm caused by homoeopathic medicines. However, I am aware that many pharmaceutical medicines have serious side effects, which is why I believe homoeopathy should remain as a 'safe' treatment option for Australians.

I have most certainly found homoeopathic medicines very effective on babies, children and animals, so I know homoeopathy has no more to do with placebo than other medical interventions. Here is an example:- My son had approximately 12 warts covering his fingers and hands. Pharmaceutical Wart

remover products did not work. I watched a doctor inject my son's fingers with anaesthetic with a view to removing them only to watch my son go into shock. His body shook so uncontrollably he literally lifted off the bed. The procedure could not be carried out. After this, I gained some homoeopathic medicines and all of the warts disappeared in a short space of time. I just wish I had attained that particular homoeopathic much much sooner. I am an avid user and believer of the benefits of homoeopathic medicines.

The Panel's discussions and opinions on the efficacy on homoeopathy are based solely on the highly flawed NHMRC Homeopathy Review. Without recognising its limitations or considering the broader research evidence base and other *positive reports*.

Further, the public positions of professional pharmacy bodies such as the PSA are misleading and irrelevant, since they are based on the flawed NHMRC Review.

How can your Option 3-4 be fair when NHMRC excluded any homoeopathy subject/research experts from the process? This is in breach of 'mandatory' NHMRC standards. How convenient.

Let's not forget the NHMRC conducted the Review twice, sacking a first reviewer in 2012 who conducted a high quality review (as confirmed through FOI [Freedom of Information] documents). The first reviewer was a principal author of *NHMRC's own guidelines* on HOW TO REVIEW HEALTH EVIDENCE. Clearly this is a **biased action** taken by NHMRC.

NHMRC hid the existence of the initial Review, its findings and public expenditure. Yet they informed the public that it used 'standardised, accepted methods' when in fact, it did not.

The Review was tainted by multiple conflicts of interest that NHMRC did not report or manage. This is in breach of Conflicts of Interest Guidelines and legislation.

I take this opportunity to reiterate – “Do we live in a democratic society or not? Do we have the freedom of choice to seek health care appropriate to our needs and beliefs or not?”

I have personally had and witnessed too many positive and beneficial results from the use of homoeopathic medicines to sit back and allow Option 3-4 play out or succeed.

I have to ask, “What is it that you, Professor King, Bill Scott and Jo Watson are so afraid of that you would dictate to the rest of us what we can and cannot choose as our personal healthcare?”

Yours sincerely

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