

**Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation**  
**Submission #5; 4-Aug-2016; Ron Dymock**

To The Review Secretariat,  
The Pharmacy Review  
Department of Health  
GPO Box 9848  
Canberra ACT 2601

I am writing this out of concern for my fellow citizens of Australia.

As a retired pharmacist of 80 years of age with no future financial interest please regard me as an independent member of the public.

(More of my qualifications later)

I am broadly in favour of regulation and protection of a good pharmacy model in the interests of society.

It is my considered opinion that commercial interests should NOT own pharmacies.

In fact the public are better served in the Italian, French and Scandinavian model and the ideal is for ownership to be restricted to ONE ( or two at most) pharmacy for ONE pharmacist owner.

Until recently the West Australian situation worked very well with only WA registered qualified pharmacists ownership of two pharmacies. This enabled the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of

Western Australia to rigorously enforce high standards of practice with full legal control and active disciplinary enforcement based on the Royal Pharmaceutical model inherited from the UK plus ownership

of pharmacies being solely in individual pharmacist hands, and control of the WA Pharmacy Act.

"The man who owned the store ran the store".

Unfortunately, since this situation was abandoned and looser limits instituted in the ideal of Australia-wide harmonisation, several pharmacists have succumbed to GREED and OVERT rampant capitalism

and are not really "dinkum" practising pharmacists at all. Schemes of arrangement appear to exist whereby pharmacists pretend to own a pharmacy but in fact financial benefit and control of a chain of pharmacies

is in the control of one or two pharmacists. The existing looser regulations are not adhered to and those getting around the ownership rules are not punished.

Nevertheless the present rules should not be abandoned but tightened or at least ENFORCED.

Pharmacy in Australia is a true profession of great benefit to Australian citizens but the balance is very delicate . Generally the public does not value the pharmacist and we can so easily have "a bad press" due to the

mistaken view that medicines are a commodity and all that matters is price and free availability.- And this at a time when drug addiction , crime and ignorance about health abound!!

Anecdotally , there is the story of Elvis Presley's staffer being told that if the "druggist won't sell you the narcotic then buy the God damned drug store" !

Actual Pharmaceutical Benefit dispensing costs have been constrained and the PBS is succeeding to serve Australia under the present model. Competition exists.

Certain problems and abnormalities do come to mind, and I am sure your Review is addressing these :

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1. Extremely disastrously high rents in shopping centres for pharmacies. (in the past pharmacists have over-offered when times were better)
  2. As patents have expired and fewer new expensive drugs been discovered the level of profits for dispensing has crashed
  3. The government has lowered remuneration
  4. Pharmacist wages are too low and yet graduate expectations are high.
  5. Universities have produced more and more graduates, and graduates of amazingly extended medical education.
  6. "Warehouse-type" establishments cast a bad image.
  7. Where is the place for "Mr or Dr Google", pharmacist advice & publicly acknowledged beneficial exclusivity, the space & place for G.P.s (proper diagnosis before treatment !!)
  8. Does the government & community appreciate the plight of the poor and the sick & what small pharmacies do, can do or should do. Pensioner co-payments too high for the poor.
  9. Difficulty for young pharmacists to buy/start a pharmacy?
- NOW, in my opinion the Location Rules are not hugely to blame but should be kept as they have resulted in BETTER professional care because due to them many/most pharmacies can afford to have TWO qualified pharmacists on duty together. The problem is caused by entrepreneurial pharmacists amassing five or more pharmacies and by the "chains" of multiples. It was always difficult to start or buy a pharmacy and now there is an oversupply of graduates.

A totally "free" market would destroy the pharmacy profession. Also it would destroy a lot of University Pharmacy Schools!! We would not appreciate the status quo until it was destroyed. Too late then!

Yes, compared with most of the English-speaking part of western civilisation the Australian pharmacy scene seems unusual, but it is unusually good for the entire community.

Now, as a post script:

I am independent in my submission but have a wealth of knowledge of business and health.

I once worked in the UK for two years many years ago but remained on the UK register for 30 years keeping abreast of their indemnity incident affairs.

I could anecdotally quote how I have saved a life or two with advice/intervention and have served the local hospice etc at my expense, but will leave this.

I am a retired pharmacist with no pharmacists in my large family. 7 children/step-children/adopted children. 15 grandchildren.

I am almost 80 years of age and about to remove my name from the practising register after 61 years in pharmacy. No future financial interest.

My children include a son who is a practising GP now located in the UK, an operating theatre nurse, school-teachers and accountants.

We consider ourselves true Australians with an interest in the health professions and education.

I have life-memberships and an honorary degrees in pharmacy organisations. (PSWA, PDL Board for 18 years, Guild, PSA and a term on the Cancer Council of WA)

I take a great interest in pharmacy in Italy and Europe.

My grandparents and parents were born in W.A.

I have started, bought, operated and sold many pharmacies in Western Australia during the last sixty years.

Yours faithfully,

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