

Lay, Shannen (Health)

From: Liz Mickan [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 5 September 2014 08:47
To: Health:Minister for Health
Cc: [REDACTED] Geraghty, Maree (Health); Smith, Michele (Health)
Subject: Submission to the Minister for Health. in response to letter from the Hon. The Premier, Jay Weatherill MP.
Attachments: Submission to Health Minister Aug 2014.pdf

Portfolio:			
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Action			

Please find attached Submission to the Minister for Health. Hon Jack Snelling MP.
Regarding the proposed abolition of all statutory boards and committees.

Liz Mickan
Lower Eyre Health Advisory Council
[REDACTED]



Government of South Australia

Lower Eyre Health Advisory Council Inc.

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Cummins & District Memorial Hospital
21 Tumby Bay Road
CUMMINS SA 5631

Tumby Bay Hospital & Health Services
Esplanade
TUMBY BAY SA 5605

SUBMISSION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH, Hon. Jack Snelling MP

From Lower Eyre Health Advisory Council August 2014

**In response to the letter from the Hon. The Premier, Jay Weatherill MP,
8th July 2014 regarding the proposed abolition of all statutory Boards and Committees.**

The Lower Eyre Health Advisory Council has received the Premier's letter and responds to the various points.

Evidence of the value of Lower Eyre Health Advisory Council

Community Engagement evidence.

- The Local hospitals have a requirement under accreditation to prove that they partner with consumers and the HAC is a very important aspect of this – on a day to day basis as well as more widely with things like the surveys as part of the 10 year plan and workshops involved with plan and three year plan.
- Community Consultation using our good relationship with the Port Lincoln Times and local newsletters to get press coverage, and using community radio. During the PATS reviews community engagement was achieved at no cost. Our community was eager to have input and presented a variety of views and accepted the changes to the system knowing that their voices were heard.
- Supportive relationship with our local Councils, and Local Government Representative who attend our meetings, and reports regularly to Council on our activities. We are currently in discussions with District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula regarding Aged Care in Cummins and with the District Council of Tumby Bay regarding Stage 2 re-development Tumby Bay Hospital.
- The Lower Eyre Health Advisory Council's community engagement and community profile, and it's fundraising comes through the establishment of the first hospital to building aged care facilities by community. This sense of ownership of the Local Health Service is paramount for the continued support. Currently LEHAC hold assets of \$10.97K
- Lower Eyre HAC believes it is an integral part of the consumer voice as required by National Safety & Health Quality Standard 2 Partnering with Consumers.

Community Donations

- support of the Cummins and Tumby Bay Local Health Service in purchases of equipment, redecoration and refurbishing and major renovations to both sites
- The high level of financial support given by the Community.
- Confidence amongst the local community that monies raised would be exclusively used for the benefit of local Hospitals, to the extent that since 2008, donations to the local health services from community donations, is in excess of \$600,000.
- it is commonplace for local funerals to request donations to the hospital in lieu of flowers

- This fundraising enables us to buy equipment, undertake renovations and redecorating for the Cummins & Tumby Bay Hospitals and Uringa and Miroma Aged Care Hostels and gives confidence to patients their care and relatives aged loved ones are in the best place.

EFFICIENCY

“is it considered more cost effective to undertake functions in another way?”

Since Health Advisory Councils in 2008, Lower Eyre HAC has been involved with its interface with our community of interest.

- we understand that whilst technically the Health Advisory Councils are zero cost, the presence of CHSA Executives at our meetings is a cost to CHSA. Whilst we appreciate the presence of the Regional Director at our meetings, we believe that it is quite appropriate for this presence to be significantly reduced. If any particular issue arise, her advice and counsel would be sort, but as a general rule, our Minutes of meetings will provide sufficient information to keep her informed of our activities.
- As HAC’s we are to stand on the steps of the Health service and look out to the community. The reports from the Regional Directors are all operational and HAC’s are not required to have this information. Our concerns are our Local Health Services.

INDEPENDENCE

“do the functions require a level of separation from government to ensure objectivity?”

The Lower Eyre HAC is convinced that functions of the HAC are better served by maintaining a level of separation from government.

- From the Health Advisory Councils in 2008, we have presented ourselves as advocates for our community in health services. Being volunteers and members of the community, we are able to encompass objectivity and a level of trust in changes to health services not experienced by government officials.
- Without a community elected, voluntary HAC the government will not have any certainty that the community’s voice has been properly heard, and the Premier’s wish to improve the way government engages with community will have a poorer outcome.

AMALGAMATION

“Could the functions of our Health Advisory Council be merged with another or could its functions be carried out in an alternative way.”

We don’t believe a single merged Eyre Peninsula HAC could have the same result as a specific local representative HAC for the following reasons:

- Rural towns are unique – their very existence depends upon their citizens supporting each other and supporting the necessary organisations in their towns. They are individual, and one town is not like another, their productivity, their populations, their demographics and their income levels. Each town must be examined individually to determine its needs.
- A combined HAC will lessen Cummins & Tumby Bay’s voice. Lower Eyre HAC Members are made up of a complete cross section of our community of interest. Each member brings a specific set of skills to the table, and a different perspective to the group, and thus we have a broad access to information about the needs and wants of the whole community. HAC members are volunteers; most have full time jobs or other day time responsibilities.

- Cummins & Tumby Bay communities have a history of fighting to retain their hospitals, health services and Aged Care facilities. These are regarded as essential parts of the town infrastructure. Cummins & Tumby Bay residents generously donate to the Local Health Services, and trust the Health Advisory Council to spend in line with the community expectations.
- If the Lower Eyre HAC is merged into an Eyre Peninsula HAC, that close link between the community and the Lower Eyre HAC will evaporate, and the community will no longer have the confidence to donate to the Health Services.
- Lower Eyre HAC rejects amalgamation because of the legal issue of land titles. In 2009, the transfer all country hospital land titles into the name of relevant HAC's was a shattering decision to communities. The land which the hospitals and Aged Care Facilities stand was gifted to the community for Health Care Services. In the minds of Cummins & Tumby Bay residents, the Health Service Facilities should always be the possession of the Community. CHSA's 2009 decision to transfer Land Titles to the name of Lower Eyre Health Advisory Council Inc. on behalf of the Minister was seen by community as an asset grab. Community believe these assets should be held by a local organisation, not regional Government with a peppercorn lease back to the CHSA on the proviso they are maintained to operational standards. Currently LEHAC hold \$10.97K of assets.
- If Lower Eyre HAC becomes amalgamated into an Eyre Peninsula HAC, then Lower Eyre HAC will cease to exist and the land titles will have to be changed again. Knowing as we do the strength of the community's feelings about the need for the name Cummins & Tumby Bay Lower Eyre HAC to be on the land title, we can be certain that an amalgamated HAC will not be accepted by the community.

ALTERNATIVE MODEL

"Could the Lower Eyre HAC function be carried out in an alternative way?"

We considered this aspect of the Premier's letter, but were unable to find a solution that will give the community the same input and confidence into matters affecting their hospital, with as little cost.

We note that the Premier is enthusiastic about using electronic and social media, -

"Community expectations today favour a direct say, transparency, immediacy and greater use of technology to enable collaboration in public policy development".

- While modern technology may suit younger people, in small country towns like Cummins & Tumby Bay that have an ageing population, many being the major users of the areas health services, this form is ineffective. These people prefer face to face conversations, they come to our public meetings, and they are not IT literate. If they are denied a HAC to inform and listen to their opinions and wishes, they will not be heard or informed.
- As Minister of Health you have, in the Health Advisory Councils, an excellent resource of community centred, local input not available to any other Minister, and at minimal cost. Individual HACs are in touch with their communities directly, unlike larger, centralised or regionalised committees.
- Lower Eyre HAC embody the concept of community ambassadors as outlined in Section 4 Partnerships in the Draft Strategic Plan 2014-2019 and look forward to being part of an active partnership with Health.

HOW COULD WE IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF OUR FUNCTIONS?

- The Advance Care Directives Package is now being promoted. There is no reason why HACs should not be able to run public information sessions to inform the community about the ACD Package – it is a difficult topic for individuals to process on their own, and the Health Advisory Council is the kind of supportive community group able to assist residents with comprehending the package. This is active community engagement by local volunteers.

SUMMARY

The Lower Eyre Health Advisory Council is

- Cost effective
- Independent of Government
- Opposed to amalgamation
- Most effective and efficient form of community consultation
- Legal entity of the community owned assets.

We have therefore fulfilled the requirements of our functions as a Health Advisory Council as a voluntary body in the most efficient way that is current, modern, efficient and cost effective. The value of the Lower Eyre HAC cannot be disputed.

Lower Eyre HAC asks the Minister to recommend we be exempt from the Premiers intended list of boards and committees to be abolished.



**Elizabeth M Mickan
Presiding Member
Lower Eyre Health Advisory Council.**