

Dr Jacqueline Goodall  
Legislation and Policy Officer  
Legislation Review  
Public Health  
Department of Human Services  
GPO Box 1670N  
Melbourne  
Vic 3001



04/11/04

Dear Dr Goodall,

I would like to make a submission to the Review of the Health Act 1958: A new legislative framework for public health in Victoria - A discussion paper.

The name of Act be renamed "The Victorian Population Health Act 2005/06".

Some matters which are legislated in other Acts which should be included are the Cancer Act 1958 and Victorian Health Promotion Foundation under the Tobacco Act 1987. The new Act should recognise the importance of promoting public health and also funded to do so and lead debate amongst the community. The new Act should also recognise the need to address inequalities in health and well being of disadvantaged communities. It should do this by having more infrastructure such as a new hospital. The funding should come from the next round of the medicare funding agreement. The Act should also include looking after the environment as well. Issues should include climate change and air pollution. The Act should have a statement that the function of the secretary is to implement policies and programs to achieve the

objectives of the Act. The Secretary should have the power to conduct inquiries into matters of public health concern.

The new Act should retain the functions for municipal councils as set out in the current Act. The new Act should recognise municipal councils role in Planning, advocating and providing organised public health programs. They also ~~Development~~ and implement strategies to protect and improve public health and promote community health and well being. The Act should also recognise that they need funding to carry them out.

The partnership between state and local government and between government and non-government be addressed in the new act.

The Act should place greater emphasis ~~on~~ implementing the MPHP and achieving its outcomes rather than just developing a document. This can be by allowing new ideas to be generated, with more allowance on trial and error. The Act should require that municipal councils set out how they intend to complete their statutory functions in the MPHPs. The Act must retain the requirement to prepare MPHPs at set intervals and to review MPHPs annually in consultation with the Department of human services. The Local government reporting requirements be retained under the new Act. They should be still every 4 years and update annually inline with the financial year. The value will be healthy population, flexibility, able to change things due to technology. finances and try something new. The MPHP be linked to other planning processes within local, state and federal government. The Act should retain the MOH. The MOH should represent the council on health matters and must keep up to date on health research and publish where possible.

The EHO who is appointed by a council automatically be an authorised officer for the purposes of the Act. The new Act must require specific qualifications and/or experience for a appointment as an EHO. That qualifications should be a PhD. If there is a shortage qualified people the local state jointly ask for the federal government to provide University places to cover shortfall. There should be funding also cover shortfall. There should be funding also cover it to need to update their existing qualifications. They also need give time off to get to their University. That raises the question if their people required to take their position while they are away that should require funding.

The provisions for consultative councils consolidated in the new Act to provide general provisions regarding establishment and functions of all consultative councils. They would need a provision to make new consultative councils and they should have access to library of their own. It should seven days a week all year round. They should have a new consultative council on climate change.

In the act there should be a separate requirement for HIA to be introduced in the new Act: any new free-way and highway Petrol Refineries, mine sites and power stations.

Yours sincerely

Mick Pastalatzis

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