



**THE HEALTH
ROUNDTABLE**

Office:- The Health Roundtable Ltd
40 Port Jackson Road
Terrigal NSW 2260
www.healthroundtable.org

15 April 2016

Dr Stephen Duckett
Chair, Review of Hospital Safety and Quality Assurance in Victoria
Department of Health and Human Services
50 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000

Dear Dr Duckett

Review of hospital safety and quality assurance in Victoria

I appreciate that the date for comments to the Review Panel in relation to the discussion paper closed on 8 April, however, following discussions with some senior representatives of The Health Roundtable last week, I am providing the following comments.

The Health Roundtable is an organisation that is committed to sharing innovations and ideas that will improve the quality and safety of hospital services provided to patients, and the community in general. By running workshops and sharing benchmarking data The Health Roundtable are in a unique position to observe innovations that grow from an initial good idea through to best practice that is adopted widely by health services.

I understand that your Review Panel has already received a number of submissions that have made suggestions about ways in which improvements can occur in Victorian hospitals, especially for maternity services. On behalf of The Health Roundtable I would like to offer an observation from our various activities that should be of use to your review.

Over the last few years, many of our member hospitals have observed the benefit of having patients / consumers of health services on hospital committees, particularly those that discuss safety and quality of service provision. The concept of having patients and consumers on hospital committees is not new, as patients and consumers have been on mental health service panels and committees for around 20 years. What is new is having patients and consumers on a wide variety of hospital service committees where there can be direct input to influence the quality and safety of hospital services. In some cases, hospitals are encouraging two such representatives on some committees.

Many of our member hospitals that have utilised patient and consumer representation on a wide variety of internal committees have reported that such input has had a catalytic effect in alerting hospitals to issues that the hospital may have been unaware of, or not considered significant. With such input, hospitals have gained not only valuable understanding of important problem issues, but also evidence that has helped support hospital activities that aim to change inappropriate entrenched cultures and behaviours of staff. We have also noted that this is a growing trend in a number of other countries including the United Kingdom and other countries in Europe.

By encouraging such involvement in hospital committees, it is possible that many more improvements in services could occur and potentially help reduce adverse events from occurring in Victorian hospitals.

Should you require any additional information either I, or Dr John Menzies, General Manager of The Health Roundtable would be happy to meet with you.

Yours sincerely

Professor Andrew Way
President, Board of Directors
The Health Roundtable