



queenslandpositivepeople

QPP

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Senate Finance and Public Administration Committees

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Inquiry into the Government's administration of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)

Queensland Positive People (QPP) is the peak state-wide, peer and community-based, not-for-profit organisation funded by Queensland Health to provide a range of services including advocacy, peer support & self-help activities and treatments & health promotion information to people living with HIV (PLHIV) and those affected by HIV throughout Queensland.

I write to express QPP's strong and unreserved endorsement of the position outlined in the letter to you from the National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS (NAPWA) dated 12 July 2011.

Like NAPWA, QPP also believes that the deferral of listing for drugs recommended for the PBS is short-sighted and we are similarly troubled that this sets an unwelcome and worrying precedent which interferes with the regulatory approval arrangements. QPP also strongly supports a reversal of these decisions and a strengthening of commitment to the PBS listing process that maintains the integrity of that process.

For QPP, this issue should *never* be a political one. Interfering with the ready access to a range of sometimes complex but life-saving treatment regimens and medications means we are literally talking about the difference between wellness and illness – or in some cases between life and death. From our point of view, this is not a melodramatic exaggeration. It is, however, a serious challenge to our ongoing health and wellbeing which, as vigorous PLHIV advocates, we are extremely alarmed about.

Accordingly, we join with NAPWA in strongly urging the Australian government to return immediately to the established and proven PBS processes in place prior to February 2011.

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We are more than happy to speak or meet with Australian government representatives at any time to discuss QPP's position and to contribute constructively to a review of your decision.

We are also very keen to provide you with any additional information which may assist you with your deliberations.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Simon O'Connor
General Manager /