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The Honourable Yvette D'Ath
Minister for Health and Ambulance Services
1 William Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

By email: health@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Dear Minister D'Ath

Please find enclosed a copy of *AMA Queensland's Survey Report on the Urinary Tract Infection Pharmacy Pilot Queensland and North Queensland Pharmacy Scope of Practice Pilot*.

In the absence of information about outcomes from the Queensland-wide UTI pilot, and in the context of the Pharmacy Guild's public spruiking of the pilot's 'success', AMA Queensland invited doctors to participate in a survey of their patients' experiences of the UTI pilot. This survey also sought their views on the proposed expansion of the pilot that would enable pharmacists to diagnose, prescribe and dispense medications for 23 conditions in North Queensland (the NQ Pharmacy Pilot).

Over 1,300 doctors participated in our survey. These doctors include both AMA Queensland members and non-members. They represent different craft groups, and come from a broad range of geographic areas across Queensland.

The survey results are alarming.

They provide shocking insights into misdiagnoses, missed diagnoses, and serious patient complications following treatment through the pilot.

At least six pregnant women were given antibiotics that are unsafe in the first trimester of pregnancy. For one of these women, her ectopic pregnancy was misdiagnosed and treated as a UTI. Numerous patients had cancer, or pre-cancerous conditions, misdiagnosed and treated as UTIs. At least nine patients ended up in hospital with complications following pharmacist treatment, primarily for sepsis and bladder or kidney infections. Complications were also reported for male patients following participation in the pilot, when the pilot was specifically limited to female patients.

The Pilot and Consortium Lead, Professor Lisa Nissen, is quoted as saying '[N]obody's died. It's a good pilot as far as the State Government is concerned'¹.

AMA Queensland holds a number of serious concerns regarding the UTI pilot.

Firstly, as evidenced by hundreds of incidents of adverse outcomes, the Government has failed in its duty of care to ensure appropriate clinical care for participants in the UTI pilot.

Secondly, the Government failed to adequately and appropriately inform or engage with medical stakeholders to ensure that doctors were aware of the pilot and were provided with a clear mechanism to report patient complications.

¹ [Pharmacists prescribing antibiotics for UTIs 'to be made permanent' | Australian Doctor Group \(ausdoc.com.au\)](#)

Thirdly, the lack of transparency about the evaluation of the pilot begs serious questions about the standards and practices employed throughout the pilot. These questions include whether appropriate clinical record-keeping was required of pharmacists, especially in comparison with the record-keeping requirements satisfied by doctors, and whether it is appropriate for the pharmacist who delivered the pilot service to also conduct the review of the patient's experience.

The shocking clinical outcomes from the UTI pilot fuel deep reservations among the medical community about the NQ Pharmacy Pilot, which will mark a significant deviation from national healthcare policies and frameworks. The medical profession and Queenslanders at large deserve to know how patient safety will be ensured.

Given the NQ Pharmacy Pilot will operate in contravention of Commonwealth legislation and outside of accepted clinical practice in other jurisdictions, doctors and the public should be made aware of when and how the Government intends to change Queensland's laws to facilitate the NQ Pharmacy Pilot.

AMA Queensland contends that QUT's evaluation of the UTI pilot, and the Government's plans for implementing the NQ Pharmacy Pilot (including when and how legislation will be amended) should be subject to appropriate scrutiny from the medical profession and the public.

We request that this information be shared as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely



Professor Chris Perry OAM
President
AMA Queensland



Dr Brett Dale
Chief Executive Officer
AMA Queensland

Enclosure: AMA Queensland's Survey Report on the Urinary Tract Infection Pharmacy Pilot Queensland and North Queensland Pharmacy Scope of Practice Pilot

CC:

The Honourable Anastacia Palaszczuk MP, Premier and Minister for the Olympics

Mr David Crisafulli MP, Leader of the Opposition, Shadow Minister for Tourism, and Shadow Minister for Olympics and Paralympics

Ms Ros Bates MP, Shadow Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, Shadow Minister for Medical Research, Shadow Minister for Women