



Metro North
Hospital and Health Service

File number: J20/4378

Mr John Robertson
Chair
Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council
GPO Box 2360
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Email: QSAC-Policy@sentencingcouncil.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Robertson

Thank you for your letter dated 7 May 2020 addressed to Dr John Wakefield, Director-General of Queensland Health regarding the recent release of the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council's Issues Paper on penalties for assaults on public officers in response to the Terms of Reference issued by the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, the Honourable Yvette D'Ath MP. Your letter has been forwarded to me for response direct.

Queensland Health welcomes the inquiry into this matter and is acutely aware that occupational violence inflicted on public officers in all its forms are damaging to individuals, service provision and the broader community. Queensland Health supports efforts to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all public officers, including health professionals. Queensland Health supports legal frameworks that acknowledge the critical role that frontline staff play in supporting community health and well-being, holding perpetrators of serious assaults to account, and deterring others from offending.

Whilst Queensland Health is not in a position to advise on any specifics of how this may be done, the work must ensure that the right balance is struck between the protection of health workers and the fair administration of justice. Queensland Health supports strong messaging to the community about the value of health workers.

Queensland Health has opted to only provide responses to the questions in the Issues Paper that directly impact frontline workers, which is collated in the attached submission. Input to the response from Queensland Health has been provided by the following key stakeholders:

- Office for Prisoner Health and Wellbeing (OPHW)
- Queensland Health Victim Support Service (QHVSS)
- Office of the Chief Nurse and Midwifery Officer (OCNMO)
- Hospital and Health Service Chief Executives and Executive Directors of Workforce
- Hospital and Health Service employees

Additionally, the Queensland Occupational Violence Strategy Unit (QOVSU) has undertaken extensive consultation across Queensland Health to allow for a broad response to this complex and challenging topic. Noting that it was of particular interest to QSAC, QOVSU invited staff all across the state to share their stories. These raw and confronting anecdotes have been de-identified and collated in the attached appendix.

Should you require further information, Queensland Health's contact is [REDACTED]

Your sincerely

[REDACTED]
Shaun Drummond
Chief Executive, Metro North Hospital and Health Service
Chair, Occupational Violence Implementation Committee

18 / 6 / 2020

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