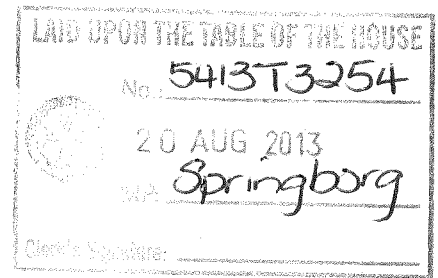


20/8/13

Health and Community Services Committee

Health Ombudsman Bill 2013 Report No. 27

Government Response



Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the Health Ombudsman Bill 2013 be passed.

Government response: Supported

The Government thanks the Committee for its consideration of the Health Ombudsman Bill 2013 and its recommendation to the Parliament to pass the Bill.

Recommendation 2

The committee recommends that the Minister inform the Legislative Assembly during the second reading debate of the steps that will be taken to avoid confusion about roles, duplication of effort and delays with matters referred to AHPRA and the National Boards. In particular, the committee requests further clarification about whether the Health Ombudsman may:

- require the National Board to refer a matter back to the Health Ombudsman, if the National Board does not notify the Health Ombudsman of a serious matter, and
- when considering a serious matter, require a health practitioner to undergo a health assessment, for example, a drugs test.

Government response: Supported

The Minister for Health will advise the Legislative Assembly on this matter during the second reading debate.

Recommendation 3

The committee recommends that the Minister inform the Legislative Assembly during the second reading debate of his vision for the system of oversight, monitoring and review of the health complaints management system.

Government response: Supported

The Minister for Health will advise the Legislative Assembly on this matter during the second reading debate.

Comments

Committee comment 1

The committee does not recommend any changes to the statutory timeframes for complaint management in the Bill. The committee, in its proposed oversight role, anticipates it will monitor the appropriateness of complaint management timeframes, and anticipates that the Health Ombudsman and the Minister will do the same.

Government response: Noted

The Government agrees that this is an appropriate matter for the Committee to monitor as part of its statutory oversight functions established under the Bill.

Committee comment 2

The committee anticipates that, as part of its proposed oversight role, it will monitor the Health Ombudsman's performance in conciliation, including the time taken to finalise conciliations.

Government response: Noted

The Government agrees that this is an appropriate matter for the Committee to monitor as part of its statutory oversight functions established under the Bill.

Committee comment 3

The committee anticipates that, as part of its proposed oversight role, it will monitor the Health Ombudsman's use of the power to publish investigation reports, in particular the circumstances in which personal and confidential information about health practitioners is published.

Government response: Noted

The Government agrees that this is an appropriate matter for the Committee to monitor as part of its statutory oversight functions established under the Bill.

Statement of Reservation

The Government acknowledges that the Deputy Chair of the Committee and the Member for Gaven have provided statements of reservation in lieu of agreement with the Committee's recommendations.