

3 November 2017

Professor Bronwyn Fredericks
Commissioner
Queensland Productivity Commission
By email: enquiry@qpc.qld.gov.au

Dear Commissioner

Draft report: Service delivery in remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

UnitingCare Queensland is a leading provider of health and community services across the state, including specialised services to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities. We are committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Queensland. We believe that reconciliation is a journey for everyone and is alive through our commitment and the passion of our people to make a difference.

Our recently launched Third Reconciliation Action Plan challenges us to deepen our connections and partnerships at a local level with Elders and community members, to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and to give them, and our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, a voice across all levels of our organisation.

As such, we welcome the opportunity to comment on the Commission's draft report.

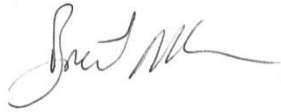
We support the underlying principle of the reform proposal; that community members are best placed to inform and drive change in their community. Our role as a service provider is to support communities to build their own capacity and capability to live safe, healthy and productive lives. It is critical to listen to and work in partnership with community to develop place-based solutions to do this successfully and sustain better outcomes.

The Commission's recommendations call for fundamental changes to the way in which the Queensland Government procures services that support remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We believe that these recommendations will lead to improved life outcomes for remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities if they are implemented within an appropriate timeframe, which will need to extend beyond the usual political cycle, and supported by a commitment to sustain adequate investment.

The draft report reflects the Commission's deep understanding of community and culture. In order for the Queensland Government to fully consider the recommendations it will be important to ensure that decision makers have a similar depth of knowledge and cultural proficiency. This will also be critical to successful implementation of the proposed reforms.

UnitingCare Queensland stands ready to further support the work of the Commission. If you have any questions about the issues raised in this submission please contact Nina MacKenzie, Engagement and Development Manager, on 0428 349 914 or nina.mackenzie@ucommunity.org.au

Yours sincerely



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