

29 March 2004

Mr. George O'Farrell
Acting Public Service Commissioner
Office of the Public Service Commissioner
PO Box 190
BRISBANE QLD 4002

**Private and Confidential-
Director-General Department of Health VRN 20/04 CEO Position**

Dear Mr O'Farrell

I have a vision for Queensland Health.

Until recently, Queensland Health has focussed heavily on fiscal management. While this approach has been successful in securing the bottom line, it has suppressed the organisation's ability to respond appropriately to the emerging challenges facing the Queensland health system. This has also resulted in a disaffected workforce, a lack of innovative problem solving, strained relationships with other government agencies and a lack of public confidence in the system's capability.

In this risk averse environment, Queensland Health has lacked strategic direction and become defensive, focussing on issues management rather than system improvement. Consequently the culture has been one of blame.

I bring to the position a palpably different style of leadership. I believe that leadership by influence produces sustainable system change as opposed to the previous command and control approach. I delegate within a clearly articulated performance framework. I require the organisation's leaders to manage up instead of merely executing directions. I promote and develop healthy relationships based on trust and respect in a just culture as essential factors for success.

I have already engaged most senior managers within the corporate and operational environment to reshape the mission, vision and statements of strategic intent for Queensland Health. We have committed to and are implementing an integrated strategy and performance framework to ensure alignment with a strategic direction.

I will strengthen our organisational responsiveness by amalgamating the current dislocated areas of organisational development, the Skills Development Centre, safety and quality, e-health/telehealth and workforce reform into a Innovation and Improvement Branch. I am introducing an innovation fund for staff to take "good ideas" to system applicability.

I do not accept that there is a crisis in health but there can be no doubt about a crisis in public confidence. To assist in addressing this issue and improving our relationship with our staff, I am reviewing the function and capability of our media and communications unit to move beyond complaints management and proactively engage the media, our staff and our communities. In parallel, I have committed to building a positive relationship with other CEOs, fostered collaborative forums with major stakeholders such as the AMA, unions, the private health care sector, the tertiary education sector and the Queensland Cancer Fund, and promoted staff input and information sessions.

I am optimistic about our future. I enjoy a close working relationship with the Minister and his staff and I have an abundance of energy for the challenge ahead while maintaining a balance between my personal and professional life.

I look forward to the opportunity to detail my vision and discuss the future direction of Queensland Health at interview.

Yours sincerely



Dr. Stephen M Buckland
MBBS, MHA, FAFOM (RACP) DavMed, MRACMA, AFCHSE