



Mallee Track Health & Community Service

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To whom it may concern,

Mallee Track Health and Community Service (MTHCS) would like to submit a response to the Introducing Competition and Informed User Choice into Human Services: Identifying Sectors for Reform.

MTHCS is a Multipurpose service (MPS) - a public sector entity legislated to provide aged care services in rural North West Victoria. Our health service is also a provider of a range of other services such as:

- Public Dental
- Family Service
- Early Childhood Education and Care – kindergartens and long day care
- Early Year Manager (EYM)
- Allied Health Services
- HACC services
- Commonwealth Home Support Packages

Whilst welcoming the introduction of consumer choice, the preliminary findings of the report:

- Lack clarity on the impact of the introduction of competition and user choice in rural areas – particularly where there is thin market or potential market failure
- Where there may be opportunities for public sector entities in rural areas, such as MPS', as a solution for ensuring a provider. In particular, we reference this quote from the findings : "For some services, and in some settings, direct government provision of services will be the best way to improve the wellbeing of individuals and families

The introduction of competition and informed user choice in Human Services, particularly in the rural context need to consider:

- the small nature of cohorts;
- the bounding of populations;
- where opportunities for supporting existing entities may exist to balance consumer competition and choice – and potential market failure

In response to the Preliminary Findings Report, MTHCS has prepared a paper (as attached) which details a potential model for consideration by the commission. Our proposal for a policy response is specific to rural areas where there is potential for market failure. MTHCS is a multipurpose service (MPS) – a model which has been around for 20 years and has addressed improved outcomes in the aged care sector. Our belief as an organisation is that the MPS model is a solid solution which we commend for consideration across the age range and lifespan in the rural context.

Thankyou for the opportunity to provide a response to the enquiry.

Kind regards

Lois O'Callaghan

Director of Community Services