



## Public Submission Cover Sheet

Please complete this sheet and submit with any attachments to the Sustainable Health Review Secretariat

<b>Your Personal Details</b>	
<i>This information will be used only for contacting you in relation to this submission</i>	
<b>Title</b>	Mr <input type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs <input type="checkbox"/> Ms <input type="checkbox"/> Dr <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Organisation</b>	Mars Petcare Australia
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<b>Publication of Submissions</b>	
<i>Please note all Public Submissions will be published unless otherwise selected below</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not want my submission published <input type="checkbox"/> I would like my submission to be published but remain anonymous	
<b>Submission Guidance</b>	
<p><b>You are encouraged to address the following question:</b></p> <p><b>In the context of the Sustainable Health Review Terms of Reference listed below, what is needed to develop a more sustainable, patient centred health system in WA?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leveraging existing investment in Primary, Secondary and Tertiary healthcare, as well as new initiatives to improve patient centred service delivery, pathways and transition;</li> <li>• The mix of services provided across the system, including gaps in service provision, sub-acute, step-down, community and other out-of-hospital services across WA to deliver care in the most appropriate setting and to maximise health outcomes and value to the public;</li> <li>• Ways to encourage and drive digital innovation, the use of new technology, research and data to support patient centred care and improved performance;</li> <li>• Opportunities to drive partnerships across sectors and all levels of government to reduce duplication and to deliver integrated and coordinated care;</li> <li>• Ways to drive improvements in safety and quality for patients, value and financial sustainability, including cost drivers, allocative and technical efficiencies;</li> <li>• The key enablers of new efficiencies and change, including, research, productivity, teaching and training, culture, leadership development, procurement and improved performance monitoring;</li> <li>• Any further opportunities concerning patient centred service delivery and the sustainability of the WA health system.</li> </ul>	

### Submissions Response Field

*Please type your response into the field below. Alternatively you may provide your submissions as a separate attachment (Suggested Maximum 5 pages).*

#### Mars Petcare Australia submission to the 2017 WA Sustainable Health Review

Dear SHR Secretariat,

Mars Petcare Australia is one of the largest manufacturers of petcare products in Australia. We are also one of the largest regional employers in the country, employing 1,000 Associates across Albury-Wodonga, Bathurst, Wacol, Sydney and Melbourne. We believe passionately in the positive, community enhancing power of pets.

Mars Petcare's vision is to make a better world for pets by making healthy, safe, nutritious food that pets love. We believe that our responsibility extends far beyond the quality of our products, to promoting the overall health and wellbeing of pets through responsible pet ownership, while also promoting the positive benefits that having a pet can have on individuals and communities.

Pets are proven to provide a number of wellbeing benefits to their owners, as studies have shown that pets, particularly dogs:

- provide companionship, company, affection and emotional closeness to their owners,
- help people with disabilities to communicate and function<sup>1</sup>,
- build bridges and social capital in communities<sup>2</sup>,
- are strongly correlated with a broad range of physical and psychological health benefits – from better cardiovascular health to lower rates of depression and stronger social connectedness.

In fact, pets are such positive influences on the lives of humans that that **one study estimated that Australian cat and dog ownership saves the public health system an estimated \$2 billion per year<sup>3</sup>**. Individually, each pet owner saves the health system \$700 per year, or \$104 million annually in WA<sup>4</sup>, as

<sup>1</sup> Hart, L.A., Hart, B.L. and Bergin B (1987) "Socialising effects of service dogs for people with disabilities" *Anthrozoos*, 1, 41-44

<sup>2</sup> Wood, L, Giles-Corti, B, Bulsara, M (2005) "The pet connection: pets as a conduit for social capital?" *Social Science and Medicine* 61, 1159-1173

<sup>3</sup> (July 2017) "Healthcare Economics of Pets", Commissioned report by Blue Green Economics.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

a result of fewer doctor visits and associated health costs, such as fewer specialist appointments and hospital visits.

The West Australian Government has stated that it intends to support patient-centred, joined up approaches to help take the pressure off increasing healthcare costs for the state, an approach that we applaud. Initiatives in preventative health and encouraging people to make more healthy lifestyle choices also support the objective of reducing healthcare costs; fewer people needing healthcare services takes demand-side pressure off the system. Supporting the health of people in urban areas therefore includes ensuring there are enough walking tracks, parks and off-leash areas to encourage West Australians to get outside and enjoy the full benefits of pet ownership. Integrating pets into our lives, such as in aged care facilities and on public transportation, greatly impacts on the ability of vulnerable sectors of society to continue accessing the benefits of pet ownership. We encourage the Government to consider these issues as part of the Review as well as issues relating to the delivery of health services.

Australia already has one of the highest rates of pet ownership in the world, but environments unfriendly to pets are meaning that fewer Australians are getting the benefits of pet ownership now than in the past. Across all levels of government, it is essential that policymakers take into account how their decisions will impact those with pets or those thinking about getting one.

Mars Petcare is pleased to have the chance to contribute to this discussion, helping support healthy choices for Australians. We would welcome further engagement regarding this issue to help promote the benefits of pet ownership to all West Australians.

Kind Regards,



Sophie Anning  
Corporate Affairs Director  
Mars Petcare Australia