

**INQUIRY INTO VETERINARY WORKFORCE SHORTAGE
IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I'm a veterinarian who graduated in 2019. Prior to that I spend 8 years nursing. I work in small animal and welfare clinics.

In that time I have noticed a huge change in attitudes by the public towards veterinary professionals. When I started veterinary professionals were far more respected however this has deteriorated with more and more people choosing aggressive behaviours towards us.

A huge issue I believe is the cost of medication. A lot of the medications we use are from the human industry. However by the time they reach a veterinary wholesaler the cost is often double to triple the price of buying direct from a chemist (and paying non PBS prices). This also holds true with consumables such as basic bandaging supplies, needles and syringes etc. A common complaint from aggravated clients is over the cost of medications and consumables. I feel that this is an area that would benefit from a government enquiry and maybe better regulation. It's reasonable to expect that support in this area would flow into better owner/client satisfaction.

Another issue is the lack of registration and indemnity of nurses. At this point in time anything a nurse does wrong falls against the vet. Whereas in human nursing, the nurses themselves can be held accountable for their actions. This leaves many vets hesitant to ask their nurses to do more, examples including placing an animal on intravenous fluids, give medications, prepare medications. My hope would be that registration and accountability would help alleviate the concerns of vets so they can focus on more pressing concerns. This would also be a good time to review what procedures a nurse can and can't do. Many forward thinking clinics allow nurses to do procedures such as inducing anaesthesia, taking x-rays and doing basic dental procedures whilst under a vets supervision. If we could allow for nurses to do these things unsupervised it would help increase nurse job satisfaction and reduce veterinarian workload. Ideally being able to have 2 nurses do a task originally requiring a vet and a nurse would make said procedure cheaper.

Understandably if these changes were made I would like there to be a way to guarantee that any cost reductions are passed to owners.