

**Submission
No 72**

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

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I have struggled to pay vet costs especially at afterhours facilities. I have volunteered for wildlife rescue and had a lot of trouble finding vets that are affordable and qualified to help treat these animals. I have backyard chickens and it is very difficult to find a qualified avian vet to help them when they are sick.

Vets are undervalued in society, they aren't paid enough for the work they do but most people in society also can't afford the costs they charge. Most people don't understand the costs of medical care when it isn't subsidised and a vet is trying to run a small business. This results in vets experiencing abuse from the public and pets not receiving the care they need. I'm not surprised by the high suicide rate of vets. I thought of becoming a vet but was completely dissuaded when I learnt how emotionally hard and underpaid the job is.

I have had many conversations with vets and they have explained that it is difficult to run a vet clinic when routine practices aren't performed to cover the costs of more advanced work. Routine practices such as microchipping, vaccination, desexing, health checks etc. Helping with these basic pet care requirements that all pets should receive by a registered vet clinic will help boost the industry.

Choice organisation has shown that there are some very dodgy vet insurance companies taking advantage of people. This needs to be better regulated so that the pets don't suffer. Why can't there be a not-for-profit pet insurance company to help people provide the medical care their pets need.

It is good that there are emergency vets open after hours such as nights and weekends but I have found these places charge a very high fee for services, I've had many people tell me about how they have had to kill their pets because the cost to treat was thousands. When they talk to their regular vets about how much that would have cost not after hours, it is only a small fraction of the cost. I'm concerned about the cost some emergency vets are charging and how this is negatively impacting on pets in our society. Most regular vets don't do any after hours work now.