

Good essay on commercialisation of the Australian healthcare system

[Parts of the World](#), [Australia](#)



The Australian healthcare system is one of the most efficient healthcare systems in the developed world. According to a comparative health study of six nations funded by the commonwealth fund and conducted in 2005, Australia ranked the highest in quality healthcare scoring either the first or the second position in all the indicators used (Davis, 2007). Both the private entities and the national government through the ministry of health provide the Australian healthcare services. The ministry of health oversees the delivery of national health policy through the state governments. The government provides subsidized healthcare services through various initiatives including the Medicare initiative and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme that provide either full subsidy or partial subsidy depending on the income status of the beneficiary. Even though the Australian healthcare system is excellent by international standards, there have been domestic calls to commercialise the healthcare system in order to realise the full potential of the healthcare industry. The commercialisation of healthcare is not the answer to the delivery of healthcare and healthier population in Australia.

According to the Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes (AAMRI), commercialisation is the employment of commercial partnerships in the development and delivery of drugs, delivery of services for the benefit of the patients (Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes, 2012). It includes the involvement of a diverse scope of stakeholders in the healthcare industry. This ranges from the pharmaceutical companies, the biomedical research entities and the hospitals. According to the 2005/2006 census, healthcare statistics were such that the ratio of doctors to patients was 1 to

322 . The 2013 census established that there were 70, 200 qualified doctors and 257, 200 registered nurses in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013). Other statistics from the global burden of disease study released in 2013, Australia has the third highest life expectancy rate in the world. The compounding of these factors provides the most appropriate environment for the commercialisation of a healthcare system. However, this is not the way to go for the Australian healthcare system due to a myriad of factors.

First, commercialisation of healthcare is associated with increased costs of the healthcare services. In their endeavour to provide competitive health services, the commercial entities provide extra amenities and personalised services to the patients. While this is a good thing, it comes with a cost. The main motive of the commercial entities is to make profits. Therefore, the extra amenities and the personalised services come at an extra cost. This cost is borne by the patient. The overall effect is that commercialisation will see the healthcare services becoming more expensive. When healthcare services become expensive, less people can afford them.

It is important to take cognisance of the fact that a proper health service system is not only a basic human need but also a human right. Every citizen has the right to access proper social amenities. The commercialisation of health services will jeopardize these rights. Therefore, the commercialisation of the health services in the Australian healthcare system is not the answer to the delivery of a healthy population.

Secondly, the commercialisation of the healthcare services will have an effect to the accessibility of health services in Australia. As mentioned above, the commercial entities have a primary goal of making profits as they

provide the respective health services. The level of income determines the demographic distribution patterns. High-income earners inhabit urban areas while low-income earners occupy remote areas. Therefore, the commercial entities are likely to establish more healthcare facilities in the urban areas where the incomes are higher at the expense of other areas with lower incomes. The profit margins for the urban areas are higher than in the non-urban areas. Unlike the profit margin, the need for proper health services is not dependent on the level of income. All citizens, regardless of their income status, require proper health services. Therefore, commercialisation will see poor accessibility of healthcare services to people living in low income areas due to the low profit margins associated with the operation in such areas. In addition to this, the commercialisation of patented medical research results will see a cost attached to life saving inventions made by the Australian medical practitioners. It will also add bureaucracy to the provision of healthcare services (Committee for Economic Development of Australia, 2013). This means that the new inventions will go to the highest bidder in most times. In the current system, biomedical research is for academic purposes (Committee for Economic Development of Australia, 2013). The inventions are used for the good of the public without the placing of a price tag on them. This is what catapulted Australia to the pinnacle of healthy nations in the world. However, the commercialisation will see the inventions used only for the benefit of those who can afford them. The overall effect is an inefficient healthcare system that only serves one portion of the population. Therefore, the commercialisation of the healthcare system in Australia is not the answer to the delivery of a healthy population.

Third, the commercialisation of the healthcare system in Australia will see the neglect of the government health policies and facilities. Due to the profitability of the commercialised sector, more and more of the practitioners will drift towards private practice. This will lead to the shortage of personnel in the government facilities. In addition to this, the unhealthy competition will render the government incentives less popular. The net effect of this is the gradual negligence of the government funded healthcare system. The services in the government public health amenities will become poor leading to challenges in the provision of proper health services. Therefore, commercialisation is not the answer to the delivery of healthcare services. Lastly, the commercialisation of the Australian healthcare system is not necessary. The existing system is efficient by international measures. According to a study on the end of life care carried out by the Economist intelligence unit, Australia emerged on top of the forty countries that were included in the study (BBC News, 2010). Data from the study shows that on a scale of 1 to 10, Australia and the United Kingdom scored 7.9. In addition to this, the global burden of disease study of 2013 ranked Australia third in life expectancy rate (Begg, 2007). According to data from the study, the life expectancy rate for the females is 88.3 years and 78.5 years for the males. Another study conducted in 2011 by the United Nations development programme (UNEP) that uses the health status of a country as an indicator of development ranked Australia second in the world (Boslaugh, 2013). Basing on the above facts, the healthcare system in Australia is efficient in its current form. Commercialisation of the healthcare system will see the introduction of external factors that may destabilise the thriving system.

Therefore, the commercialisation of healthcare services in Australia is not the answer to the delivery of a healthy population.

In conclusion, the prospect of commercialisation of the healthcare system in Australia is an attractive proposition. However, it is associated with a myriad of disadvantages that outweigh its proposed benefits. Commercialisation will surely lead to the increase in the cost of health services. It will also lead to the inaccessibility of proper healthy services in the remote areas and areas of low income. In addition, it will lead to the neglect of the government healthcare facilities. The commercialisation of the healthcare system in Australia is not the answer to the delivery of a healthy population. The current system is the answer to the delivery of a healthy system since it has a record of accomplishment, excellent performance and global recognition its efficiency.

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