

CHAPTER 17: THE ADVANCEMENT OF HEALTH

The Committee considers that 'the advancement of health' should be explicitly recognised as a charitable purpose under its own head of charity. It is clearly accepted as a charitable purpose by the courts and the public.

The Committee's proposed new head of charity 'the advancement of health' would include all charities whose purposes are to advance human health. This makes it clear that 'the advancement of health' is a charitable purpose whether or not it is to benefit the poor.

Having a separate category of 'the advancement of health' also acknowledges that health is a significant area of involvement by charities. Charitable health organisations contribute over a quarter to each of the gross product and employment of the charitable sector.¹

In general terms, the Committee intends that 'the advancement of health' should cover the provision of various medical, mental health and other health services by not-for-profit entities, including preventative as well as curative measures. More specifically, the Committee considers that the following non-exhaustive list of purposes is indicative of purposes that should fall within this head of charity:

- the care, treatment and rehabilitation of sickness, disease and suffering in humans, including:
 - services provided by acute care hospitals (that is, the provision of medical, surgical or obstetrical services for patients, and care, nursing and other professional services);
 - services provided by other acute care institutions such as alcohol and drug treatment centres and day hospitals;
 - services provided by mental health institutions for patients with psychiatric, mental or behavioural disorders;

¹ Lyons, M and Hocking, S 2000, *Dimensions of Australia's Third Sector*, Centre for Australian Community Organisations and Management, University of Technology, Sydney, pp 75-77.

- community health services such as home nursing services, family planning services, alcohol and drug rehabilitation not requiring admission to hospitals or other establishments, and patient transport to hospitals and other treatment centres;
- provision of public health services aimed at advancing the health of whole or specific populations or preventing disease, including health promotion, nutrition services, immunisation and screening for diseases;
- health research, that is, research related to the nature, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and incidence of disease and other health problems, research into health services, nutritional problems, pharmacology etc.; and
- the provision of information, advice and advocacy on health policy.