

PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

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Dr. David Rosengren
Director-General, Queensland Health
33 Charlotte Street
Brisbane Queensland Australia

24 February 2026

Dear Dr Rosengren:

Hello from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). We're writing regarding the recent Queensland Health Survey, which found that 49% of Queensland doctors surveyed met the threshold for burnout risk.ⁱ With flu season imminent, measles reemerging, and the state population ageing, this is concerning. But there's something simple doctors could do to improve residents' health and lighten their load: prescribe animal-free diets.

We know there's no "magic bullet" for health, but numerous studies show that a lifestyle free from animal flesh and high in plants comes close. Animal-free diets have long been linked to better cardiovascular health, with one 30-year Harvard Health study finding that diets with the highest ratio of plant to animal protein led to the lowest risk of cardiovascular disease, coronary artery disease and strokeⁱⁱ – the leading cause of death for Queensland males.ⁱⁱⁱ

Additionally, research indicates that a higher intake of plant instead of animal protein is associated with a lower risk of dementia mortality,^{iv} the leading cause of death for females in Queensland.^v Another significant new study found that vegans have the lowest overall risk (24%) of developing cancer.^{vi} As cancer claims the lives of around 10,000 Queenslanders each year,^{vii} surely this is worth sharing with patients.

Of course, living vegan isn't just about us. While we may adopt an animal-free diet to avoid languishing in a hospital bed, animals bred for their flesh, eggs, and milk experience extreme stress due to confinement in filthy, crowded cages and sheds for their entire lives, and 1.6 million are violently slaughtered *every single day*.

Hippocrates advised that prevention was better than cure, and that food could heal. Yet, despite mounting research indicating that we can be considerably healthier by leaving animals off our plates, doctors don't recommend animal-free diets often enough. As a result, people are getting sicker, animals are suffering, and the planet is being destroyed by methane and carbon-heavy animal agriculture.

When it comes to addressing doctor burnout, we sincerely hope you will think outside the (animal kill) box by urging Queensland doctors to prescribe a shift toward vegan living.

I appreciate your consideration.

Kindest,



Mimi Bekhechi
PETA

Entities

- PETA US
- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

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ⁱ McKay, J. (2026, February 17). Internal review finds almost half of all Queensland Health doctors at risk of burnout. ABC News. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-02-17/queensland-health-survey-doctors-clinicians-wellbeing-burnout/106355086>

ⁱⁱ Harvard Health Publishing. (2020). More evidence that plant based diets might ward off heart problems. Harvard Medical School. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/heart-health/more-evidence-that-plant-based-diets-might-ward-off-heart-problems>

ⁱⁱⁱ Queensland Health. (2024). *Mortality*. Report of the Chief Health Officer Queensland. <https://www.choreport.health.qld.gov.au/our-health/mortality>

^{iv} Sun, Y., Liu, B., Snetselaar, L. G., Wallace, R. B., Shadyab, A. H., Kroenke, C. H., Haring, B., Howard, B. V., Shikany, J. M., Valdiviezo, C., & Bao, W. (2021). *Association of major dietary protein sources with all-cause and cause-specific mortality: Prospective cohort study*. Journal of the American Heart Association, 10(5). <https://doi.org/10.1161/JAHA.119.01555>

^v Queensland Health. (2024). *Mortality*. Report of the Chief Health Officer Queensland. <https://www.choreport.health.qld.gov.au/our-health/mortality>

^{vi} American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. (2025). *Longitudinal associations between vegetarian dietary habits and site-specific cancers in the Adventist Health Study-2 North American cohort, The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. [https://ajcn.nutrition.org/article/S0002-9165\(25\)00328-4/fulltext](https://ajcn.nutrition.org/article/S0002-9165(25)00328-4/fulltext)

^{vii} Queensland Health. (2024). Annual cancer results. Report of the Chief Health Officer Queensland. <https://www.choreport.health.qld.gov.au/our-health/cancer/annual-cancer-results>

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