

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: Monday, 29 January 2024 10:53 am
To: Registrar
Subject: St John/Securely

Categories: [REDACTED]

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Dear Committee,

[REDACTED] in the medical alarm business. I'd like to express my concerns about the potential acquisition of Securely by St John in the context of the medical alarm industry.

To provide some background, the industry has seen significant changes over the years, particularly in the accreditation process by Work and Income. Initially, there were around 40-45 accredited suppliers, but now, due to a tender process, there are only five. The government aims for a competitive market to ensure quality service at an affordable price for seniors relying on Disability Allowance.

My concern lies in the potential acquisition reducing the number of suppliers to four, with St John already having higher rates compared to others. For example, St John's "Anywhere" alarm is priced at \$23.50 per week, while Securely offers the same service for \$16.10 per week. Apart from the medical alarm cost, the senior individual may also have the GP consultation, prescription and other disability related costs. Currently the Disability Allowance has a maximum subsidy threshold of \$75.10 per week. St John medical alarm is already more than 30% of it. This significant price difference could place an additional financial burden on seniors, especially in times of rising living costs.

Moreover, St John's acquisition would result in a monopoly, limiting options for users and creating an unfair advantage for the dominant player. This goes against the government's objective of fostering competition in the industry.

In light of the current economic challenges faced by seniors, it seems counterintuitive to allow an acquisition that could potentially increase costs and limit choices. I hope the Committee considers these concerns in their evaluation of the acquisition.

Sincerely, [REDACTED]