re: proposed draft of professional practice for Chiropractors

rebecca commerford to chair

To whom it may concern,

Firstly, I would like to say I am extremely disappointed in the three week window in which to respond. This is especially so as I was not made aware of this proposal until late last week, and I was not informed by the board or the CAA. When deciding on a proposal that will effect most, if not all, Chiropractors in Australia, I find a three week window to send in submissions a very unfair situation. This would appear to imply the Board is not interested in making decisions in conjunction of the Chiropractors of Australia. That is very worrying, for both Chiropractors and for the Australian public.

I must question the motives of the Board in wanting to introduce restrictive rules. I must also question the Chiropractors Board's opinion, when other health professionals boards do not seem to share it's opinion.

Chiropractors, as the Board is well aware, are very well educated primary health care professionals - not children. We do not need to be addressed in a demeaning way. As with any occupation, there may well be practitioners who are not primarily interested in their patient, but certainly the vast majority of practitioners (and every practitioner I know!) hold the patient as their primary concern. There are suitable guidelines currently in use, the Chiropractors Board does not need to address these already established guidelines. I also find it offensive that, rather than work with the profession to improve ethical practice (of which the majority of practitioners already uphold), the board should find it suitable to tar us all with the 'unethical' brush.

I believe, and may not be correct, that the Boards guidelines look to restrict the use of radiographs for Chiropractic purposes? If this is so, then this needs to be addressed. Many Chiropractors read radiographs for both Medical and Chiropractic analysis. This is a very useful tool.

I also believe, (but am unsure as the Chiropractic Board appears to have made no effort to contact Australian Chiropractors), that the Board is looking to place restrictions on maintenance care, and spinal checkups. If this is so, this certainly is a big backward step for the Australian community and future. I find it interesting, especially at this point in time when we should be looking forward, this step would be taken. I feel it better to educate and maintain a persons health from birth, than to wait until they present as an obese adult, with back pain, bad eating habits, bad lifting techniques and significant health challenges. The way forward is a health and wellbeing model, not the old, tired, ineffective sick care model the medical profession currently operates in.

I am lodging my objection strongly. The board needs to speak, respectfully, with Chiropractors to improve any issues. We do not need to be belittled as a profession.

I also believe you need to have a consultative process, and not a sneaky three week period

where the Board hopes there will be no knowledge of this process.

Dr Rebecca Harwin (nee Commerford)