Attention: Chair, Chiropractic Board of Australia

Damien O'Dwyer to natboards 07/04/2010 04:56 PM

To whom it may concern

I am concerned by the draft *Code of Professional Practice for Chiropractors in Australia.* I fail to see the need for this document in conjunction with the Cross-professional Code of Conduct.

I am bemused by the Board's judgement that Chiropractors require further guidance on how to conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner:

> The Code of Professional Practice for Chiropractors while predominantly addressing the profession-specific practice and performance aspects does also include areas of conduct and ethics where the Board felt there needed to be further guidance for practitioners.

This inference is insulting to all in the profession. Most, if not all of these guidelines are repetitive and overly prescriptive when taken in context of the Cross-professional Code of Conduct.

The draft raises many more questions than it answers.
Words such as 'tout', 'engendering fear' etc have no place in such a document.
How will chiropractors be monitored?
How will complaints/charges be dealt with?

I am somewhat surprised by the tone of this draft. I note with interest that the GCC (UK) was used as a reference for the drafting of this document. Will the National Chiropractic Board be using some of the tactics of the GCC in order to investigate and "prosecute" Australian chiropractors? It is now on the public record that the GCC has engaged private investigators on chiropractors (or those who have chosen to become de-registered). The GCC also schedules hearing for 5 days and the legal costs involved in defending chiropractors have increased the insurance premiums of at least one of the associations in the UK. (This is stated on the insurer's policy.) How much influence has the GCC had on drafting the chiropractic specific clauses?

Has the Board had any feedback from chiropractors working under the GCC regime to gauge their effect on the profession? My experience, having worked there, is that people readily admit they work in fear of the regulator, and this has a detrimental effect on their patient care. They are always second-guessing "What would the GCC say about that?"

Over-regulation may be damaging to the health and wellbeing of the community. There have been many infamous cases brought against British chiropractors. One case, that took over 2 years to be heard, related to cat hairs on the clinic floor.

I see this document as a medico-legal minefield, which will result in onerous and unnecessary costs on the profession and diminish the delivery of chiropractic care in Australia.

Yours sincerely

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