



Media release

17 March 2017

Chiropractor is disqualified from applying for registration after sexual contact and inappropriate conduct with patients

The State Administrative Tribunal of WA has disqualified a former chiropractor from applying for registration for three years with the Chiropractic Board of Australia (the Board) after admitting to professional misconduct, including sexual contact and inappropriate conduct with female patients.

Dr John Horner was disqualified from applying for registration as a chiropractor for three years from the date of the order (3 March 2017), has been reprimanded and is prohibited from providing any health service that involves consultation with or touching any female patient until such time as he is returned to the register of health practitioners. He was also ordered to pay the Board's legal costs of \$10,000.

Dr Horner admitted that he behaved in a way that constituted professional misconduct when, in mid-2000, he commenced a sexual relationship with a female patient that continued to mid-2012 and involved sexual acts performed in his consulting rooms as well as at the patient's home. He also admitted to sexual misconduct during a consultation with another female patient, when he touched her breast for his own gratification.

Three other, separate instances of misconduct occurred with female patients between May 2006 and December 2013, wherein he failed to administer treatment in a manner that preserved their modesty and dignity – in one instance he asked a 19-year-old patient to remove her underwear for the purposes of providing soft-tissue therapy to her buttocks, anterior hip and groin.

Dr Horner surrendered his registration as a chiropractor in February 2015. If Dr Horner had not surrendered his registration, the Tribunal would have cancelled it.

In response to the Tribunal's decision, Chair of the Board, Dr Wayne Minter, said, "Chiropractors have a duty of care for their patients, and are required to understand their obligations under the National Law. They must never violate professional boundaries or breach patient-practitioner trust. Protecting the public is the Board's number one priority, and we will always respond swiftly to investigate and reprimand any practitioner who is suspected of putting the community at risk."

The tribunal's orders are published on the [State Administrative Tribunal of Western Australia website](#).

For more information

- For online enquiries visit www.ahpra.gov.au/enquiry
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 9275 9009 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200