

2 August 2018

Medical Board of Australia
GPO Box 9958
Melbourne VIC
3001

Sent by email: medboardconsultation@ahpra.gov.au

RE: Public consultation on good medical practice; proposed changes

I hold grave reservations with regards the proposed changes to the Good Medical Practice: A Code of Conduct for doctors in Australia. Specifically, draft clause 2.1 *Professional values and qualities of doctors*;

As a doctor, you need to acknowledge and consider the effect of your comments and actions outside work, including online, on your professional standing and on the reputation of the profession. If making public comment, you should acknowledge the profession's generally accepted views and indicate when your personal opinion differs. Behaviour which could undermine community trust in the profession is at odds with good medical practice and may be considered unprofessional.

Draft clause 2.1 appears to be a deliberate attempt to stifle intelligent discussion and regulate debate within the medical community. Intelligent debate has been a vital part of medical history that has led to important discoveries and changes in practice. Examples over time include changes to approaches to mental health, sexual health and gender equality in medicine to name but a few.

AHPRA should direct its time and resources investigating legitimate threats to patient care such as unsafe doctors and malpractice, rather than attempting to police freedom of speech and stifling debate that defines our profession. Proposed clause 2.1 should be removed.

Sincerely



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