

From: Michelle Middlemost
To: [medboardconsultation](#)
Subject: Re: Public consultation on draft revised code of conduct, Good medical practice: A code of conduct for doctors in Australia.
Date: Wednesday, 15 August 2018 9:58:17 PM

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing as I am concerned that with the new proposed wording free speech is being limited. Who decides what is the "professions generally accepted views" and why should a practitioner be bound by such views if they conflict with that practitioner's conscience and beliefs.

I believe that doctors need to be respectful but also that they should be allowed to speak about their beliefs and have open and frank discussions with their patients. Unfortunately patients and their families do not always know what good medical care is - are doctors expected to comply with referrals for genital mutilation because this complies with the families (if not the patient's) beliefs.

Are doctors expected to comply with not treating a psychotic patient because the patient's family prefer that the person be taken to an Indigenous healer for a smoking ceremony (ensuring that the patient is well and truly treatment resistant and very unwell before they finally receive treatment under the Mental Health Act some months later).

What if a practitioner declines to participate in state sanctioned killing (in opposition to their medical board's views) and what makes the practitioner's views of less value than the medical board's?

How does AHPRA decide what is "generally accepted" and what are the biases of those deemed fit to judge other practitioners (and will these be disclosed when a practitioner is judged).

Why are we not allowed to talk with patients about the consequences of their decisions, no matter how hard that discussion is?

Good medical practice requires skill, knowledge and sensitivity and a willingness to take time to discuss options and risks to get a good outcome. Forcing doctors to provide care they do not agree with and cannot provide as it goes against their conscience is in no one's best interest and does not make for good care and will not build trust in the community.

Thank you

Dr Michelle Middlemost