

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [medboardconsultation](#)  
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While I am not a professional member of AHPRA, I feel very strongly about challenging the proposed changes to AHPRA's Code of Conduct. The reasons for that are set out below:

- The proposed wording has an inherent limitation of freedom of speech – a Constitutional right given to all Australians which, when withdrawn or limited, always produces loss of community trust in what is said, and creates suppression. People should always be allowed to voice opinions formed from their own beliefs or conscience, even if they are not shared by others. That is what democracy is about.
- “generally accepted views” are culturally specific, and change over time. Australia is home to many peoples from many different cultures. Which culture will you choose? To force everyone to accept the cultural views of only one set of people is not only undemocratic, it is also against the non-oppressive principles within the AASW Code of Ethics that I adhere to.
- Who will be the one making the decision to choose one culture/belief system over another? How will the committee be selected? This proposed committee will provide an inherent opportunity for abuse of power to develop; and further alienate doctors with minority beliefs and the people they represent.
- How far does or can this go? If the judging panel of doctors (known within the code as the “majority” of the profession) decide that female mutilation is a generally accepted practice, albeit not an Colonial one, does that mean that a doctor could not speak out about it? Or if a doctor treats a child who has been raped by her adult husband, will the said doctor also not be able to speak out? Will doctors who speak out against immunisation be struck off the register? These things are viewed differently in cultures that already exist within Australia; and are either generally unacceptable or controversial.

As social workers, we spend a lot of time helping people through issues caused by an abuse of power within their social environment. At times this is an uphill battle. Please do not make it any harder for us by silencing voices who would challenge “generally accepted” beliefs – the world is full of people: scientists, inventors, artists, musicians, explorers, etc, who have achieved wonderful, honourable, life-changing discoveries by doing just that.

Regards,

**Lorraine Morgan, BSW**

Accredited Mental Health Social Worker