

From: Emily Higgins
To: [medboardconsultation](#)
Subject: Public consultation on good medical practice
Date: Tuesday, 31 July 2018 9:36:02 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing as a concerned member of the public in regards to a proposed Code of Conduct, which is open for public submissions until August 3. From my understanding this could force doctors to accept 'cultural beliefs and practises' that are opposed to good medical practise, according to a group of doctors convened by Dr Lachlan Dunjey of Perth.

Dr Dunjey hopes language of the 2009 Code of Conduct remains unchanged in the new version: "'Culturally safe' does not necessarily equate to medically safe ... 'Respecting' can be taken to mean agreeing with, affirming, and accepting that we cannot challenge false medical belief and inappropriate treatment."

The Medical Board of Australia draft code of conduct that will apply to all Australian doctors requires doctors to be "culturally safe" and comply with a patient's beliefs about gender identity and sexuality, with no provision given for a doctor to differ in their professional judgement.

"Gender identity is relevant in so many ways including age, experience, psychological factors and last but not least any possible therapeutic intervention both medical and surgical with life-long outcomes and consequences. Likewise, sexual orientation is also medically relevant preventively and therapeutically with regard to past and current sexual practices."

It is also unclear whether doctors will be compelled to act contrary to their own conscience regarding patient requests for referrals. Labor MPs in Queensland including Deputy Premier Jackie Trad have demanded that Queensland doctors be compelled to refer women for an abortion, and thus violate the conscientious beliefs of many doctors.

Personal opinion is being silenced and the need to accept the profession's generally accepted views is deemed of higher importance and comes with the threat of deregistration, which I believe is unacceptable.

Please consider these thoughts.

Emily Higgins