



I am writing about a very serious matter that has the potential to severely restrict the use of integrative medicine in Australia.

The Medical Board of Australia is planning to impose greater regulation around the use of integrative, complementary and alternative medicines (CAMs), which will significantly restrain the practice of integrative medicine and the use of CAM modalities.

The Board's public consultation paper on "Clearer regulation of medical practitioners who provide complementary and unconventional medicine and emerging treatments" is born of prejudice and ignorance and must be seriously challenged.

The proposal would see a split between conventional doctors and integrative medicine doctors. It would sanction doctors who use safe and effective integrative medicine in their day-to-day practice.

Integrative medicine doctors combine quality conventional medicine with safe and effective complementary medicine to improve health and reduce unnecessary medical treatments.

They embrace prevention as a first principle of healthcare, help manage complex illness and care for patients for whom conventional medicine has not assisted.

The Medical Board already has a strong code of conduct on good medical practice which sets out what is expected of all doctors registered to practise medicine in Australia.

The proposed new draconian regulation is simply unnecessary. It is nothing more than an attack on complementary and integrative medicine.

Furthermore, it is wrong for the Medical Board to group complementary medicine with unconventional medicine and emerging treatments. Complementary medicine is safe and has nothing in common with these treatments.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration has never been able to confirm a single death in Australia that directly resulted from using complementary medicine.

By contrast, it is estimated that there are around 650,000 hospital presentations/admissions¹ every year due to medication-related problems.

With their permission, I have attached a critique of the Medical Board's proposal, prepared by Dr Mark Donohoe MBBS FASLM and Professor Stephen P Myers PhD BMed ND FACNEM.

More information and resources are available at:
www.integrativemedicinefreedomofchoice.com

There is also information on the Australian Integrative Medicine Association's website at: www.aima.net.au

It is important that we, as supporters and practitioners of complementary medicine, take a strong stand against this new proposal. I urge you to please make a submission to the Medical Board.

Submissions can be made by doctors/practitioners, patients, family/friends and the general public.

One of the options that the proposal considers is:

Option one – Retain the status quo of providing general guidance about the Board's expectations of medical practitioners who provide complementary and unconventional medicine and emerging treatments via the Board's approved code of conduct.

Please tell the Medical Board that you want option one to be selected.

Written submissions can be sent by email, marked: 'Consultation on complementary and unconventional medicine and emerging treatments' to medboardconsultation@ahpra.gov.au by close of business on 30 June 2019.

Submissions for publication on the Board's website should be sent in Word format or equivalent.

Submissions by post should be addressed to the Executive Officer, Medical, AHPRA, GPO Box 9958, Melbourne Victoria 3001.

For more than 50 years I have worked to support integrative medicine in Australia. I hope you will join me in challenging this shocking proposal from the Medical Board.

Kind regards



Marcus C Blackmore AM

¹ Pharmaceutical Society of Australia 2019. *Medicine Safety: Take Care*. Canberra: PSA.