

From: [REDACTED]
To: [medboardconsultation](#)
Subject: Public consultation on Good medical practice
Date: Thursday, 16 August 2018 8:48:18 PM

Dear AHPRA,

Thank you for putting forth the draft of the revised medical code of conduct for public comment. I am a registered medical practitioner based in Sydney, and I writing to express my concern with the particular wording of section 2.1 that states the following (my emphasis added):

*Community trust in the medical profession is essential. Every doctor has a responsibility to behave ethically to justify this trust. The boundary between a doctor's personal and public profile can be blurred. 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.*

Whilst I agree with the sentiment that doctors ought to be careful with their social media presence, I take issue with the particular wording of the sentence highlighted in bold. Who is to determine what the "profession's generally accepted views" are, and by extension, what can or cannot be stated in public without adding the proposed requisite clause of "my views differ from that of my profession"?

I am a Christian, and due to my personal religious beliefs, there will inevitably be times when my views on certain topics will be at odds with a proportion of other members within my profession. Assisted suicide and abortion are two such areas. However, I am concerned that should I choose to express my opinions on such controversial matters in a public forum, I may be liable to punitive action from AHPRA if my interpretation of what my profession's "generally accepted views" differ from that of AHPRA's own interpretation.

The wording of the revised changes seems far too open-ended and poorly defined, and I strongly advise AHPRA to reconsider this issue in the final draft.

Finally, I would appreciate my identity in this letter be kept confidential. Social media is an unforgiving arena where content is frequently taken out of context to attack others, and I would appreciate being kept away from that.

Regards,

[REDACTED]