

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
Mr Martin Fletcher (& Senior Managers)
Chief Executive Officer
GPO Box 9958 Melbourne, VIC 3001

Dear Martin Fletcher & Senior Managers,

On 21-23 July 2023, The Christian Medical and Dental Fellowship of Australia (CMDFA) will be hosting their bi-annual conference in Darwin at the Travelodge Resort. The signatories to this letter are concerned counsellors, legal experts, community workers, lived-experience professionals and NT residents that condemn the conference being held in Darwin and the public displays of CMDFA's dangerous and stigmatising beliefs and practices. We urge that APHRA investigate the CMDFA and their members.

The CMDFA are a fellowship of doctors, dentists and associated healthcare professionals that support anti-abortion and anti-trans beliefs. Their members practise evangelism during their professional duties using an international method called the Saline Process™.

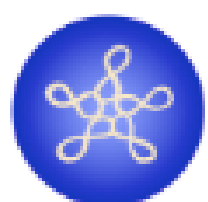
The CMDFA beliefs and practices are dangerous and stigmatising for people seeking medical care in Australia. They actively advocated against abortion law reform in New South Wales and South Australia. They lobbied against a positive obligation on medical practitioners who are 'conscientious objectors' of abortion to refer clients who seek abortion care to a practitioner who will provide that care. They have advocated against the banning of conversion therapy in NSW, believing it to be a legitimate method of care for people experiencing gender dysmorphia. They actively advocate against surgery as a method of care for trans people. The CMDFA promotes evangelism during medical practice through the Saline Process™, a global initiative to train Christian medical practitioners in how to 'cultivate, seed, sow and harvest' their client's conversion to the Christian faith. The CMDFA's attitudes on gender and abortion are dangerous, stigmatising and potentially life-threatening for people who access medical care in Australia. Their work of evangelism whilst performing professional duties goes against APHRA's code of conduct.

The upcoming conference shows how the CMDFA's influence extends beyond their member's expression of faith. Keynote speakers talk about their experience of evangelising in remote communities within Australia and the Pacific. A talk on gender dysphoria explores one doctor's use of 'talk therapy' for young people instead of the 'malpractice' of gender-affirming surgery. A Saline Processes™ training discusses how to practically and gracefully fulfil God's call to be his witnesses in the workplace.' The conference program highlights the disregard of the CMDFA's members in upholding ethical standards of medical care, and how CMDFA members are encouraged to exploit the practitioner-client relationship.

The signatories of this letter do not condone the practice of expressing personal beliefs to patients in ways that exploit their vulnerability and power-imbalance of the patient/medical practitioner relationship, as per APHRA's ethical code for medical practitioners. As residents, lived-experience professionals, social workers, advocates, and concerned citizens we condemn the conference being held in Darwin. Simultaneously, we urge that APHRA investigate the CMDFA and their members.

At best, the CMFDA's beliefs and advocacy have the damaging impact of stigmatising and shaming people who access vital medical care. At worst, their work has the potential to exploit power imbalances and vulnerabilities and erode safe, accessible legal abortion and gender-affirming surgery in Australia.

Sincerely,



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