

Mr Dan Harvey

Submission to the Practitioner Regulation Sub-Committee of the Health Workforce Principal Committee

As members of the Association of Transpersonal and Emotional Release Counsellors (ATERC) we write in response to the report of Professor Margaret Schofield on Best Practice Self-Regulation Model for Psychotherapy and Counselling.

We represented our Association at the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA) Council Meeting August 23-24, at which the issues raised in this report were thoroughly discussed. Over many years now PACFA has worked on self regulation in order to ensure standards of excellence for the professions of psychotherapy and counselling. To this end PACFA has documented and required its member associations to put into effect professional standards of training, ethics, supervision, ongoing professional development, insurance cover and complaints procedures. PACFA is also in the process of accrediting training courses in psychotherapy and counselling

In co-operation with the Australian Counselling Association (ACA), the other peak body representing psychotherapists and counsellors, a national credentialing system and a national register of practitioners is being set up. It was evident in the discussions of the PACFA Council meeting last weekend that, while we would prefer the professions to come under statutory regulation, until such time as this happens, we are committed to ensuring best practice by self-regulation. In view of this we, the undersigned, urge the Practitioner Regulation Sub-Committee of the Health Workforce Principal Committee to endorse the report of Professor Margo Schofield.

Our members feel that the lack of recognition of the professions of psychotherapy and counselling in government policies and practices has led to unfair discrimination. In view of the standards of self-regulation in place and practiced by PACFA and ACA members, we urge you to recognise the contribution of our professions in the allied health field and recommend that psychotherapy and counselling be accorded the same status as other professions in the allied health field, e.g. psychologists and social workers.

Thank you

Corrie van den Bosch

Thea Welch

The Association of Transpersonal and Emotional Release Counsellors.