

Dear Sirs and Madams,

I wish to make a submission to the Senate inquiry into the administration of health practitioner registration by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). In particular, I am very concerned about section 'c': the impact of AHPRA processes and administration on health practitioners, patients, hospitals and service providers.

My concern is that the administration of health practitioner registration under AHPRA does not recognise the specialised qualifications of many psychologists while giving priority privileged status (as specialists) to members of the colleges of one particular professional body – the Australian Psychological Society (APS). I have seen no evidence that members of the APS colleges possess superior skills or qualifications compared to other practitioners who engage in regular professional development. Therefore, there is not sufficient justification for automatically granting privileged status to members of APS colleges while denying it to other qualified practitioners. I make this statement as a regular attendant of one of the APS colleges.

To illustrate my point, I was entitled to call myself an Organisational Psychologist prior to the transition to the National Registration scheme (as I possess both a Masters in Organisational Psychology and the necessary supervised practice). I have only worked as an Organisational Psychologist and never in generalist practice. I am not qualified to provide any psychological services other than organisational psychology services. Under the new scheme, I am considered a Generalist Psychologist and am no longer entitled to call myself an Organisational Psychologist. This is very confusing to my clients and detrimental to my career. Simultaneously, peers with the same qualifications who chose to become members of a private professional group - the APS College of Organisational Psychologists, are entitled to use a title that I am not. This is a false dichotomy enforced by AHPRA and one which is grossly unfair to many experienced and qualified practitioners.

Thankyou for considering my submission,

12/04/2011.