

Mr Edward O'Donoghue MLC  
Chairman  
Legal and Social Issues Committee  
Legislative Council  
Parliament of Victoria  
Spring St  
Melbourne 3002

Ref : APHRA Inquiry

Dear Sir,

There is a situation that has existed between our local Stawell Regional Health hospital and a Doctor from the Patrick Street Clinic Stawell since May 2011. The doctor had his Visiting Rights terminated by hospital management much to the great consternation of his many patients who no longer have access to their own doctor if and when they are in the hospital which has no salaried doctors.

According to information (enclosed) from an article from our local newspaper in January 2012, the CEO of the hospital claimed that chaperone conditions had been placed on the doctor in January 2011 but the hospital was not formally notified by APHRA until April 2011, although the doctor himself had notified the hospital through its Medical Director (Sessional) of the imposed condition at the time it was imposed.

If the report from the CEO is factual, it is quite disturbing that it took so long for an official notification to be made by APHRA to SRH.

I also enclose a photocopy of an excerpt from a 2011 SRH Quality Assurance Report, page 11, dealing with the Human Resource Information System (HRIS) under the heading of Credentialing and Privileging and note with interest that SRH does have the ability for checks regarding any restrictions, notifications or amendments to a doctor's registration.

In the case of the above mentioned doctor <sup>I</sup> ~~we~~ also note, that despite the fact he was totally cleared by a Judge and Jury in the County Court more than 12 months ago, that the APHRA condition has yet to be removed from the APHRA website, which surely must be detrimental to his professional standing.

Yours sincerely,

Norma Barton

*Norma M Barton*

*22/01/2013*

ATTENTION: - MR EDWARD O'DONOGHUE

REF. AHPRA INQUIRY

FROM NORMA BARTON

Tuesday, January 31, 2012 — Page 5

# Doctor ban due to contract obligation

**STAWELL** - Stawell Regional Health has issued a statement in relation to the termination of services provided by obstetrician Dr Arthur Obi.

The Stawell Regional Health Board made what it described as a difficult decision to terminate the services of Dr Obi in May last year.

Chief Executive Officer, Rohan Fitzgerald, said the hospital received notification from the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA) in April 2011 that Dr Obi had serious conditions imposed on his registration in January.

The conditions that have been imposed on Dr Obi's registration are published on the AHPRA website.

Mr Fitzgerald said the conditions require that "all female patients seen by Dr Obi requiring breast, gynaecological or intimate examinations are to be seen under the Chaperone guidelines."

"It was the responsibility of Dr Obi to promptly advise the Health Service of any conditions that apply to his registration," Mr Fitzgerald said.

"The hospital had not been informed by Dr Obi of those conditions," he said.

Mr Fitzgerald said Dr Obi had both professional and contractual obligations to notify the hospital of conditions on his registration.

"It was of significant concern to the Board that Dr Obi did not advise the hospital of the conditions placed on his registration.

"Boards of Victorian public hospitals have the responsibility for overseeing clinical and financial governance.

"In recent years Boards have become more aware of the need to take effective, and at times, immediate action where they determine there may be a risk to patient safety."

Mr Fitzgerald said the board noted that Dr Obi was recently acquitted in criminal proceedings relating to his professional obligations.

"The subject matter of those proceedings did not form the basis of the Board's decision to terminate Dr Obi's employment," Mr Fitzgerald said.

- Dr Obi was found not guilty on six counts of rape and sexual assault in the Ballarat County Court in December.

- A newly formed Support Dr Obi group is planning

to hold a public meeting over the termination on Friday, February 10 at the Entertainment Centre.

PLEASE NOTE

THIS IS NOT A PHOTOCOPY

IT IS THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE FROM STAWELL REGIONAL HEALTH  
"QUALITY OF CARE REPORT" 2011

A. McBeaton.

ATTENTION MR EDWARD  
O'DONOGHUE

REF APHRA INQUIRY



STAWELL REGIONAL HEALTH

The Human Resource Information System (HRIS) centralises personnel and education data across a workforce of practitioners with differing professional needs and is a key management tool in identifying broader programs for study and training. Grampians Rural Health Alliance provided training to Executive Administration staff in the data entry and reporting of course sessions. The ability to report on a staff member, group of staff or particular course is a valuable tool for line managers in supporting the performance appraisal program in each department.

The HRIS also allows the centralised entry and review of credentialing requirements of staff. This data is reviewed through internet upload to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), saving hours of work in reviewing individual registrations.

The System and Data storage is maintained within the requirements of the Public Record Office of Victoria.

any restrictions, notifications or amendments to their registration. The details on the AHPRA website are available to the public. In addition police checks are conducted on all staff.

We also have policies in place that must be followed in order for a practitioner to undertake new procedures or operations.

### Website

We have revitalised our website to include more information for the community and prospective employees. On the website is our latest Annual Report, Quality of Care Report, news items, information regarding our services and current vacancies. Please take a moment to visit [www.srh.org.au](http://www.srh.org.au)

### Credentialing and Privileging

*These processes are very important and help to ensure that all health care staff are registered and only do what they have been trained to do. Each year we check with AHPRA that our nurses, allied health staff and doctors are registered and whether they have*



Kelly Friend and Carol Christian  
serve morning tea.

# CasConnect

CasConnect is a central organisation which coordinates the placement of relief staff in health services. After demonstrating significant success during its pilot phase, CasConnect has secured funding from the DoH to expand across Victoria.

CasConnect was developed by Stawell Regional Health, with the support of the DoH under the auspices of the Rural Health Bank Pilot Project. CasConnect went live in 2008 at Stawell Regional Health with 23 members. Today it has more than 500 members across 10 rural health services.

CasConnect is an innovative e-commerce system, delivering flexible and low-cost services to regional health organisations. It reduces the time, effort and duplication associated with multiple health services and site relief staff bank arrangements thereby generating significant productivity savings for these health services.

CasConnect has also helped to attract, recruit and retain vital

health workers in regional Victoria, with participating health services increasing their casual relief pools by 20% during the pilot period. This is a significant achievement.

Careful consideration of all the recommendations made by health services and nurse members during the formal evaluation of the pilot project in late 2010 has assisted CasConnect in planning for a secure and viable future.

SRH has agreed to support CasConnect during its next phase. CasConnect expects modest growth in the short term; however it aims to achieve financial independence by the end of the 2013 financial year by targeting a combination of operational efficiencies and growth.

We would like to thank all our participating health services and relief staff members for their commitment and support during the pilot project and hope we can continue to provide this valued service to them.



*CasConnect's David Francis and Lynette Baker*