

4 July 2013

The Honourable Georgie Crozier MLC
Chair
Family and Community Development Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Ms Crozier

RIGHT OF REPLY – MR BOYLE & MS MATHER

I refer to the evidence of Mr James Boyle and his sister, Ms Jill Mather, at a public hearing on 15 March 2013 during which they repeated allegations which they have made a number of times before regarding their treatment and the treatment received by their late brother through the Melbourne Response and Carelink.

Their brother's situation was complex, and tragic. He had been a client of Carelink since March 2005. He had serious medical issues, but was reluctant to accept help. He was treated very sensitively by Carelink staff including being transported and assisted at appointments in a wheelchair. Unfortunately he chose not to go into hospital for the treatment that was offered to him and to be funded by Carelink. Sadly, he passed away in late 2005. The distress of Mr Boyle and Ms Mather at the death of their brother is obviously understandable and I have great sympathy for them. However, their testimony must be understood in its proper context.

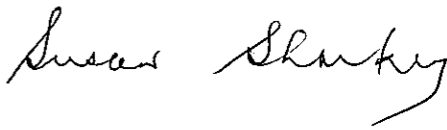
The testimony given by Mr Boyle to this Inquiry about the treatment of his brother has been the subject of five complaints that Mr Boyle has previously made to professional bodies about the Melbourne Response and representatives of the Archdiocese, including complaints about me made to the Psychology Board in 2007 and AHPRA in 2011. In his evidence to this Inquiry, Mr Boyle did not tell the Committee that his allegations against me had been investigated and rejected. In fact, all five of Mr Boyle's complaints to professional bodies have been rejected.

Despite the fact that Mr Boyle's previous five complaints have been rejected, in his evidence to this Inquiry on 15 March 2013, Mr Boyle again made allegations about his brother's treatment by the Melbourne Response and representatives of the Archdiocese, and stated that Carelink "did as close to nothing as is possible". This is simply not correct.

The fact is that his brother never made a complaint about his treatment by Carelink. At no time did he express to me or anyone else at Carelink that he had an issue with procedures that Carelink was following or the treatment that he was receiving. He had every opportunity to do so during interviews that he attended at Carelink and at other times. He was provided with a supportive and caring environment whenever he was present at Carelink. He expressed his gratitude and thanks for the efforts that Carelink made. Mr Boyle also wrote to Carelink expressing his thanks.

I therefore reject as unfounded and inaccurate the allegations against me in the testimony of Mr Boyle and Ms Mather.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Sharkey". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Susan Sharkey
Coordinator