

Wednesday, 25 August 2021

Public Statement: Prohibition Order – Mr John Warncken

The Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner Associate Professor Grant Davies has issued a Prohibition Order against Mr John Warncken who offered counselling services.

Mr Warncken is prohibited from:

- providing specified health services, namely health-related counselling (however described);
- offering, advertising or otherwise promoting health-related counselling (including where those services may be provided by another person);
- holding himself out or otherwise promoting himself as a provider of health-related counselling services; and
- providing advice in relation to the provision of health-related counselling (including where those services may be provided by another person).

The order commenced at 12:01am today and will remain in place indefinitely or until revoked or revised by the HCSCC.

Today's announcement follows the conclusion of an investigation which commenced on 16 March 2021, into health services provided by Mr Warncken.

The HCSCC is satisfied Mr Warncken breached the [Code of Conduct for Certain Health Care Workers](#), namely:

- clause 3(1): A health care worker must provide a health service in a safe and ethical manner;
- clause 3(2)(a): A health care worker must maintain the necessary competence in the health care worker's field of practice; and
- clause 18: A health care worker should ensure that appropriate indemnity insurance arrangements are in place in relation to the health care worker's practice.

The investigation concluded, on the balance of probabilities, Mr Warncken:

- repeatedly and unnecessarily prompted a consumer to relay explicit details of their childhood sexual trauma;
- was controlling in only allowing communication between the consumer and their partner and mother through him;
- told the consumer's ex-partner they were in danger from the consumer with no basis;
- communicated with a consumer in an inappropriate manner;

- failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with the consumer; and
- failed to maintain appropriate indemnity insurance in relation to their practice.

Associate Professor Davies said he issued this order to protect the safety of members of the South Australian public.

“An unregistered health care worker must comply with the Code,” he explained.

“It is important they are familiar with it and are abiding by it.

“The investigation – and subsequent prohibition order – into the health services offered by Mr Warnken is an example of how serious non-compliance with the Code is.

“Should any member of the public have concerns about the counselling services they have received from Mr Warnken, I urge you to get in touch with my office.”

The HCSCC can be emailed at info@hcsc.sa.gov.au or phoned on 8226 8666.