

REPORT TO NZAP AGM, MARCH 2020

Ethics and Professional Standards Committee

Enormous gratitude is extended to Stephanie Forde, who completed almost seven years' service as Chair of the Ethics and Professional Standards Committee (EPSC) and fulfilled the role of Complaints Convenor over the past several months. Stephanie has generously continued to provide transitional support to those coming into these roles. Likewise, huge thanks go to Séan Manning for his contributions to the Committee over several years and to Barbara Bassett for a period as Complaints Convenor. Stephanie, Séan and Barbara have stepped down from the Committee this year.

We are fortunate to have the ongoing expertise of Margot Solomon and Katherine Stewart on the EPSC. They are joined by Helen Florence, Helen Packard as incoming Complaints Convenor (from February 2020), and me as incoming Chair (from November 2019).

The Memoranda of Understanding for the Committee and the role of Chair were reviewed and updated in July 2019.

There are no active formal complaints open at the time of writing. The Complaints Convenor has provided information and support to anyone enquiring about the possibility of complaint, as needed.

Current areas of work include updating information about the complaints process on the NZAP website.

When the Code of Ethics was being updated 2017-2018, the Committee concluded that the cultural responsiveness of our complaints process will be considered as part of a Council-led review. It also concluded that more thorough consultation is required, perhaps led by Māori, before significantly adapting our Code of Ethics towards more culturally responsive ethical frameworks, and that such change may be best addressed at a constitutional level or through other avenues, rather than through the Code of Ethics. This constitutes another substantial area of work.

Ongoing thought is required about NZAP's oversight of professional standards for those members not registered under the HPCA Act.

At the General Election in September 2020, two matters with direct bearing on mental health and ethics will be put to the vote: the referendum on the Cannabis Legalisation and Control Bill, and the referendum on the End of Life Choice Act 2019. Psychotherapists have the opportunity to make valuable contributions to public discussion about these matters and, as an Association, it will be useful to consider clinical implications so that members are prepared for changes if they occur.

The NZAP Review of the EPSC is underway and the Committee had some initial contact with the Review panel in January 2020.

I am grateful for the wisdom and extensive experience of the Committee as I newly join them.

Daniel Larsen
Chair, Ethics and Professional Standards Committee