

"It is more important than ever that we can all have access to writers like Dr David Berger and they are not being silenced due to some individuals 'shooting the messenger'"

Letter from an Australian doctor to AHPRA in defense of Zero-COVID advocate Dr. David Berger

Our reporters
14 July 2022

The WSWS is continuing to receive statements in support of Dr. David Berger, an Australian physician and dedicated Zero-COVID advocate, who is facing disciplinary action from the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA) because of his opposition to the official "let it rip" pandemic policies of mass infection and death.

Since the publication of our first article, which calls on scientists, health workers and other sections of workers to speak out in defence of Dr. Berger, the WSWS has published five articles compiling these statements. These articles have been read by tens of thousands of people throughout the world.

We urge readers to speak out in Dr. Berger's defence by emailing your statements here. Please indicate in the email how you would like to be identified in our next article, and if you want to include a photo, please attach one to the email.

Dr Mary Tapsall, a retired general practitioner from northern Victoria, Australia, contacted AHPRA last week protesting its treatment of Dr. Berger. She called on it to review its disciplinary action, "with close attention to any motivations from those who made any complaints." We include below Tapsall's email to the WSWS, her submission to AHPRA, and its response.

Email to WSWS:

Hello,

Please feel free to use my complaint to AHPRA regarding their restrictions on Dr David Berger. I received the 'beige' reply from AHPRA as below. I am contemplating whether to progress my complaint to the Ombudsman but am watching to see if there are any further developments.

I am not surprised but am very impressed by the

outpouring of support for Dr Berger from outstanding experts across the world, as well as more ordinary people like myself.

Best wishes,

Dr Mary TAPSALL

Submission to AHPRA:

I am a retired General Practitioner with a keen interest in the Covid epidemic. I have followed Dr David Berger on Twitter for over two years now and have also read his excellent articles in *The Age*, *Guardian*, *BMJ* and *Medical Journal of Australia*.

I have found Dr Berger to be a completely truthful, expert and compassionate writer whose only concern is for the optimal health of all people. He is always quick to note and credit to the authors, important research regarding Covid published worldwide as well as the anecdotes of people, especially health workers, trying to manage these enormous challenges. When he has made comment on other health professionals it has always been factually based.

Some people have been wrong, often over and over, about key understandings about the pandemic. To call this out, when those same people won't acknowledge their misunderstandings, is entirely reasonable. The pandemic, like climate change and many other huge issues, is an information battle.

We are all being urged to take personal responsibility for managing our individual risks but are not often given the tools and information to do so. Dr David Berger has been one of the most informative and reliable sources I have for understanding these risks.

The disciplinary action taken by AHPRA is bewildering

and suggests some people or persons have a personal vendetta against Dr Berger for perhaps highlighting their significant misunderstandings of the pandemic. These misunderstandings are not trivial and have real life consequences for people trying to manage their risks.

I urge the board to review the process by which they chose to take disciplinary action and to ascertain whether complaint/s made are genuinely made or might reflect vindictiveness. It is more important than ever that we can all have access to writers like Dr David Berger and they are not being silenced due to some individuals 'shooting the messenger.'

**Response from AHPRA National Complaints Manager
Amanda Watson**

Dear Dr Tapsall,

I refer to your complaint received on 9 July 2022 in which you express disappointment about the decision made by the Medical Board of Australia (the Board) recently to take regulatory action against Dr David Berger.

Unfortunately, the confidentiality provisions in the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act under which we operate restrict me from commenting on any individual regulatory matter except to the extent that information is available on the online public register of practitioners. However, I acknowledge your support of this practitioner and the time taken to provide your comments about this matter.

I'm sorry that I have not been able to speak in any substantive way to the concerns that you raised in your correspondence.

Having received this response to your complaint, you are able to raise your concerns to the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman should you continue to remain concerned about this matter. You can find out more about the Ombudsman's service at www.nhpo.gov.au and contact the Ombudsman by email at complaints@nhpo.gov.au.

Stefan, a high school teacher from regional New South Wales, submitted the following statement of support for Dr. Berger:

I was shocked to hear of Dr Berger's sanctioning by AHPRA, and absolutely flabbergasted that he is being ordered to attend some sort of "education" program if he is to maintain his medical licence. Is this a political decision designed to appease a government that doesn't want any alternative put forward to the way they are managing the pandemic?

Dr Berger tells the truth about the consequences of letting the pandemic rage, and what can be done to stop it. AHPRA's action against him is baseless and should be withdrawn. There are still huge amounts of absences in

schools because of COVID, we aren't able to run normal classes and might have one teacher to supervise at least two or three classes. You can't give students the attention they need.

At some schools, I've heard of kids' classes being put in the playground, there might be two or three classes out there, in the middle of winter, barely supervised, because there's nowhere else to put them. Every day there might be at least seven or eight students absent. One of my students now suffers from long COVID. He is an excellent student but has had about two months off school and his symptoms have continued for four months.

When the climate change debate was raging, I didn't see any climate change sceptics being sanctioned for spouting absolute rubbish, yet Dr Berger, a doctor is being sanctioned for voicing his expert opinion based on sound research and scientific facts. It draws parallels to the Julian Assange case where unearthing unpleasant truths is a crime. What next?

Andiope Hatzis, an Occupational & Public Health Advocate in Australia, sent this "Personal Message of Appreciation from a Health & Safety Advocate":

As a public health advocate, Dr Berger succeeds at both the art and science and is a real treasure and a godsend for the greater public good, beyond Australian shores.

Dr Berger distills and amplifies key Covid-19 messages through the skillful use of digital media, reaching a wide audience; efficiently and effectively highlighting the vital importance of precautionary approaches and safety measures, for the protection of the community.

As a health and safety advocate with lived experience of growing up in a family with an injured worker, I have a heightened understanding of the impacts of illness and injury, on peoples' lives and their communities.

Dr Berger is a stalwart of public health and a shining light in the darkness of the pandemic. Dr Berger, thank-you for your service.

Send us your statements of support for Dr. Berger and we will publish them in the coming days.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact