

# Health Workers Rank-and-File Committee (Australia) adopts resolution to defend Dr David Berger

Health Workers Rank-and-File Committee (Australia)  
15 July 2022

A meeting of the Health Workers Rank-and-File Committee (Australia) was held last Wednesday to expose the persecution and coordinate the defence of Dr David Berger, a highly respected remote area general practitioner.

Berger was ordered by the Medical Board of Australia and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) on June 7 to undertake a disciplinary “education program” for his criticisms of the dropping of any measures to stop the spread of COVID.

Health workers from across Australia attended Wednesday’s meeting, including nurses, doctors, hospital admin staff members, and aged care and disability workers.

The report to the meeting, written by a Queensland junior doctor, described Berger’s background and placed AHPRA’s attack in the context of a new wave of COVID-19 infections and deaths, with governments in Australia and internationally rejecting scientifically-guided public health measures to stop its spread.

“David Berger was born in the UK and is the child of Jewish refugees who fled Nazi genocide,” the report explained. “The experiences of his family combined with what he described as an idealistic desire to be of public service, instilled during his training as a doctor, inspired him to work as a general practitioner (GP) in rural and remote communities. He has worked around the world, including the UK, Solomon Islands and northern Australia.

“He is an experienced and dedicated health communicator and, along with his social media comments and broadcast media interviews, Berger has written extensively on the pandemic and how to fight it.

His articles have been published in the *Age*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Guardian*, *BMJ* (formerly, *British Medical Journal*) and the *Medical Journal of Australia*.

“From day one, Dr Berger has fought strenuously for a scientific approach to COVID and called for its elimination through mass testing and vaccination, supported by lockdowns, masking, quarantines, and internationally coordinated travel restrictions, policies collectively known as Zero-COVID. This is not a fringe position. Principled scientists and doctors, including in Australia, Raina Macintyre, Brendan Crabb and Guy Marks, all internationally respected scholars and clinicians, have advocated for Zero-COVID.

“Their principled and humane stand, mandatory for anyone who calls themselves a health worker, is in stark contrast to the official spokespeople for the various state and federal health departments. One by one, as per the call of big business, they have fallen into line downplaying the severity of COVID, some more enthusiastically than others.

“Nick Coatsworth, former Australian Deputy Chief Medical Officer and infectious disease physician, in November 2021 claimed that if Omicron ‘is milder than Delta, you actually want it to spread within your community... it could be that we want Omicron to spread around the world as quickly as possible.’ He had not a shred of evidence for this. More than 8,000 people in Australia have died since. He has not been deregistered, or even censured by AHPRA for this misinformation.”

The report stated: “Health workers must see this attack on democratic rights and scientific truth as a call to arms. The ultimate target of the silencing of opposition is that of all health workers. We will

advance at the end of this meeting a resolution calling for the defence of Dr Berger, his right to speak, ending his persecution by AHPRA, and to mobilise and build the rank-and-file committees with this demand.”

Following the report, there was extensive discussion about how to take this campaign forward, including through developing a resolution that workers can put forward in their workplaces.

One worker commented: “I didn’t know of Dr Berger’s principled work until I read the WSWs article. The attack on him is appalling and clearly has serious implications. I am glad to be a part of this committee and any efforts to support him.”

The meeting unanimously adopted the following resolution to take forward the defence of Dr Berger and the demand for AHPRA’s restrictions to be lifted:

“This meeting condemns the censorship imposed on Dr David Berger by the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency and demands that all restrictions on him be lifted immediately and unconditionally.

“Dr Berger has won a following of millions of people in Australia and internationally because he has consistently warned of the great dangers of COVID-19 and has advocated the necessary public health measures to deal with it in opposition to the ‘let it rip’ policies carried out by governments and their agencies on behalf of powerful corporate and financial interests.

“He has been a tireless advocate for the health interests of the population and has spoken the truth. All his warnings, made in the face of official opposition, have been confirmed by events. This is why attempts are being made to silence him.

“The AHPRA demand that Dr Berger undergo a ‘program of education’ and produce a ‘reflective practice report’ is akin to the measures imposed by authoritarian and dictatorial regimes.

“The censorship is aimed not only at him. It is intended to silence the growing number of medical and health professionals appalled and concerned about official policy based on the scrapping of all necessary public health measures.

“The censorship imposed on Dr Berger must be ended immediately so that he and others can continue their advocacy in support of the necessary public health measures to deal with the most dangerous pandemic in more than 100 years, and possibly ever.”

The meeting also announced the establishment of the

Health Worker Rank-and-File Committee (Aus) Twitter account, which can be followed here.

One attendee, after the meeting, wrote on Twitter: “Today was a day of great hope for me. I attended my 1st Health Workers Rank and File Committee meeting. We moved a resolution defending Dr Berger against govt attempts to silence him via AHPRA which I will publish asap. A new Twitter presence is born @HealthRandF\_Aus Join us”

Another health worker who attended the meeting, Marie, said: “What is happening to Dr Berger is so unfair. We all should have the right to say our opinion. It is just so unfair that he can’t say what he wants and needs to say against COVID.

“I think we have the right to know what is going on with the pandemic. It is obvious something is wrong with AHPRA. What is the matter? I think they should have listened to him and his knowledge. Why not give him a chance?

“Most people are not wearing masks on public transport; they are confused if we should wear them or not because the government is not implementing mask mandates now. There needs to be public health education, and Dr Berger has been fighting for that.”

*To get involved in the Health Workers Rank-and-File Committee, write to [sephw.aus@gmail.com](mailto:sephw.aus@gmail.com), or contact us on Twitter @HealthRandF\_Aus*



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**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**