

## Media release

---

19 June 2013

### Board finds Minister has no case to answer

On Saturday 25 May 2013, it was reported that AHPRA and the Medical Board of Australia were investigating allegations that senior WA health officials, including Health Minister Kim Hames, former WA Country Health Medical Director Dr Felicity Jefferies, and former Director-General of Health Kim Snowball, were involved in the reuse of 'single-use only' anaesthetic circuits on patients in WA hospitals.

The Board has taken the unusual step of publicly reporting the outcome of the investigation, in the public interest.

The notification - received in February 2013 - alleged that that all anaesthetists working in government hospitals in WA were required to re-use 'single-use only' anaesthetic breathing circuits.

The notification was lodged in WA and files were opened about all practitioners named in the notification. In the interests of fairness, independence and transparency, the matters were referred interstate to be dealt with by the Victorian Board of the Medical Board of Australia, which resolved to investigate the allegations.

After a detailed investigation of all the registered practitioners named in the notification, the Board resolved to take no further action primarily because there was no evidence to support the allegations made against the practitioners. Reasons included:

- that the WA Department of Health had issued a circular dated 13 December 2006 - *Re-use of Single Use Devices* - which stated 'single use only' devices were not to be re-used, in accordance with the Therapeutic Goods Administration Regulations;
- no evidence was provided by the notifier, or obtained in the investigation, to support the allegation that anaesthetists working in government and private hospitals in WA were required to re-use single use devices on successive patients;
- no evidence was provided by the notifier, or obtained in the investigation, to support the allegation that the WA Department of Health, or the practitioner directed, sanctioned or permitted the re-use of single use devices; and
- no evidence was provided to indicate that the practitioner, in practising medicine breached the circular.

The Board is reporting on the outcome of the investigation, with the consent of the practitioners named in the media, to address any public health concerns held by the WA community caused by reports of the Board's investigation.

*For more information*

- Visit [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au) under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200