

Bacchus Marsh investigations

20 March 2023

Background

In 2015, Ahpra and the National Boards launched investigations in relation to 101 matters about the care provided by individual practitioners at the Bacchus Marsh Hospital during the period of 2008 to 2015. This followed a cluster of potentially preventable stillbirths and neonatal deaths at the Bacchus Marsh Hospital (formerly operated by Djerriwarrh Health Service).

Concerns were raised about 43 registered health practitioners among the 101 matters reported (some practitioners were the subject of multiple notifications). All investigations have finalised.

For the 43 registered health practitioners reported, almost half (21 practitioners) had matters which were able to be closed without the need for regulatory action. This includes practitioners who surrendered their registration or who had already undertaken steps towards remediation, which a National Board considers sufficient to manage any ongoing risk to the public. For example, when a practitioner has completed education or training that addresses any gaps identified in their skills or knowledge.

For those practitioners where further action was taken:

- six practitioners were cautioned
- six practitioners had conditions imposed on their registration (including those who were cautioned and had conditions imposed)
- one practitioner was referred to a panel hearing, and
- nine practitioners were referred to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Final tribunal outcomes (in order of completion):

	Name	Board	Former role at DjHS	Status
1.	Ms Dianne Macrae	NMBA	Associate Nurse Unit Manager / Midwife	<p>Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia v Macrae (Review and Regulation) [2018] VCAT 1707</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing: 18 October 2018 • Reasons: 30 October 2018 • Outcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reprimand ○ Undertaking to never again apply for registration

2.	Ms Mary Little	NMBA	Manager Maternity Services	<p>Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia v Little (Review and Regulation) [2020] VCAT 687</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing: 10 June 2020 • Reasons: 25 June 2020 • Outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reprimand ○ Disqualified from applying for registration for 10 years
3.	Ms Julia Meek	NMBA	Director of Nursing	<p>Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia v Meek (Review and Regulation) [2021] VCAT 68</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing: 17 December 2020 • Reasons: 27 January 2021 • Outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reprimand ○ Disqualified from applying for registration for 10 years
4.	Dr Surinder Parhar	MBA	Director of Obstetrics	<p>Medical Board of Australia v Parhar (Review and Regulation) [2021] VCAT 1295</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing: 6 July 2021 • Reasons: 1 November 2021 • Outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reprimand ○ Disqualified from applying for registration for 12 years
5.	Dr Lorraine Lines	MBA	Career Medical Officer (Obstetrics and General) <i>[Junior doctor]</i>	<p>Medical Board of Australia v Lines (Review and Regulation) [2021] VCAT 1394</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing: 3 November 2021 • Reasons: 18 November 2021 • Outcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reprimand ○ Disqualified from applying for registration for 3 months
6.	Dr Jocelyn Benedicto	MBA	Career Medical Officer (Obstetrics and General)	<p>Medical Board of Australia v Benedicto (Review and Regulation) [2022] VCAT 117</p>

			<i>[Junior doctor]</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing: 22 November 2021 • Reasons: 2 February 2022 • Outcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reprimand
7.	Ms Elizabeth Wilson	PhysioBA	Director Clinical and Quality Support Services	<p>Physiotherapy Board of Australia v Wilson (Review and Regulation) [2022] VCAT 881</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing: 27 May 2022 • Reasons: 5 August 2022 • Outcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reprimand ○ Disqualified from applying for registration for 2 years
8.	Dr Rakhi Basu	MBA	Career Medical Officer (Obstetrics and General) <i>[Junior doctor]</i>	<p>Medical Board of Australia v Basu (Review and Regulation) [2022] VCAT 1206</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing: 10 – 12 October 2022 • Reasons: 26 October 2022 • Outcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reprimand
9.	Dr Lee Gruner	MBA	Director of Medical Services	<p>Decision on facts: Medical Board of Australia v Gruner (Review and Regulation) [2022] VCAT 1116</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing: 5 – 6 April 2022 • Reasons: 27 September 2022 <p>Decision on characterisation of conduct and sanction: professional misconduct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons: 17 March 2023 • Outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reprimand ○ Registration cancelled with effect from 1 April 2023 ○ Disqualification from applying for registration for 10 years.