

Decision of the Psychology Board of Australia

Performance and Professional Standards Panel

Jurisdiction: Victoria

Date of hearing: 30 November 2011 and 15 February 2012

Date of decision: 15 February 2012

Classification of Notification:

Documentation – Health report – delay or failure to provide

A mother took her son to the psychologist in relation to difficult and challenging behaviour. In the second consultation the mother advised that she could not afford ongoing treatment and requested a report to the treating GP and paediatrician. The psychologist failed to provide the report.

Allegations

The psychologist faced allegations that the psychologist failed to promote the interests of the patient by not providing a written report when it was appropriate to do so.

Finding

The Panel found the practitioner had not provided appropriate services to the notifier's son and the notifier. It found that he had failed to communicate appropriately and provide a service to a reasonable standard, had been insensitive to the notifier's requests and to her distress about her son's situation, and was not sensitive to the need for a professional opinion that would facilitate effective intervention for his care.

On the basis of those findings, the Panel decided that the practitioner behaved in a way that constituted unprofessional conduct, namely that the conduct was of a lesser standard than that which might be reasonably expected of the practitioner by the public or the practitioner's peers.

Determination

The Panel did not make an adverse determination as it was persuaded that the practitioner had learned from the experience, changed his practice and would not make the same mistake again.