

## Media release

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13 November 2015

### Tribunal reprimands former psychologist, finds professional misconduct

The Qld Civil and Administrative Tribunal has reprimanded former psychologist Steven Spring for professional misconduct, and precluded him from applying for registration for two and a half years.

The Psychology Board of Australia referred the matter to the Tribunal in early 2014, alleging Mr Spring had violated practitioner-patient boundaries on two occasions between 2010 and 2011.

Between July and November 2010, Mr Spring provided therapy to two patients (a couple) who were having relationship problems. Mr Spring saw the patients individually and together, discussing intimate details of their relationship over the course of the therapy. It was during this time that Mr Spring commenced an intimate relationship with one of the patients.

The second boundary violation relates to Mr Spring's treatment of a patient for depression and issues relating to chronic back pain between May and November 2011. The Board alleged that during the course of the therapy, Mr Spring disclosed a number of personal matters to his patient, including that he had received death threats. After this, Mr Spring texted the patient seeking assistance with hiring a hit-man.

The Tribunal reprimanded Mr Spring for professional misconduct, and precluded him from applying for registration as a psychologist for two-and-a-half-years.

Mr Spring's registration lapsed two-and-a-half years ago, so by the time he is able to reapply for registration, he will not have practised for five years and will need to meet all the relevant Board standards.

Mr Spring was ordered to pay the Board's costs.

The reasons for the Tribunal's decision are available on [AustLII](#).