

SERIOUS CONCERNS ABOUT PHYSIOTHERAPISTS CONDUCT

In light of recent events and the decision of the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal the Physiotherapy Board of New Zealand and Physiotherapy New Zealand have released a joint statement.

“We are alarmed in the rise of complaints formally investigated – either through a Professional Conduct Committee, or the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal. The overwhelming majority of these cases relate to sexual misconduct” states Janice Mueller (Chairperson, Physiotherapy Board).

“As Registered Physiotherapists, the public expects the highest professional and ethical standards from our profession. The trust placed in Physiotherapists by patients should not be abused – this is a given” says Ian D’Young (President, Physiotherapy New Zealand). Professional standards of conduct are in place – the *Aotearoa New Zealand Physiotherapy Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* (the Code) – is published jointly by the Physiotherapy Board and Physiotherapy New Zealand. These are a mandatory for physiotherapists practising in New Zealand. The Code states:

“Physiotherapists must not exploit any patient/client whether physically, sexually, emotionally, or financially. Sexual contact of any kind with patients/clients is unacceptable. Physiotherapists must establish and maintain appropriate professional boundaries with patients/clients and their whanau and families.”

Physiotherapy is ‘hands-on’. The public’s confidence in our profession will be seriously damaged if practitioners are not mindful of their ethical and moral responsibilities. PNZ and the Physiotherapy Board are consistent in the message of public safety.

The Physiotherapy Board and Physiotherapy New Zealand are committed to maintaining the highest standards of the profession, and the public’s confidence”

If you are concerned about the conduct of a Physiotherapist we encourage you to contact the Board on 04 471 2610 or through our [website](#).