

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Mr Eran Segev

President, Australian Skeptics

Emailed to: editor@skeptics.com.au; eran@segev.com; vic@skeptics.com.au; nsw@skeptics.com.au

Dear Mr Segev,

As a career scientist, it was with great surprise and disappointment that I was informed of my nomination, along with my Dean and Vice Chancellor for the Bent Spoon Award based on unsubstantiated allegations [REDACTED]. The broad-ranging allegations made about the University's National Institute of Complementary Medicine (NICM) [REDACTED] are totally unsupported [REDACTED].

NICM conducts important scientific research to close the gap between the use of complementary medicines and the understanding and knowledge of if and how they work. NICM conducts itself with the highest degree of integrity, ethics, scientific enquiry and social responsibility. Our research is independent, peer-reviewed, and is published in highly reputable, world-leading journals. NICM has been evaluated by Australia's leading scientists under the *Excellence in Research for Australia* scheme and received the highest ranking of 5 for two consecutive periods, representing research that is deemed well above world standard.

We completely refute these allegations and do not defend the use of any complementary medicine unsupported by evidence. The focus of our research institute excludes many forms of complementary medicine based on this notion. Our work focusses on the evaluation of herbal medicines and supplements in particular with a view to providing better scientific evidence to assist clinicians and consumers to make informed decisions about their healthcare. We are also well aware of the different forms of evidence from traditional use of ethnic (indigenous) medicines to preclinical and clinical scientific evidence.

NICM welcomed the review into homeopathy conducted by the NHMRC in 2015 - it is entirely appropriate that the efficacy of all healthcare treatments is independently assessed. As part of this review NICM was requested by the NHMRC to provide comment on the methodologies used to compile the report. We provided this feedback which solely related to the methods of the review - we have no interest or qualifications to comment on homeopathy per se.

http://www.nicm.edu.au/health_information/government_submissions

I am unsure as to what screening method you may use to filter out offensive, defamatory or inappropriate nominations, but this filter may not have been applied correctly in this instance. We note you reserve the right to reject nominations that are deemed inappropriate, defamatory or frivolous. We kindly request you exercise this right and seek your assistance to withdraw this offensive and unsubstantiated nomination. We acknowledge the work of the Skeptics Society and Friends of Science in Medicine as we share a common goal in striving to achieve better evidence based healthcare.

With kind regards



Professor Alan Bensoussan

Director

22 November 2016