

2nd May 2020

The Hon Jenny Mikakos
Victorian Minister for Health
jenny.mikakos@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Minister Mikakos,

Exclusion of Bowen therapists from practicing in Victoria during COVID-19 pandemic

We write to you on behalf of the nearly 2,500 Bowen therapists in Australia, many of whom are represented by membership to the Bowen Therapists Federation of Australia (BTFA).

We are seeking clarification on why Bowen therapists are still restricted from practicing in Victoria during the COVID-19 pandemic, while remedial massage and myotherapist practitioners are able to resume.

Bowen therapy is a holistic remedial technique in line with remedial massage and myotherapy. It aims to treat the cause of joint pain, muscle issues, sports injuries, ongoing or intermittent pain. Bowen therapy is conducted through clothing without the use of oils, and Bowen therapists are able to follow the social distancing rules set by government as we have a short intake with each client (which can be conducted 1.5m apart). We follow strict hygiene protocols and always have our clients' safety and wellbeing in mind.

Bowen therapists all hold professional qualifications (a Diploma of Specialised Bowen Therapy or a Cert IV in Bowen Therapy) from registered training provider RTO#41134, delivering nationally-recognised Bowen therapy training in every State/Territory in Australia and approved by ASQA.

Up until 1st April 2019, Bowen therapy was eligible for a private health insurance rebate, but this has since been cut by the Federal Government.

It would seem that only AHPRA-registered health care workers with health fund status are permitted to keep practicing during the COVID-19 pandemic. We consider this to be discriminatory and unfair.

As small businesses, Bowen therapists have built up a client base who may suffer emotionally and physically without their regular treatment. Many clients rely on Bowen therapy to keep them mobile and pain-free.

We have so far had confirmation from the NSW, WA, QLD and ACT governments under their Remedial Massage Therapy clarification that Bowen therapists are permitted to resume practice. We urge the Victorian Government to kindly allow Bowen therapists to resume their practice as an essential service at this time, when it is much needed.

Yours sincerely,



Heather Hartley
President – Bowen Therapists Federation of Australia