

## QUEENSLAND

## COMMISSIONS OF INQUIRY ACT 1950

## QUEENSLAND PUBLIC HOSPITALS COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

## STATEMENT OF PEGGY BROWN

1. I, PEGGY BROWN, Director of Clinical Services, Mental Health ACT, of c/o Mental Health ACT, cnr Moore and Alinga Streets, Canberra City, Australian Capital Territory, acknowledge that this written statement by me dated 21 September 2005 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
2. This statement is made without prior knowledge of any evidence or information held by the Inquiry which is potentially adverse to me and in the expectation that I will be afforded procedural fairness should any adverse allegation be raised against me.

## Qualifications and experience

3. I was awarded the qualification of Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (with second class honours) from the University of Queensland in 1983.
4. In 1991 I achieved Fellowship of the Royal Australia and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists.
5. I was appointed to the position of Chief Psychiatrist and Acting Director of Mental Health in January 1997.
6. In February 2000, I was appointed to the position of Director of Mental Health, a statutory position under the *Mental Health Act 2000*. In late 2000, I became Director of the Mental Health Unit, Queensland Health, Corporate Office.
7. In March 2003, I took leave without pay from Queensland Health and went to work in the United Kingdom. In September 2004, I resigned from my employment with Queensland Health and moved to Canberra.
8. Since October 2004, I have held the position of Director of Clinical Services, Mental Health ACT and in December 2004, I was appointed as Chief Psychiatrist, a statutory position created by virtue of the *Mental Health (Treatment and Care) Act 1994*. I am also currently acting General Manager, Mental Health ACT.

## Position responsibilities

9. The position of Director of Mental Health is a statutory function under the *Mental Health Act 2000* as it was under the previous *Mental Health Act 1974*. I also held

the concurrent position of Director of the Mental Health Unit, Queensland Health and was responsible for the oversighting of policy, funding and statewide strategic planning for mental health services.

10. The Mental Health Unit of Queensland Health worked in conjunction with the Districts and Zonal Management Units in the implementation of statewide policy.

### Vincent Berg

11. I have been asked to provide this statement in relation to my involvement with the Vincent Berg matter.
12. I am advised that at paragraph 223 of the statement of Dr Steve Buckland, former Director-General, Queensland Health, he has stated that he consulted with *'psychiatrists in the Mental Health Unit of QH'* regarding the disclosure to former patients of Vincent Berg.
13. I have located my diary from 2002 and can confirm that on 5 December 2002, I met with Dr Buckland who was then General Manager Health Services ('GMHS').
14. My diary indicates that I had been in Townsville on 4 December 2002 attending a meeting with Dr John Allen, Director Integrated Mental Health Service and Ms Debbie Fawcett, Manager of Integrated Mental Health Service, on an unrelated issue.
15. Immediately following that meeting, I was asked to meet with Dr Andrew Johnson, Executive Director Medical Services. I was informed at that time that Vincent Berg, who had been appointed to the position of non-training Registrar in Psychiatry at Townsville Hospital in January 2000 (for 1 year), had in fact made false assertions as to his qualifications.
16. Dr Johnson informed me that upon becoming aware of this information, that an audit had been undertaken of all patients seen by Vincent Berg. I was not shown a copy of the audit undertaken by Townsville Hospital, but had a discussion regarding the audit findings with Dr Johnson. I recall that Dr Johnson indicated that they intended to make a public disclosure regarding Vincent Berg's bogus qualification.
17. At that meeting, I recall enquiring of Dr Johnson whether he had raised this issue with the Zonal Management Unit and/or GMHS. As a psychiatrist, I personally felt that there were a number of issues around a public disclosure, however I am now unable to recall if I discussed my concerns at that time with Dr Johnson.
18. On my return to Brisbane, I telephoned Dr Buckland, in his position as GMHS to discuss my concerns with him. I am unable to recall whether I spoke with Dr Buckland over the telephone, or his Executive Support Officer. However, I recall meeting with Dr Buckland in his office on 5 December 2002 to discuss my concerns with him.

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19. I did not create any documentation in relation to that meeting.

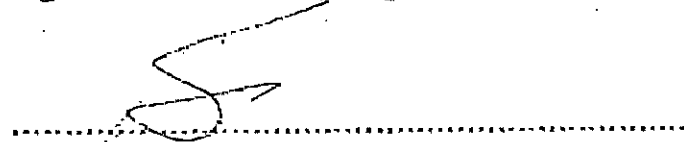
20. The meeting took between 30-60 minutes and I expressed my concerns in relation to Dr Johnson's proposal to make a public announcement regarding Vincent Berg. My concerns involved weighing up the potential risks to mental health patients as against the public benefit of such disclosure.

21. Vincent Berg had been supervised during the course of his 1 year contract at the Townsville Hospital. The audit conducted did not suggest any major issues surrounding the provision of care by Vincent Berg.

22. My recollection was that the audit demonstrated that only a small number of patients, approximately 3 or 4, may have required follow up. It was for these reasons that I favoured selected follow up over public disclosure. I recall that Dr Buckland and I were in agreement regarding this issue.

23. I am advised that Dr Buckland has stated in his evidence that he also consulted with the Principal Advisor in Psychiatry. At the time, this was a position held by Dr Arnold Waugh, who worked within my unit. I am unaware whether Dr Buckland consulted with Dr Waugh.

Signed at Canberra on 21 September 2005.



Peggy Brown  
Director of Clinical Services  
Mental Health ACT  
Canberra