

DWK 32

**BUNDABERG HEALTH SERVICE DISTRICT
MEDICAL SERVICES**

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Our Ref: DK-ja

24 December 2003

Mr Miles de Lacey
Complaints Assessment Coordinator
Office of Health Practitioner Registration Boards
GPO Box 2438
BRISBANE Q. 4001

Dear Miles

Re: Fax dated 18 December 2003.

As outlined in my letter of 21 October 2003, there were initially two complaints about Dr Qureshi from P23 and P13. I have attached a copy of the complaint from P23. Since my second letter, I have received a further complaint about Dr Qureshi approaching P13 (see attachment). I have also attached a copy of an email from Ms Toni Hoffman, then Acting Assistant Director of Nursing, concerning reports from nursing staff about Dr Qureshi. No staff have come forward to substantiate this email or to report anything further.

I believe that the three incidents appear sexually motivated with the first complainant noting prolonged and excessive touching of her breasts and Dr Qureshi's wet groin area, the second complainant noting stroking of her inside thigh, touching of breasts and Dr Qureshi allegedly stating she needed a massage, while rubbing his hand between her breasts. Finally the third complainant noted kisses on her cheek and touching of her breasts.

In my view, there appears to be a pattern emerging. Touching of breasts has occurred in all incidents, while the second and third complainant noted that Dr Qureshi was stroking their head and hair during the period surrounding the actions that caused them most distress. On reflection these two ladies attached even greater significance to the head and hair stroking, having felt that this action was not expected and made them feel uneasy. The latter two events occurred after-hours. The women are of various ages; none of whom have met Dr Qureshi previously. There doesn't appear to be any benefit for any patient to make any complaint. All complainants were immediately upset, expressing strong wishes never to see Dr Qureshi again and requesting care by others. All ladies clearly explained to me that these actions were unrequested, unwelcome and formed no part of any normal clinical examination, based upon their past experience.

Complainant 2 noted that she had been cared for in three hospitals in different locations over the last two years and believed she had been exposed to many different doctors, examinations and clinical techniques.

These incidents have been referred to the Audit and Operational Review Unit of Queensland Health. Dr Qureshi has been informed verbally and in writing that he must ensure a chaperone accompanies him when examining all female patients and he has been removed from the on-call roster until further notice. It should be noted that I counselled Dr Qureshi after the first incident about professional behaviour reinforcing expectations in Australia, with regard to clinical examination, including breast and internal examinations plus associated communication/explanation prior, during and after such examinations. After the email about staff concerns (as noted above), I counselled Dr Qureshi about ensuring personal space was maintained and encouraged him to project his voice to ensure clear communication between staff and himself.

I don't believe that these behaviours are due to cultural misunderstanding. While Dr Qureshi was born and educated in Pakistan, he undertook a number of clinical attachments in Northern Ireland from August 2002, prior to commencing employment in Australia. There are many other overseas trained doctors practising at Bundaberg Base Hospital, including some from Pakistan, whom I understand Dr Qureshi socialises with. They would be able to provide appropriate mentorship and advice on behaviour expectations in the Australian context. Bundaberg Health Service District employs a Director of Clinical Training (DCT) and a Medical Education Officer. Both people are available to provide any advice in such matters as required or requested. I know that Dr Qureshi has spoken to the DCT on at least one occasion.

I hope this information is useful. Should you require any further information, please don't hesitate to contact my office on 4150 2210.

Yours sincerely



Dr Darren Keating
Director of Medical Services