

16 August 2023

**To: Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development,
Communications, and the Arts**

Exposure draft of the Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023

Definitions

Misinformation – Dissemination of false, or inaccurate information, often without intent to deceive.

Disinformation – Deliberate spread of false information to deceive and manipulate.

Problems with the definitions – they are too broad. True/ correct/ evidence-based information and debated medical information can be mislabelled as misinformation and disinformation by anyone, including politicians and bureaucrats.

Dangers to the practice of medicine in Australia

The ethical practice of medicine requires the freedom of individual medical practitioners and of Australian medical organisations to openly debate the many changing aspects of the practice of medicine as new and old medical information emerges and new medical events occur.

If this freedom to debate is censored or repressed in any way by labelling any aspect of this debate as misinformation or disinformation then the ethical practice of medicine in Australia will be destroyed and patients harmed as a result.

Example

The Covid Vaccines were declared to be safe and effective by the Australian government but subsequently found to be unsafe for many Australians and ineffective in preventing transmission of Covid-19 and its clinical sequelae for many patients.

Debate was censored by the Australian government via AHPRA and by the mainstream media and what was subsequently proven to be correct was falsely labelled by Australian health bureaucrats as misinformation.

ACMA EXTRAORDINARY POWERS

Under the current Australian government's proposed laws, ACMA would gain sweeping powers to require a medical practitioner, or indeed any Australian, to appear at a time and place of its choosing to answer questions about misinformation or disinformation. Heavy fines would apply for non-attendance.

Danger to the integrity of Australia's healthcare system

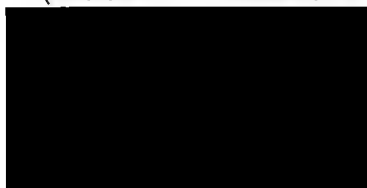
This Bill has the potential to undermine the trust between medical practitioners and their patients, thus compromising the integrity of Australia's healthcare system and the excellent medical outcomes achieved in the past.

Social Media Companies

ADF acknowledges that social media companies are capable of using algorithms and other digital technology that may promote negative consequences to their users because they are more remunerative, despite knowing the likely consequences.

The solution is to legislate for digital/ social media companies to make these algorithms transparent to all Australians.

(Reference - Whistleblower testimony to USA Congress by Frances Haugen)



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