



## **The Regulatory System is broken – it needs urgent repair to prevent further suicides.**

Voice of Chinese Australians Commentary No 12 25 March 2023

Dr Yen-Yung Yap was a founding member of the National Chinese Australian Leadership Group and his sudden death was reported in the Advertiser and the Daily Mail. We quote the Daily Mail headline:

### **Devastated wife of gynaecologist who took his own life in mysterious circumstances reveals he was being disciplined at work after a string of controversial deliveries.**

- Dr Yen-Yung Yap, 43, was found dead on September 5 in a forest near Adelaide.
- Dr Yap told by the medical board they had received complaints of misconduct.
- His wife, Mei-Khing Loo, is demanding answers about the investigation.
- She said her husband claimed he'd done nothing wrong before he disappeared .

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8899309/Wife-Dr-Yen-Yung-Yap-wants-answers-investigation-husband-death.html>

[https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=AAWEB\\_WRE170\\_a\\_GGL&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.adelaidenow.com.au%2Fnews%2Fsouth-australia%2Fdr-yenyung-yaps-widow-demands-answers-over-the-death-of-her-obstetrician-husband-amid-a-medical-board-investigation%2Fnews-story%2F620e1778f42b09f99d8d363bf3349e19&memtype=anonymous&mode=premium&v21=dynamic-groupa-control-noscore&V21spcbehaviour=append](https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=AAWEB_WRE170_a_GGL&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.adelaidenow.com.au%2Fnews%2Fsouth-australia%2Fdr-yenyung-yaps-widow-demands-answers-over-the-death-of-her-obstetrician-husband-amid-a-medical-board-investigation%2Fnews-story%2F620e1778f42b09f99d8d363bf3349e19&memtype=anonymous&mode=premium&v21=dynamic-groupa-control-noscore&V21spcbehaviour=append)

This nightmare for the Yap family was real and was bravely faced by his widow, Mei-Khing and her three children. The question is how long the family has to endure such torturous waiting to obtain ‘justice’ for Dr Yap, especially with the regulatory body.

This issue seemed to lie dormant until The Advertiser in Adelaide picked up the story again.

[https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=AAWEB\\_WRE170\\_a\\_GGL&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.adelaidenow.com.au%2Fnews%2Fsouth-australia%2Fahpra-overhaul-as-shocking-report-reveals-suicide-rates-of-underinvestigation-practitioners%2Fnews-story%2Fa0c6ac5066b004ec9f49e446d0ffc378&memtype=anonymous&mode=premium&v21=dynamic-groupa-control-noscore&V21spcbehaviour=append](https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=AAWEB_WRE170_a_GGL&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.adelaidenow.com.au%2Fnews%2Fsouth-australia%2Fahpra-overhaul-as-shocking-report-reveals-suicide-rates-of-underinvestigation-practitioners%2Fnews-story%2Fa0c6ac5066b004ec9f49e446d0ffc378&memtype=anonymous&mode=premium&v21=dynamic-groupa-control-noscore&V21spcbehaviour=append)

### **AHPRA overhaul as shocking report reveals suicide rates of under investigation practitioners.**

The widow of a respected Adelaide obstetrician says families are being “torn apart” by the nation’s medical regulator, as shocking new research reveals 16 healthcare workers died by suicide over four years while under investigation. (Selected quotes from The Advertiser)

“A ground breaking report into the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) found that 16 healthcare workers had taken their own lives and another four had attempted after being reported to the industry body between January 2018 and December 2021.

Dr Yap’s wife, Mei-Khing Loo, who has battled ongoing health complications she attributes to the trauma of her husband’s death, said there was “no justice” for doctors who were “failed” by AHPRA. Under AHPRA’s reporting system, complaints can be made anonymously and do not require supporting evidence.

**“I believe he took his life because of the stress of AHPRA doing its investigations,” Ms Loo said. “It has torn my family apart. That’s the consequence of these investigations, they break apart families – I think a lot of other families have gone through the same as me.” Despite her pleas, Ms Loo said AHPRA denied her repeated requests to complete the investigation into her late husband.**

Are the number of deaths mentioned in the review represents only the tip of the iceberg?



Suicide rates among doctors in Australia are high and who knows how many doctors have committed suicide due to a Sham Peer Review?

<https://insightplus.mja.com.au/2022/22/100-years-of-physician-suicide-call-for-action>

The law used by the regulatory body is discussed in our commentary on Dr Charlie Teo.

**Another Doctor on the Crucifix – Victim of Tall Poppy Syndrome**

<https://www.quora.com/What-are-peoples-opinions-on-neurosurgeon-Dr-Charlie-Teo/answer/Anthony-Pun>

The findings of the investigators can be summarised as follows:

- 1 Managing Health Concerns - Reduce investigative timelines.
- 2 Being Open, Transparent and Maintaining Hope.
- 3 Supporting Practitioners, Help at-risk practitioners.
- 4 Learning From Practitioner Experience: Continue research into the impact of regulation on those involved in the processes, including reviews of all serious incidents .

We echo Ms Lo's comments about these suggested reforms:

Ms Loo said she hoped the researchers' tragic findings would prompt an overhaul of the reporting process, saving other families from the trauma she and her children endured.

We also support the comments of medical and health law specialist Jaswinder Sekhon, principal at the national firm Goldman Law, who was acting for Dr Yap, prior to his death, on a number of matters instigated by AHPRA.

He said that the unchecked actions of AHPRA and the medical councils contributed greatly to the stress for Dr Yap and his family and called for urgent and immediate reform of the regulator's far reaching powers. "I am very concerned about the stress, investigations pose on other health professionals, the damage to the profession and, ultimately, the public's confidence in health care."

The above sentiments expressed by Ms Lo, the widow of Dr Yap and lawyer Jaswinder Sekhon are strongly supported by the Australian Health Reform Association (AHReform).

The Chinese Australian community wish to see a quick resolution of Dr Yap's case on humanitarian grounds, that such closure, agreeable by both parties, would reduce the pain and sufferings of Dr Yap's widow and her children.

The suicide rates is unacceptable to the general Australian public for "doctors under investigations"! Medical practitioners' jobs are stressful enough and genuine unintended mistakes happen. AHPRA needs not to put extra pressure on medical practitioners. We pray for quick appropriate solutions to prevent the unnecessary deaths of Australian doctors whose were trying to save lives and improve the well-being of fellow Australians. To the authorities involved, can you please make it a national priority in implementing these reforms.

Chinese Australians empathize with Yap family with this statement: "This appears to be a double calamity – AHPRA starts but does not complete the investigation - one life, Dr Yap's sadly lost and pain and suffering to his wife and family for three years in not completing the investigation – our hearts go out to her."

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