



5 February 2024

Clinical Services Manager
Wellington Rape Crisis

Concerns regarding cancellation of Wellington Rape Crisis services

Kia ora Ms _____,

1. The Free Speech Union is a registered trade union with a mission to fight for, protect, and expand New Zealanders' rights to freedom of speech, conscience, and intellectual inquiry. We believe in a tolerant society that respects diversity, including a diversity of thought, and believe this is brought about not only through government policy, but in the attitudes and decisions of everyday New Zealanders.
2. We have been approached by one of our members, _____, alleging that she has been refused service at the Wellington Rape Crisis centre, and believes this to be on the basis of her gender-critical beliefs. We understand she has had her appointments cancelled on the grounds that she may cause conflict in the centre's waiting room, following a discussion in which she challenged Wellington Rape Crisis' policy of including transgender people in their services alongside other women. Ms _____ mentioned that this also followed comments of hers in which she believed she was allowed to speak her mind to others so long as she was not being threatening or insulting.
3. We understand your position and the necessity of ensuring your waiting room is a safe space for those engaging your services. However, _____ informs us she was speaking in the hypothetical, and had never even been in the waiting room with another person. We are concerned that her personal views influenced the decision to cancel her future appointments, and are concerned at the fact that the response to your concerns was to simply cancel her future appointments, rather than find a way to address them while still providing assistance to Ms _____.
4. There could have been any number of alternatives your centre could have afforded Ms _____. Future appointments could have been done remotely, as we understand is common practice these days. At the very least, she could have been warned against talking to others in the waiting room, rather than having services pulled at the first instance.
5. No society is well served when even therapy services get pulled in knee-jerk reactions to indiscretionary comments said to one's counsellors. We would hope that Ms _____ personal views themselves, which you are perfectly entitled to disagree with, did not weigh in the decision to decline her your services. We understand your obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act but also hope that Ms _____ right to not be discriminated against under the Human Rights Act is respected, too.
6. We would be interested to hear your thoughts on this matter, and discuss how Wellington Rape Crisis may be able to accommodate those like Ms _____. We believe the services you provide to the

community are essential and wish to see them made available to as many people who need it as possible.

7. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Yours faithfully,

Free Speech Union (New Zealand) Inc.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Ayling', with a horizontal line underneath.

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