



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	205/98
2. Advertiser	Australian Physiotherapy Association
3. Product	Professional Services
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 10 November 1998
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The series of advertisements features the literary character, the ‘Hunchback of Notre Dame.’ The character is shown struggling and groaning as he pulls the rope to ring the bell in the bell tower. Then, straightening up, his hunch seeming to dissolve he seems very pleased. A male voiceover says, ‘A member of the Australian Physiotherapy Association can help almost anybody ... Move well, stay well.’ In one or two of the advertisements in the series, the character on leaving the room, bangs his head on the door frame (now too low to easily accommodate his frame).

THE COMPLAINT

Comments the complainant made about the advertisement included:

‘(the advertisement uses) the image of a person with a spinal disability as an object of fun. This is both offensive and degrading to people with disabilities, and it is images and adverts such as these which continue to foster negative stereotypes of people with disabilities.’

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (‘the Board’) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (‘the Code’).

The Board was of the view that the portrayal of the person did not constitute discrimination or vilification of any section of the community and did not breach the Code. The Board dismissed the complaint.