

# Media Release

**The Hon Marlene Kairouz MP**

Minister for Local Government

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation



Thursday, 28 September, 2017

## **BELLE GIBSON PENALISED FOR MISLEADING HEALTH CLAIMS**

Minister for Consumer Affairs Marlene Kairouz has welcomed the orders handed down against Belle Gibson in the Federal Court of Australia today.

The court ordered that Ms Gibson pay penalties totalling \$410,000 for five contraventions of section 21 of the Australian Consumer Law (Vic).

Consumer Affairs Victoria took legal action to protect Australians from groundless health advice that posed a serious risk to the community - and to hold Ms Gibson to account.

The top priority in this case has been to restrict Ms Gibson from making and profiting from false medical claims.

In March this year, Justice Debra Mortimer found Ms Gibson and her company, Inkerman Road Nominees (in liquidation), had engaged in misleading and deceptive conduct and unconscionable conduct in the promotion of The Whole Pantry book and app.

Ms Gibson has been ordered to pay the following amounts:

- \$90,000 penalty for the contravention concerning the app sales donations claims;
- \$90,000 penalty for the contravention concerning the company earnings donations claims;
- \$50,000 penalty for the contravention concerning the app launch donations claim;
- \$150,000 penalty for the contravention concerning the Schwarz family app donations claim;
- \$30,000 penalty for the contravention concerning the Mother's Day event donations claim.

Consumer Affairs Victoria commenced legal action in the Federal Court of Australia against Belle Gibson and Inkerman Road Nominees Pty Ltd in 2016 for engaging in misleading and deceptive conduct and unconscionable conduct in breach of Australian Consumer Law (Vic).

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Consumer Affairs Marlene Kairouz**

*"Belle Gibson sold a web of lies to vulnerable, desperate people – and thought she could get away with it."*

*"Her actions were not only careless, but also dangerous. Her book and app were targeted at people who had cancer and were looking for a ray of hope."*

*"The penalties handed down today send a clear message that we won't put up with this rubbish, particularly when it stands to affect those battling cancer."*

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