

Mission in the City:

Serving on government boards and committees

Purpose:

- 1 Work within existing power and accountability structures, rather than externally as advocate or critic.
- 2 Not acting as representative of Churches to protect or advance an institutional viewpoint, but as an expert in ethics, governance or justice.
- 3 To introduce into the sphere of public policy an element of the Lord's Prayer 'Your kingdom come, on earth....'
- 4 To work with other public networks to produce policy and practice to enhance the public good.
- 5 To promote the interests of minorities such as non-English speakers, ethnic groups, refugees and asylum seekers, and people with disabilities.

Government committees of which Alan Nichols has been a member:

Hospital Boards:

- Board of the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, Melbourne 1989-91, including 2 years as chair of the Ethics Committee.
- 9 years 2000-2009 on the Board of Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Melbourne, including 8 years as Deputy Chair and 7 years as Chair of the Ethics Committee, with a significant research component.
- Chair of the Victorian Health Department's Cancer Survivorship Project Committee 2012-14. Member, Cancer Survivorship Program Advisory Committee for 2016-18.

Social justice:

- 1981-82 Chair, Income Security Task Force, for Victorian Minister for Community Welfare Pauline Toner
- 1983-85 Member, Family Law Council's Reproductive Technology Committee (the Asche Committee), which produced the report *Creating Children* (1985).
- Member of the Social Justice Consultative Council of the Victorian Government 1988-91, and of the Community Council Against Violence in the same period.
- 2001-2006 Community Visitor in the Office of the Public Advocate, Department of Justice. Board Member of the Board of the Community Visiting Programme 2004-06.

Infertility and Reproduction:

- Board member of the Victorian Infertility Treatment Authority 2000-04, and a member of the Victorian Assisted Reproduction Treatment Authority's Ethics Committee 2006-13 and then Advisory Committee 2014-present.
- Member, Victorian Biotechnology Ethics Advisory Committee 2006-2008.

Nongovernment agencies:

- Also served on Boards in the domestic welfare sector, in particular as Council member of the Victorian Council of Social Service 1976-86 and President 1981; and Board member of the Australian Council of Social Service 1980-86.

A total of 34 years in 'public service' on government decision-making bodies.

Lessons learned and achievements gained (always in cooperation with other Board members, CEO and staff):

- 1 There are many people of goodwill to work with in enhancing the common good.
- 2 In each area specific achievements, such as better patient care within a cancer hospital, increased revenue for research.
- 3 In areas of controversy such as genetically modified crops or access to IVF for lesbian couples, a view based on Christian ethnics is welcomed, and often supported.
- 4 Specific improvements in State subsidies for travel, etc, added to pensions.
- 5 Improved standards in accommodation standards for disabled and homeless people.
- 6 Many opportunities arise for 'witness', by counselling, supporting minorities, finding others with compatible views on particular issues.

Alan Nichols

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