

# Chiropractic degree wins Bent Spoon

25 November, 2011 **Sophie Cousins** 0 comments

          

RMIT University has won the Bent Spoon Award for being "the perpetrator of the most preposterous piece of paranormal or pseudo-scientific piffle", for the alleged content of its chiropractic degrees.

Awarded by the Australian Skeptics, the **dishonour** was given to the Melbourne-based university for its chiropractic teachings and for treating children and infants at its on-campus paediatric chiropractic clinics.

The clinics were subject to a series of complaints earlier this year by leading figures in medicine, amid concern there was no evidence that chiropractic treatments on children were safe or effective.

The university - contacted yesterday by Australian Doctor refused to comment on its award.

The high-profile campaigner against unproven health treatments, Loretta Marron, won the Skeptic of the Year award for her campaign against the chiropractic industry.

Her lobbying of government has largely focused on what she calls "fundamentalist" chiropractors -- those who believe vertebral subluxation is the cause of most disease, a philosophy which appears to deny germ theory.

Speaking with Australian Doctor, the retired scientist said: "It never occurred to me before that they would teach this type of nonsense in a university".

"If I see something that's not right, I feel I should do something about it. What fundamentalist chiropractors believe in is total bollocks."

Ms Marron, who began campaigning after she saw the "outrageous claims" made by some alternative therapists after her diagnosis of breast cancer, said she wanted people to receive evidence-based information.

"They need protecting; they are victims twice -- first of the disease, and then of the behaviour of alternative therapists."

RMIT refused to comment this week. But back in March this year the university told Australian Doctor: "RMIT is committed to an ethic of rigorous scientific enquiry....RMIT promotes evidence-based chiropractic education and practice and recognises there is an overall lack of high-level clinical evidence in chiropractic."

In addition, a dishonourable mention went to the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and Blackmores, for its attempt to market its dietary supplements to patients as a Coke and fries-style accompaniment to prescription medicines.

To read Australian Skeptics' undercover visit to an RMIT open day where they sat in on a chiropractic lecture, [click here](#).

