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Teacher in 'harmful cult' gets NDIS funds

EXCLUSIVE

By **RICK MORTON**, SOCIAL AFFAIRS WRITER

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A “behaviour specialist” who teaches in a “socially harmful cult” runs a clinic that - receives taxpayer money through a federal autism program and the \$22 billion National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Just a day after Universal Medicine cult leader Serge Benhayon was found by the NSW - Supreme Court to be the leader “of a group which to his knowledge makes false claims about healing that causes harm to others”, an instructor called Tanya Curtis appeared in a video defending his teachings.

Mr Benhayon was also found by the jury to have an “indecent interest in young girls as young as 10 whom he causes to stay at his house unaccompanied”. During a defamation case against a former client, which he lost, the former bankrupt and one-time tennis coach told the jury he was the reincarnation of Leonardo da Vinci.

Ms Curtis — a member of the Universal Medicine clinic in Brisbane — is the founder and sole director of Fabic Pty Ltd, which deals predominantly with children who have autism, ADHD and anxiety or depression.

Fabic is an approved provider under the federal government’s Helping Children with Autism program, which subsidises early-intervention services. Fabic employs a speech pathologist, occupational therapist and psychologist.

Fabic, based on the Gold Coast, is also a registered provider with the NDIS offering accommodation, employment, transport and household services.

Almost anyone can register for the NDIS to provide household tasks without needing extensive checks or vetting.

The Weekend Australian revealed another Gold Coast clinician, psychologist Natasha Lakaev, was the founder and instructor of the unrelated Universal Knowledge program

and is also listed as an approved provider of services by the federal government.

In the video posted on the Facebook page of Universal Medicine's Brisbane branch, Uni-med Brisbane, Ms Curtis defends the teaching of "ageless wisdom" by Mr Benhayon. She explains "the ancient lineage of philosophical teachings from greats such as Imhotep, Buddha, Plato and now Serge Benhayon". "After I had my first healing session I went and attended a course that was presented by Serge Benhayon on the ageless wisdom teachings, and the best way I could describe it was it felt like home," she says in the video.

Ms Curtis's Fabic organisation sells a range of audio recordings, presentations and even children's books. One item, a book of tips for parents with behaviourally challenged children, includes a quote by Mr Benhayon on the cover.

She did not respond to questions about whether she used Universal Medicine theories or techniques in her taxpayer-funded work but Ms Curtis told *The Australian* she achieved results.

"I am highly experienced and qualified in the area of working with any person, groups and organisations who are supporting behaviour change in one person and/or a group of people," she said. "Our philosophy is based on seeing the strengths in every person and thus no person and/or their behaviours will ever be judged. Due to the quality and principles of the work that I offer at Fabic, I am often known as the 'last resort person', obtaining results with behaviour change in cases where other attempts have failed."

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is assuming responsibility for registration of service providers under the scheme. "(The commission) has a range of actions it can take if it discovers that some ... organisations or their key personnel are not suitable to be involved in the provision of supports or services to NDIS participants," a spokeswoman said.

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