**Nitschke seeks last laugh after getting NT AMA flick**

By JILL POULSEN

IN the latest blow to voluntary euthanasia campaigner Dr Philip Nitschke’s professional reputation, the Australian Medical Association NT has taken the unusual step of kicking him out.

In a letter sent to Dr Nitschke (pictured) earlier this month AMA NT vice-president Dr Barbara Houertz said she had received a request from the Australian Medical Association Northern Territory Council to meet on Tuesday, 10 February, 2015 and unanimously agreed that you be expelled from the Association.

Dr Nitschke said he was surprised to be expelled.

“Given the fact that the court review is imminent, it was surprising to get a letter from the NT AMA the other day telling me their council had taken a unanimous decision to expel me from the AMA,” he said.

“I had suggested to them it may be wise to await the court decision, but clearly they were very keen to act. If we win, I’ll be wanting an equally enthusiastic reinstatement. Dr Nitschke’s had to get his medical registration back will be heard in the NT Supreme Court at the start of April.

His registration was suspended in July last year after he admitted to supporting 45-year-old Perth man Nigel Brayley’s decision to take his own life despite knowing he was not terminally ill.

Mr Brayley died in May 2013 after taking euthanasia drug Nembutal. Dr Nitschke appealed the decision to suspend him and argued he had never been in a doctor-patient relationship with Mr Brayley.

The matter was heard in Darwin by the NT Health Professional Review Tribunal in November last year but following the three-day hearing the tribunal decided Dr Nitschke’s suspension should continue – leading to the Supreme Court challenge.

This week Dr Nitschke told the NT News the medical tribunal was considering a new set of 12 complaints about his alleged professional misconduct.

Dr Nitschke is in London preparing for his upcoming show at the Edinburgh Comedy Festival.

“It’s to be his stand-up comedy debut after teaming up with British comedian Mel Moon to write and deliver the show they are calling Comedy with Purpose. The material will be centred on euthanasia.

“The medical board and AMA has provided a wealth of material that lends itself to satire, and I welcome the chance to ridicule them from the stage,” Dr Nitschke said.

**Alarm as rare virus found in flying fox**

THE deadly Australian bat lyssavirus has been detected in a flying fox in the Top End, prompting the Territory Government to warn people about contact with all bats.

Centre for Disease Control director Dr Vicki Krause said it was the second bat to test positive in recent months and only the third ever in the NT, the first being in 1997.

“Any flying fox or bat in the NT should be treated as a potential carrier of the disease and close contact should be treated as a potential carrier of the disease, the virus is usually transmitted from bats to people through the blood, saliva, faeces, or urine of the animal,” she said.

The virus affects the nervous system and causes fatal encephalitis – inflammation of the brain.

“Bat lyssavirus is a bat-borne infectious disease that mainly infects bats and is usually fatal to humans. It is rarely transmitted from bats to people,” Dr Krause said.

She said the virus was usually transmitted from bats to people through bites or scratches, or by being exposed to bat saliva through the eyes, nose or mouth.

“The virus can cause or exposure to bat fur, faeces, urine or blood does not pose a risk of exposure to AVL, nor does being near bat roosting areas. However any direct contact with bats increases the risk of potential injury and should be avoided,” she said.

Dr Krause was also quick to point out that the bats caught in recent months were flying foxes, and that these bats were not associated with the lyssavirus.

**Trap set for creek saltie**

PARKS and Wildlife are attempting to trap a 3.5m saltwater crocodile spotted near Manning Dam yesterday.

The crocodile was reported to the Parks and Wildlife team by a member of the public, and is believed to be in the creek just below the dam wall of the popular recreation spot.

The area where the saltie is suspected to be hiding has been declared off-limits by the Power and Water Corporation, who manage the creek.

The crocodile management team have set a trap and will monitor it regularly.

The team have removed 56 crocodiles from Top End waters this year, including recent catches at Berry Springs and Marlows Lagoon.

Croc sightings can be reported to 0492 822 859 (Darwin) and 0407 958 455 (Katherine).