

## By David Hirsch

**A**lthough tort reform has certainly reduced claims numbers overall, there are still many 'high-value' medical negligence claims and other claims involving significant injury that can be pursued on behalf of injured people.

This edition features papers that offer a mix of practical medical and legal advice that should assist lawyers in cases where medical issues are at the fore.

Bill Madden and Tina Cockburn analyse 'open disclosure' and argue that honest and timely disclosure of medical mistakes is good medical practice and risk management – but may also be legally necessary. Tom Faunce develops this theme further in his article on a doctor's duty to follow up and to disclose adverse events.

Roger Magnusson explores the intricacies surrounding the potential liability of 'medical teams', an issue of increasing importance when healthcare is now rarely provided by a single doctor.

My own contribution aims to assist lawyers to choose good cerebral palsy cases and avoid the bad ones. Cathy Henry explores the disturbing development of 'specialist' skin cancer centres that are often not staffed by trained skin cancer specialists at all. Dr Stephen Buckley alerts us to the need to

consider the potentially serious effects of apparently minor traumatic brain damage.

Anna Walsh considers the vexed question of how to calculate damages in a wrongful birth claim. Peter King examines the 'new regime' of giving concurrent expert evidence in light of the recent NSW Supreme Court decision in *Halverson v Dobler* [2006] NSWSC 1307.

Ian Freckelton surveys the laws governing the conduct of doctors in his article on regulation of the health profession.

Finally, this edition's costs update reviews legal costs in medical negligence claims, and a case note profiles damage assessed at 15% of 'a most extreme case'. Niall Connolly reviews an important new textbook on medical law, and Gerry Mullins takes us back to 'trial school' with some hints on how to approach medical negligence cases generally.

I am sure that you will find this year's focus on medical law edition informative and helpful. ■

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