



15 DECEMBER 2014

Judgments	2
New South Wales. Civil & Administrative Tribunal	2
Victoria. Coroners Court	2
Legislation	3
Commonwealth	3
Australian Capital Territory.....	3
New South Wales	3
Northern Territory	3
Queensland.....	3
South Australia.....	3
Tasmania.....	3
Reports	4
Australia. Department of Health	4
Australia. Department of Social Services.....	4
Australia. Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and the boards.....	4
Australia. National Health & Medical Research Council.....	5
Australia. Therapeutic Goods Administration	5
Australian Institute of Health & Welfare	6
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.....	6
Australia. National Mental Health Commission	6
Australian Capital Territory. Health Directorate	6
New South Wales. Ministry of Health.....	7
Northern Territory. Department of Health.....	7
Queensland. Department of Health	7
South Australia. Department for Health & Ageing.....	8
Tasmania. Department of Health & Human Services	8
Victoria. Department of Health	8
Western Australia. Department of Health	8
New Zealand. Ministry of Health.....	8
United Kingdom. Department of Health.....	9
United States of America. Department of Health & Human Services	9

Australian Medical Association	10
British Medical Association	10
Canadian Medical Association	11
American Medical Association	11
About us	12
More information	12

JUDGMENTS

New South Wales. Civil & Administrative Tribunal

Health Care Complaints Commission v Dr Nikolova-Trask - [2014] NSWCATOD 149

A rural health practitioner, Dr Biljana Nikolova-Trask, had used Facebook as a medium to provide medical advice and convey pathology results.

The Tribunal did not ultimately make a finding as to the propriety of this conduct. It noted, however, the lack of direction or advice available to practitioners regarding social media use in "a time of rapidly developing technology and changing methods of communication". In this regard, there are no manuals or policies published by the Medical Board of Australia or the Medical Council of NSW to guide doctors about appropriate use of social media. The "Computer Security Guidelines" published by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners are of limited assistance.

The Tribunal had regard to the expert evidence which stated that Dr Nikolova-Trask's use of Facebook for provision of medical advice and pathology results was not improper, given the lack of guidance available.

The Tribunal made the following general recommendations:

- There is a very real need for the Medical Board of Australia and/or the Medical Council of NSW (and other Health Professional Boards and Councils) to provide guidelines for health professionals in this area.
- Any policy implemented by a practitioner regarding disclosure of confidential medical information via email or social media should be subject of a patient's informed consent.
- It is important professionals bear in mind information conveyed by text messages and social media can easily be corrupted or misused.

12 December 2014 - **Cheney v Mid North Coast Local Health District** - [2014] NSWCATAD 220

Government information public access - confidential health information - personal information of a child

Victoria. Coroners Court

4 December 2014 - **Inquest into the death of Leroy William Scott** - COR 2011 1475

15 month old Leroy Scott died at Geelong Hospital on 26 April 2011 as a result of Staphylococcus Aureus Septicaemia of unknown origin.

Leroy had been taken to hospital on the evening of 23 April 2011. A blood sample was taken the following morning and sent to St John of God Pathology (SJOG Pathology). The result returned 80% positive for cocci resembling staphylococcus. A subsequent test was ordered for a definitive result, but this did not become available until after 10am the following morning, 26 April 2011. By this time, Leroy had gone into cardiac arrest. Had antibiotics been administered earlier, the Coroner noted, Leroy would almost certainly have survived.

Coroner Heffey identified two key issues for investigation:

- Whether the potential gravity of Leroy's presenting features was unreasonably overlooked earlier in his presentation to the hospital; and

- the tardiness of the conduct and communication of the various tests and test results from SJOG Pathology to the hospital treating team.

It was noted, in particular, that the fact that it was a holiday weekend was a complicating factor and led to misunderstandings.

Accordingly, the Coroner recommended (among other things) that there be clearer protocols between the hospital and SJOG Pathology so that information is readily available to inform hospital staff in relation to the hours of operation over public holidays and weekends.

9 December 2014 - [Inquest into the death of Ling Gong Tang](#) - COR 2010 1790

Death as a result of decompensated alcoholic liver disease in the setting of gastro-intestinal haemorrhage - whether death in custody - recommendations made in relation to Victoria Police.

LEGISLATION

Commonwealth

[Aged Care and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014](#) - C2014A00126 • Act No. 126 of 2014 as made - Assented 4 December 2014. Commencement: ss 1-3 on assent, Schedule 1 day after assent (5 December 2014), Schedule 2 on 1 July 2015, Schedule 3 day after assent (5 December 2014).

[Health and Other Services \(Compensation\) Care Charges \(Amendment\) Act 2014](#) - C2014A00127 • Act No. 127 of 2014 as made - Assented 4 December 2014. Commencement : ss 103 on assent. Schedule 1 on 1 July 2015.

Australian Capital Territory

[Food Amendment Act 2014 A2014-57](#) Notified 4 December 2014. Commencement: on a day to be fixed.

New South Wales (NSW)

12 December 2014 - [Health Administration Amendment \(Disclosure of Information\) Regulation 2014](#).

12 December 2014 - [Mental Health Amendment \(Corresponding Laws\) Regulation 2014](#) (2014-794).

12 December 2014 - [Private Health Facilities Amendment \(Disclosure of Information\) Regulation 2014](#) (2014-795).

5 December 2014 - [Health Practitioner Regulation Legislation Amendment Act 2014 No 84](#) - Assent 28 November 2014.

5 December 2014 - [Mental Health Amendment \(Statutory Review\) Act 2014 No 85](#) - Assent 28 November 2014.

Northern Territory

8 December 2014 - [Alcohol Mandatory Treatment Amendment Act 2014](#) - 46 of 2014.

5 December 2014 - [Licensing \(Repeals and Consequential Amendments\) Act 2014](#) - 44 of 2014.

Queensland

5 December 2014 - [Health and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014](#).

South Australia

5 December 2014 - [Sexual Reassignment Repeal Bill 2014](#) - 40/2014.

Tasmania

11 December 2014 - [Genetically Modified Organisms Control Amendment Act 2014 \(No. 11 of 2014\)](#).

REPORTS

Australia. Department of Health

Media releases

10 December 2014 - **Official opening of the Port Macquarie Base Hospital expansion**. The opening of new and expanded facilities at Port Macquarie Base Hospital will significantly improve access to quality hospital care by local residents and communities along the Mid-North Coast.

9 December 2014 - **A Strong and Sustainable Medicare**. The \$7 Medicare co-payment measure announced in the 2014-15 Budget will no longer proceed.

9 December 2014 - **Work Begins on Commonwealth Games Velodrome**. Work has begun on the Queensland State Velodrome Project – one of the centrepieces for the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

8 December 2014 - **Australia's First Digital Hospital**. Australia's first hospital with fully integrated, digital eHealth capability has been officially opened.

7 December 2014 - **Funding for Safer Beaches**. As Australia's annual exodus to the beach looms the Australian Government is bolstering surf lifesavers ability to save lives.

6 December 2014 - **Health Star Rating: making healthier choices at a glance**. Parents will more easily be able to make healthy food choices for their families through the introduction of a new star rating food labelling initiative.

5 December 2014 - **Grants to help rural practices take on trainees and GP registrars**. The Assistant Minister for Health, Senator Fiona Nash, has urged rural and regional general practices to apply for grants to build the facilities needed to take on more trainees and GP registrars.

Private Health insurance (PHI) Circulars

10 December 2014 - **PHI 74/14 New Private Same-Day Hospital Information**.

5 December 2014 - **PHI 73/14 New Version (V.1.11.0.3) of Check-it Released**.

5 December 2014 - **PHI 72/14 Private Hospital Name Change**.

Australia. Department of Social Services

10 December 2014 - **Changes to the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC)** - As part of the 2014-15 Budget, the Government will make changes to the CSHC from 1 January 2015.

Australia. Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and the boards

11 December 2014 - **Pharmacist reprimanded, registration cancelled and disqualified for professional misconduct**. The State Administrative Tribunal of Western Australia has reprimanded Mr Frank Balestra, cancelled his registration as a pharmacist and disqualified him from applying for registration for 30 years. The Pharmacy Board of Australia referred the matter to the tribunal in April 2013, after an investigation that followed a referral from the Medical Board of Australia. The Medical Board of Australia alleged Mr Balestra had dispensed approximately 100,000 items of anabolic androgenic steroids, stimulants, human growth hormone and clomiphene (a fertility medicine) to patients for non-therapeutic purposes since 1 January 2006.

10 December 2014 - **Pharmacist reprimanded and disqualified for professional misconduct**. The State Administrative Tribunal of Western Australia has found that Mr Nicholas Gledhill engaged in professional misconduct, reprimanded him and disqualified him from applying for registration for two years. Mr Gledhill had previously let his registration lapse. The Pharmacy Board of Australia referred the matter to the tribunal in 2014, in relation to handling or dispensing schedule 8 medications (drugs of dependence). Mr Gledhill had pleaded guilty to offences committed under the *Poisons Act 1964* (WA) in 2006.

10 December 2014 - **Tribunal reprimands medical practitioner, cancels registration**. The State Administrative Tribunal of Western Australia has reprimanded Dr Gareth Eldred, cancelled his registration as a medical practitioner and disqualified him from applying for registration for 18 months. The Medical

Board of Australia referred the matter to the tribunal in April 2014, after a series of events dating back to October 2011 when the Board received a mandatory notification alleging that Dr Eldred had been using prescription and illegal drugs while employed as a medical practitioner at the Fremantle Hospital and Health Service.

10 December 2014 - **Medical practitioner reprimanded and suspended for unsatisfactory professional conduct.** On 4 November 2014, the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal reprimanded Dr Bharat Doolabh, suspended his registration for 12 months and imposed conditions on his registration as a medical practitioner. The Medical Board of Australia referred a disciplinary matter to the tribunal alleging that Dr Doolabh had engaged in unsatisfactory professional conduct under the *Health Practitioners (Disciplinary Proceedings) Act 1999* (Qld), which was in place in June 2009, before the introduction of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

8 December 2014 - **CEO briefing on the 2013/14 annual report.** CEO Martin Fletcher briefed National Board and committee members on the 2013/14 annual report of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme on Monday 17 November 2014. Mr Fletcher talked National Board and committee members through data highlights and the work of National Boards and AHPRA during the third year of the National Scheme.

5 December 2014 - **National Boards report on their work.** National Boards have reported on their work in regulating their profession in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme during 2013/14. The reports provide a profession-specific view of each Board's work in managing risk to the public and regulating their profession in the public interest. These profiles record regulation at work in Australia for the 12 months ending 30 June 2014.

5 December 2014 - **Physiotherapist permanently disqualified for professional misconduct.** Mr Bharath Devadas - permanently disqualified from applying for registration as a physiotherapist. The tribunal handed down its reasons for its decision on 10 October, finding unanimously that Mr Devadas' conduct constituted professional misconduct. The tribunal recognised that the victim suffered greatly as a result of this crime, and that her anguish was compounded by a criminal trial, which was needed because Mr Devadas did not admit guilt.

Australia. National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC)

9 December 2014 - **New statement and guidance for consumers on direct-to-consumer genetic testing.** New publications recommending Australians exercise caution when ordering direct-to-consumer genetic tests were released today by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). The publications include a new NHMRC position statement and an accompanying information resource for consumers. They come in response to the increased availability and falling costs of genetic tests for the public.

Targeted Consultation on the Draft Principles for Accessing and Using Publicly Funded Data for Health Research. Closing Date - 16 February 2015 - 10:00am.

Public consultation on elements of the Project Grants scheme. Closing Date - 24 February 2015 - 3:00pm.

Australia. Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA)

11 December 2014 - **Sirius Hip Stem 34B and 38C (used in hip replacements).** Biomet Australia has issued a hazard alert regarding two batches of the Sirius Hip Stem 34B and 38C.

11 December 2014 - **TGA operations over the holiday period, 2014-15.** The TGA will have limited operations from 15:00 (AEDST) on Wednesday, 24 December 2014 until 09:00 (AEDST) on Friday, 2 January 2015.

11 December 2014 - **Trilogy bone screws.** Zimmer is issuing a hazard alert regarding some lots of its Trilogy bone screws due to their potential to fracture.

9 December 2014 - **Australian Public Assessment Reports for prescription medicines (AusPARs).** Added Bevacizumab, Ocriplasmin, Ranibizumab.

9 December 2014 - [Rock Hard for Men tablets](#). Rock Hard for Men tablets pose a serious risk to your health and should not be taken.

9 December 2014 - [Max Hard capsules](#). Max Hard capsules pose a serious risk to your health and should not be taken.

8 December 2014 - [TGA presentation given at the Australasian Ethics Network Conference workshop, 3 December 2014](#). This presentation provided an overview of the TGA role in unapproved therapeutic goods and clinical trials.

8 December 2014 - [Galantamine](#). Janssen-Cilag has updated the Product Information (PI) for galantamine (marketed under the brand name Reminyl, as well as a number of generic brands).

8 December 2014 - [Updates to the list of designated orphan drugs](#) - Added Lenvatinib Mesilate.

Australian Institute of Health & Welfare

12 December 2014 - [Improvements seen across many Indigenous primary healthcare indicators](#). Improvements have been seen across a range of national key performance indicators (nKPIs) for Indigenous primary healthcare services, particularly in relation to "process-of-care" indicators, according to two reports released today by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). The report, *National Key Performance Indicators for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary health care: Results from December 2013* is the 2nd in a series released by the AIHW, and presents information from 207 services delivering care to over 265,000 clients.

10 December 2014 - [Adoptions remain low despite more carer adoptions](#). There were 317 adoptions finalised in Australia in 2013-14, a fall of 9% from the previous year, according to a report released today by the AIHW. The report, *Adoptions Australia 2013-14* shows that while the number of Australian children adopted was similar to the previous year, the number of children adopted from overseas continues to decline. "Of the 317 finalised adoptions, 203 were of children who were born or were permanently residing in Australia—a slight decrease from the 210 such adoptions in the previous year," said AIHW spokesperson Mr Tim Beard.

9 December 2014 - [Australia's allied health workforce growing](#). The allied health workforce, which makes up about 25% of the health workforce, is growing, according to new information released today by the AIHW. "Nearly 154,000 allied health practitioners were registered in 2013, compared to just over 146,000 in 2012," said AIHW spokesperson Dr Adrian Webster. There are 16 allied health professions registered through the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, including psychologists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, dentists, dental hygienists, dental prosthetists, dental therapists, oral health therapists, occupational therapists, medical radiation practitioners, chiropractors, optometrists, Chinese medicine practitioners, podiatrists, osteopaths and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners.

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care

8 December 2014 – On the Radar – Issue 203 ([PDF 100KB](#)) ([Word 130KB](#)).

Australia. National Mental Health Commission

10 December 2014 - [National Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services delivered to the Commonwealth Government](#). The National Mental Health Commission is pleased to have delivered the *2014 National Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services* to the Commonwealth Government. The Review examines existing mental health programmes and services across all levels of government, and the private and nongovernment sectors. It focusses on assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of programmes and services in supporting individuals experiencing mental ill-health and their families and other support people to lead a contributing life and to engage productively in the community.

[December 2014 update](#) (Newsletter online).

Australian Capital Territory. (ACT) Health Directorate

8 December 2014 - [ACT Air Quality Monitoring](#). The ACT Government's new Air Quality Index allows the Canberra community to see, in real time, what air quality is like.

New South Wales. Ministry of Health

Media Releases

12 December 2014 - **NSW Medical Devices Fund applications open**. Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research Jillian Skinner today encouraged innovators to apply for grants under the NSW Government's Medical Devices Fund. Applications for round three of the NSW Medical Devices Fund open today, with \$6.7 million available to support outstanding medical technologies. This funding is on top of the \$16.4 million already allocated to nine technologies in the first two rounds of the fund. These past recipients included Saluda Medical's fully implantable chronic pain management system and Elastagen's pioneering use of the human protein elastin to naturally repair skin.

10 December 2014 - **Scholarship Success For Innovative Minds**. Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research Jillian Skinner last night announced the inaugural winners of two prestigious international postdoctoral scholarships valued at \$448,000 over two years.

10 December 2014 - **\$104 Million Port Macquarie Hospital Expansion Project Officially Open**. Health Minister Jillian Skinner today joined Port Macquarie MP Leslie Williams to officially open the \$104 million Port Macquarie Hospital expansion project. Mrs Skinner said the redevelopment of Port Macquarie Hospital began in 2012 and has enhanced health services and delivered additional 12,000m² of floor space for patients and staff.

10 December 2014 - **\$80 million Kempsey Hospital redevelopment reaches new heights**. Health Minister Jillian Skinner and Oxley MP Andrew Stoner today marked a major milestone in the \$80.9 million redevelopment of Kempsey Hospital, with construction reaching its highest point on the three-storey main hospital building. To mark the milestone, a pencil pine tree was lifted onto the roof of the structure - approximately 22 metres above ground.

Policy Directives & Guidelines

4 December 2014 - **Salaries and Wages - Charging of Commission for Deductions**. PD2014_045.

Northern Territory. Department of Health

Media releases

8 December 2014 - **World Indigenous Domestic Violence Conference breaking barriers**. Minister for Women's Policy, Bess Price, has today opened the World Indigenous Domestic Violence Conference in Cairns.

6 December 2014 - **Free vehicle safety checks before the holiday season**. Territory motorists will be offered the opportunity to have their vehicles undergo a free AANT safety check today to ensure a safe Christmas on the roads at Bunnings on Bagot Road.

Queensland. Department of Health

Media releases

11 December 2014 - **Chief Health Officer warns against consuming raw milk**. Chief Health Officer Dr Jeannette Young has urged Queenslanders not to drink raw (unpasteurised) milk as it is unfit for human consumption.

9 December 2014 - **Darling Downs Emergency Departments beat the NEAT**. Goondiwindi Hospital's Emergency Department is one of four Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service Emergency Departments to exceed the National Emergency Access Target (NEAT).

8 December 2014 - **State-of-the-art birthing suites opened in Stanthorpe**. Expectant mothers in Stanthorpe and the Southern Downs now have access to state-of-the-art facilities after two purpose-built birthing suites were officially opened at Stanthorpe Hospital recently.

South Australia. Department for Health & Ageing

Media releases

11 December 2014 - **Raw milk warning**. SA Health is issuing a warning about the serious dangers of drinking unpasteurised cow's milk.

5 December 2014 - **Avoid bat contact**. SA Health, in conjunction with the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA), is reminding South Australians to protect themselves against serious and potentially fatal diseases by not handling bats.

Tasmania. Department of Health & Human Services

11 December 2014 - **Green Paper Released**. The State Government has released a Green Paper on Delivering Safe and Sustainable Clinical Services in Tasmania, as the next step in the One State, One Health System, Better Outcomes plan. The Green Paper invites community feedback about what health services we have, the workforce we need to deliver them, and where those services should be provided from.

9 December 2014 - **Health Council of Tasmania Announced**. The Health Council of Tasmania, which will provide expertise and advice to Government, has been announced. The Health Council of Tasmania is an important part of the One State, One Health System, Better Outcomes reforms announced earlier this year.

Victoria. Department of Health

11 December 2014 - **Gastro cases linked to drinking unpasteurised milk**. Victoria's Chief Health Officer Dr Rosemary Lester has issued a warning about the dangers of drinking raw cow's milk. Her warning has been prompted by five cases of gastroenteritis illness in children who had drunk unpasteurised milk.

5 December 2014 - **Safe summer swimming stops sickness**. Victorian swimmers should ensure their good personal hygiene to prevent gastroenteritis this summer.

Western Australia. Department of Health

Media Releases

9 December 2014 - **Premier, Minister for Health and Minister for Regional Development: 21st century hospital and health care for Onslow**. The growing Pilbara town of Onslow will benefit from a new hospital bringing major health services under one roof and providing purpose-built rooms for a range of specialists and services.

Operational Directives (OD)

11 December 2014 - **OD 0580/14**. Prescription and Management of Intravenous Patient Controlled Analgesia. - This policy is intended for use in all Western Australian public hospitals and departments where patient controlled analgesia (PCA) is given via intravenous, as Patient Controlled Intravenous Analgesia (PCIA) is prescribed. It aims to ensure that prescription, administration and monitoring of PCIA is safe and appropriate for most patients. This document describes minimum standards for the provision of routine PCIA care, but therapy and monitoring should be adjusted for the individual patient's condition. High-risk patients (eg those with head injuries, pre-existing respiratory disease such as obstructive sleep apnoea, or renal/hepatic failure) will require more intensive monitoring or dose adjustment.

10 December 2014 - **OD 0579/14**. Falls Risk Assessment and Management Plan (FRAMP) - The FRAMP is a tool for clinicians to assess and manage patients who are identified at risk of falling in inpatient settings. It should be used for the general adult population in all Western Australian public hospitals.

New Zealand. Ministry of Health

11 December 2014 - **Snapshot of New Zealanders' health released**. The **Annual Update of Key Results 2013/14: New Zealand Health Survey** provides up-to-date and retrospective information on key health issues facing New Zealand adults and children. This information is vital to being able to effectively monitor trends and identify changing patterns of disease. Survey data is collected continuously but findings

are reported annually. The latest update is based on data gathered from more than 4600 children and more than 13,300 adults surveyed from July 2013 to June 2014.

9 December 2014 - [Independent Chair appointed to lead next steps in DHB shared services programme](#). Acting Director-General of Health Chai Chuah today announced the appointment of Sue Suckling as Independent Chair of the group overseeing the transition from Health Benefits Limited (HBL) to a District Health Board- (DHB) owned vehicle. Ms Suckling will lead the newly established HBL Transition Interim Governance Group, and takes up the role immediately. Ms Suckling is one of New Zealand's most experienced leaders with over 25 years' experience in corporate governance. She brings the specialist skills required to lead the transition of the current shared services work programme from HBL to a sector-led arrangement.

United Kingdom. Department of Health

11 December 2014 - [Public health commissioning in the NHS 2015 to 2016](#) - Guidance.

11 December 2014 - [NHS Outcomes Framework 2015 to 2016](#) - Policy paper.

11 December 2014 - [NHS Mandate 2015 to 2016](#) - Policy paper.

11 December 2014 - [Progress report on the UK Five Year AMR strategy: 2014](#) - Policy paper.

10 December 2014 - [Reducing health inequalities](#) - Correspondence.

10 December 2014 - [Emergency care for the mind](#) - Speech.

9 December 2014 - [DH Health building notes](#) - Collection.

9 December 2014 - [Health technical memoranda](#) - Collection.

9 December 2014 - [Report reveals 36 women died from flu in 3 years](#) - Press release.

9 December 2014 - [NHS Injury Costs Recovery scheme: April 2014 to March 2015](#) - Transparency data - Part of a collection: [DH NHS Injury Costs Recovery scheme](#).

9 December 2014 - [The national cancer strategy: 4th annual report](#) - Guidance.

5 December 2014 - [Dalton review: options for providers of NHS care](#) - Independent report.

5 December 2014 - [Second cohort of NHS volunteers gear up to fight Ebola in West Africa](#) - Press release.

5 December 2014 - [NHS Mandate 2014 to 2015](#) - Policy paper.

5 December 2014 - [Social work education: progress](#) - Policy paper.

4 December 2014 - [Public Health Outcomes Framework 2013 to 2016](#) - Policy paper - Part of a collection: [Health and social care outcomes frameworks](#).

4 December 2014 - [DH non-executive appointments](#) - Guidance.

4 December 2014 - [DH workforce information: 2014](#) - Part of a collection: [DH monthly workforce data](#).

4 December 2014 - [Improving children and young people's mental health services](#) - Open consultation.

United States of America. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS)

11 December 2014 - [Department of Health and Human Services announces partnership with technology company PayNearMe to encourage consumers to visit Health Insurance Marketplace](#).

10 December 2014 - [New HHS grants increase, improve learning opportunities for young children](#).

9 December 2014 - [Secretary Burwell issues declaration under PREP Act to support development of Ebola vaccines](#).

9 December 2014 - [HHS awards \\$36.3 million in Affordable Care Act funding to reward and expand quality improvement in health centers](#).

8 December 2014 - [New federal health IT strategic plan sets stage for better sharing through interoperability.](#)

5 December 2014 - [Financial incentives and ability to exchange clinical information found to be top reasons for EHR adoption.](#)

Australian Medical Association (AMA)

11 December 2014 - [Action needed on medical workforce planning.](#) AMA Vice President, Dr Stephen Parnis, said today that the AMA is concerned that medical workforce planning in Australia has stalled since the abolition of Health Workforce Australia in the May Budget. Dr Parnis said that effective and coordinated medical workforce planning is essential to ensure we have a highly skilled medical workforce in the right numbers and in the right places to meet the future health needs of the Australian community.

11 December 2014 - [Call centre triage no substitute for quality general practice services.](#) The AMA today released its revised Position Statement on *Call Centre Triage and Advice Services - 2004 (Revised 2014)*. The Position Statement reflects changes that have occurred over the last decade, including the establishment of Government-run national call centre triage services, and incorporates current data and research. AMA Vice President, Dr Stephen Parnis, said the AMA maintains that, while telephone triage can be part of an integrated GP out-of-hours service model, it is not a substitute for accessing high quality GP after-hours services.

9 December 2014 - [Government's new co-payment model a "mixed bag".](#) AMA President, A/Prof Brian Owler, said today that the Government's reworked co-payment model is a mixed bag, with welcome exemptions for vulnerable patients but concerns remain about cuts to the Medicare patient rebate. A/Prof Owler said the AMA has been calling for protection for the poor, the elderly, the chronically ill, and Indigenous Australians – and this has been delivered with the new co-payment model.

9 December 2014 - [Health star website back on track.](#) The AMA welcomes the reinstatement of the "Health Star Rating" website by the Assistant Health Minister, Fiona Nash. AMA Vice President, Dr Stephen Parnis, said today that the website is an important part of a broader strategy to help people make healthier food choices and lead healthier lives.

9 December 2014 - [AMA plan to cut red tape burden on medical practice.](#) The AMA has set out a plan to reduce red tape in medical practice, which will improve the efficiency of the health system and enable doctors to spend more time seeing patients. Details of the plan are included in a submission to Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Josh Frydenberg, who is coordinating the Government's efforts to cut red and green tape.

British Medical Association (BMA)

11 December 2014 - [Medical students help the homeless access health advice.](#) Medical students have been giving health advice to homeless people. BMA medical students committee deputy chair for welfare Twishaa Sheth (pictured right) said the project in Leicester city centre was "an absolutely fantastic initiative". Ms Sheth said: "It shows the impact that determined medical students can have on the welfare of marginalised and vulnerable groups and highlights the positive contributions that can be made by students on public health."

10 December 2014 - [BMA backs campaign to widen participation in medicine.](#) Potential medicine applicants from hard-to-reach backgrounds need help to understand what work experience they need. This and other recommendations were highlighted at the launch of the SEEG (Selecting for Excellence Executive Group) project's final report today at Westminster.

10 December 2014 - [TTIP no threat to NHS, says Hunt.](#) Health secretary Jeremy Hunt has insisted that TTIP (the transatlantic trade and investment partnership) does not pose a threat to the NHS. The proposed trade agreement would not take commissioning powers away from CCGs (clinical commissioning groups) or limit Government control over health services, Mr Hunt told MPs yesterday.

10 December 2014 - [Comprehensive pupils face bars to medicine.](#) The BMA is urging the Government and others to act on new proposals for knocking down barriers that are preventing bright students from

entering medicine. The Selecting for Excellence project launched its final report this week after an 18-month study of selection methods to medical degrees with a focus on widening participation.

9 December 2014 - **Share your experiences of tackling Ebola**. Doctors leading the fight against Ebola in West Africa are being urged to contact the BMA to share their experiences. Hundreds of UK medical staff have been volunteering in countries such as Sierra Leone following the outbreak of the virus late last year.

9 December 2014 - **Children admit e-cigarette use**. The BMA has warned of the potential dangers of e-cigarettes after a survey revealed children as young as ten are experimenting with the devices. The Welsh Government survey published last week shows six percent of ten to eleven year old children have used e-cigarettes, compared with two percent who have smoked tobacco cigarettes. The vast majority of children who said they had used e-cigarettes had never smoked tobacco cigarettes. The Welsh Government is planning to ban the use of e-cigarettes in its Public Health Bill.

9 December 2014 - **Efficient trials risk losing patient trust**. The BMA has raised concerns over potential changes to the process by which patients give their consent or dissent to take part in some types of clinical trials. The Health Research Authority (HRA) has proposed new guidance on simplifying procedures for attaining informed consent from patients to take part in large-scale research trials in the NHS.

5 December 2014 - **BMA levels playing field for international medical graduates**. International medical graduates of UK universities will be able to compete for training posts on an equal footing to their peers, thanks to BMA lobbying. The development means those graduates who are on visas will have the same access to core and specialty training jobs as their UK and European Economic Area (EEA) colleagues.

5 December 2014 - **Lower drink-drive limit comes into effect**. The BMA has urged people intending to drive to avoid drinking any alcohol as new drink-drive limits come into effect in Scotland. From today, the limit for Scotland will be 50mg of alcohol in 100ml of blood, down from 80mg, which remains the limit in the rest of the UK.

5 December 2014 - **Morale decline: workforce survey shows plummeting satisfaction**. Only one in five doctors are satisfied with their current careers, a BMA survey reveals. The association's quarterly tracker survey of views across the medical profession shows that morale has declined year on year.

Canadian Medical Association

11 December 2014 - **New publication focuses on diabetes**.

5 December 2014 - **Canadian Medical Forum to map future of role of physicians**.

4 December 2014 - **Feds urged to follow "Canadian way" to reform health care**.

American Medical Association (AmMA)

11 December 2014 - **Medical school transformation begins to spread**. Two new medical schools are opening within the University of Texas system, and they've tapped the consortium of medical schools in the AmMA's Accelerating Change in Medical Education initiative to help develop forward-thinking curricula that will prepare future physicians for an increasingly complex health care system.

10 December 2014 - **Med ed gets evaluated in special JAMA issue**. A special **theme issue** of *JAMA* released this week focuses on important topics in the continuum of medical education, including health care spending, resident duty hours and maintenance of certification (MOC).

9 December 2014 - **Medical liability climate stable for now, but future uncertain**. Although the medical liability environment for physicians is stabilizing, premiums vary greatly by geographic location and expenses to resolve liability claims are at some of the highest levels ever, according to two new AmMA reports that examine medical professional liability insurance trends.

9 December 2014 - **New toolkit targets preventable admissions for sensitive conditions**. The American Hospital Association (AHA) recently released a **toolkit** to help hospitals and health systems reduce preventable inpatient admissions for ambulatory care sensitive conditions. These conditions could be avoided with adequate primary care, such as asthma, low back pain and uncomplicated pneumonia. The toolkit includes resources from five national organizations that can help address the barriers to

preventing such conditions, including a shortage of primary care physicians, ineffective communication between primary care physicians and those in subspecialties, and a lack of patient engagement.

8 December 2014 - [How telemedicine challenges the medical profession](#). Telemedicine offers significant promise—including increased access to care and better health outcomes—but challenges remain to sort through. The [December issue](#) of *Virtual Mentor*, the AmMA's online ethics journal, considers this issue from a variety of angles. Skeptics worry that the benefits of telemedicine may be outweighed by diminished privacy and security of medical information and loss of the therapeutic value tied to hands-on encounters between patients and their physicians. Many contributors to this month's issue believe that the innovative uses of telemedicine draw attention to the ever-present need for improving access to care, patient privacy, security of medical information and quality of the patient-physician relationship.

ABOUT US

Michael Regos



Michael is the head of the DLA Piper health litigation group.

He practises in the areas of health law, insurance law, medical negligence and coronial enquiries. He represents Victorian public hospitals and their insurers, the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority and is the solicitor of choice for Australia's second-largest private health operator.

Michael regularly presents to medical groups and hospitals on medico-legal issues.

Contact Details

T +61 3 9274 5437

michael.regos@dlapiper.com

MORE INFORMATION

Contact your nearest DLA Piper office:

BRISBANE

Level 28, Waterfront Place
1 Eagle Street
Brisbane QLD 4000
T +61 7 3246 4000
F +61 7 3229 4077
brisbane@dlapiper.com

CANBERRA

Level 3, 55 Wentworth Avenue
Kingston ACT 2604
T +61 2 6201 8787
F +61 2 6230 7848
canberra@dlapiper.com

MELBOURNE

Level 21, 140 William Street
Melbourne NSW 3000
T +61 3 9274 5000
F +61 3 9274 5111
melbourne@dlapiper.com

PERTH

Level 31, Central Park
152–158 St Georges Terrace
Perth WA 6000
T +61 8 6467 6000
F +61 8 6467 6001
perth@dlapiper.com

SYDNEY

Level 22, No. 1 Martin Place
Sydney NSW 2000
T +61 2 9286 8000
F +61 2 9286 4144
sydney@dlapiper.com

www.dlapiper.com

DLA Piper is a global law firm operating through various separate and distinct legal entities.

For further information, please refer to www.dlapiper.com

Copyright © 2014 DLA Piper. All rights reserved.

If you would like to reproduce any of this publication, please contact Michael Regos on +61 3 9274 5437 or michael.regos@dlapiper.com.