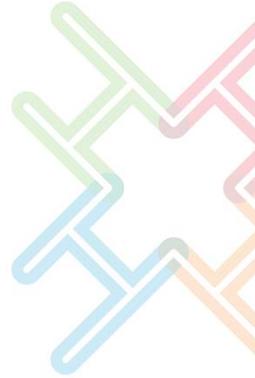


Is medical practice safer than it used to be? (Consumer perspective)

Emma Sayers
Senior Project Manager
e.sayers@healthissuescentre.org.au



Unsafe medicine

(Sources: PM, ABC news www.abc.net.au, SBS news www.sbs.com.au)

Baby died despite Vic Mum's concerns

- "The actual day he passed away I was in the health service office and (a staff member) said he was fine."
- "It's pretty devastating... to have someone sit in front of you and say 'Oh, we could have fixed it if he was born here'."

Victorian families consider legal action



Unsafe medicine

(Sources: PM, ABC news www.abc.net.au, SBS news www.sbs.com.au)

Baby died despite Vic Mum's concerns

- Parents of seven babies who died at the hospital were told the deaths could have been avoided.
- The families were not aware that the circumstance of the death of their baby was being investigated.

Victorian families consider legal action



Unsafe medicine

(Sources: PM, ABC news www.abc.net.au, SBS news www.sbs.com.au)

*A former director of obstetrics was investigated after a complaint from a colleague over a baby's death in February, 2013.

*It was only at the end of a 28 month investigation that AHPRA put conditions and restrictions on his registration.

*Review identified a "multi-system failure"; no one doctor was common to each case.

Victorian families consider legal action



Is the Australian healthcare system full of “catastrophic failures”, “staggering incompetence”, and “bureaucratic bungling”?

(‘Victorian families consider legal action’; Source: SBS news www.sbs.com.au)

Medicine – the miracle maker

- How our extraordinary doctors and nurses saved the lives of six strangers in Australian transplant first (Herald Sun, May 13 2014)
- How Miracle Man came back from the brink in Liverpool Hospital (SouthWest Voice 25 June 2015)
- Toddler's decapitated head reattached in medical miracle (October 2015)

AIHW Medical Indemnity

- Australia's medical indemnity claims 2012-13
“In 2012–13, the number of new public sector claims was about 950 (less than any of the previous 4 years) and the number of new private sector claims about 3,300 (similar to the previous 2 years)”

— “Australia has a high quality health care system, rating well internationally, and serving the bulk of the population well”

(AIHW Safety and quality of health care www.aihw.gov.au)

Expectations of medicine

Medical error works against the idea that the medical system has the ability to cure you, faith in technology, faith in expertise and faith in medicine

(Adapted from Ryan and Harrison's statement on proactive ACP in 'Barriers to Advance Care Planning: A Sociological Perspective' in Rogne ed 2013)

The reality of medicine

Mukherjee S., 'The Laws of Medicine' TED Books 2015

It's easy to make perfect decisions with perfect information.
Medicine asks you to make perfect decisions with imperfect information.

— **“My medical education taught me plenty of facts but little about the spaces that live between the facts”**

Mukherjee S., The Laws of Medicine, TED Books 2015

— **The spaces that live between the facts: the power of sociocultural context**

The 'good' doctor

- Technically competent; does no harm
- Other ways to be a 'good' doctor
 - a 'good' junior/trainee (approval of seniors)
 - a 'good' team member (one of the boys)
 - a 'good' employee (protect reputation)
 - A 'good' wife/mother/husband/father

(Based on an idea originally described by: McDougall R., (2013)
'Understanding doctors' ethical challenges as role virtue conflicts',
Bioethics, 27(1), pp 20–27)

The 'good' consumer

- The 'good' patient
 - a 'good' partner/parent/child (positive; protect)
 - a 'good' client (positive; compliant)
- The 'good' carer
 - a 'good' partner/parent/child (positive; protect)
 - a 'good' partner/parent/child (advocate; protect)
 - a 'good' client (positive; compliant)

Culture change

- Why do I need to change? (motivation)
- What do I need to do?
- I believe I have the capacity (self efficacy)
 - confident in my ability to exert control over my own motivation, behaviour, and social environment

(Prochaska & DiClemente; Bandura)

We believe in discovering and celebrating signs of progress, in acknowledging people for their contributions and in leveraging what is working as the best way to overcome what is not working....

...The healthcare system will never be perfect, but it can always be better.

(Consumers Advancing Patient Safety, Statement of Beliefs,
www.patientsafety.org)