



## **Decision Making and the Impact on Practitioners**

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## **Outline**

- Personal impact on medical practitioners under investigation
- Role of MIIs
- Ideal regulatory model?

## Personal impact on practitioners

- Inevitable emotional stress
- Variable – not related to potential outcome
- Short term → long term impact
- Acute → chronic stressor
- Assault on doctor's sense of self and personal integrity

## What is the personal impact on practitioners?

Cunningham W. The immediate and long-term impact on NZ doctors who receive complaints. NZMJ 2004; 117:1198.

- Survey of 221 doctors who had received a complaint
- Immediate impact
  - anger (73%)
  - depression (65%)
  - reduction in tolerance of uncertainty and of confidence in clinical practice (42%)
  - reduced enjoyment in practice of medicine, reduced trust and sense of goodwill towards patients (38%)
  - shame, guilt (33%)

## What is the personal impact on practitioners?



- Long-term impact
  - persisting anger (37%)
  - reduction in trust of patients (32%)
  - reduced feeling of goodwill towards patients (18%)
  - did not wish to continue practising (9%)

## What is the personal impact on practitioners?



Nash L, Daly M, Johnson M et al. Psychological morbidity in Australian doctors who have and have not experienced medico-legal matter: cross sectional survey. Aust & NZ J Psychiatry 2007; 41:917-925.

- Survey of 566 Australian GPs
- Explored differences in psychological morbidity between those GPs who have and have not experienced medico-legal matters

## What is the personal impact on practitioners?



- GPs with current medico-legal matter
  - 45% experienced psychiatric morbidity
- Past history of medico-legal matters
  - increased level of disability and depression subscores
- Male GPs with current or past medico-legal matter
  - significantly higher levels of alcohol use

## What factors influence the impact on practitioners?



Riley G. Understanding the stresses and strains of being a doctor. Med J Aust 2004; 181:350-353.

- Personality
  - obsessionality
- Professional identity
- Support
- Timeframes

## Role of MIs

- Explanation of process, including timeframes
- Advice and support throughout process
- Interface between Board and practitioner

## Conclusion - Ideal Regulatory Model

Self-regulation  External regulation

- Medical Board of Australia
  - working in partnership with AHPRA to protect the public and guide the profession
- Regulators
  - although priority is protection of public, the impact on practitioner can (and should) still be considered
- Doctors and their representatives
  - inevitably a less than optimal outcome when the personal impact is not acknowledged and managed

