

Book Review

Medical Law in Ireland (Third Edition)

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This third edition sees an evolution of this text from what was previously known as *Clinical Practice and the Law*, which was also aimed at clinical students and practitioners. Whilst this text will also be suitable for a plethora of readers in the disciplines of healthcare and law, its emphasis is more so from a legal practice perspective. The contents are reflective of this evolution's general approach which has necessitated the shedding of certain topics, e.g. the law of forensics and sexual assault and some aspects of forensic medicine.

However, this shedding does not in any way diminish the usefulness of this text which serves as a very useful addition to the range of textbooks now available dealing with the topic of medical law in Ireland. In a foreword written by Judge Mary Irvine, she states the appeal of this book in that it covers "in detail all of the essential areas of medical law in terms of both principle and practice."

In this respect, the text does a service to those in both professions by dealing succinctly, but in appropriate detail, with all of these relevant essential areas. Whilst the areas are covered in great detail, they carefully avoid an overly academic approach, and, where necessary, other appropriate texts are referred to so that unnecessary duplication is avoided.

The evolution in the text is best evidenced in Ch.9, which deals with clinical negligence and its practice and procedure aspects. Here again, as opposed to simply attempting to reproduce all of the law relevant to issues of practice and procedure, the authors usefully cite aspects which are covered in more detail in the relevant

appropriate texts—such as Delany and McGrath's *Civil Procedure in the Superior Courts*—without compromising, however, appropriate explanations relevant to clinical negligence practice. This can be seen, for example, in the section dealing with personal injury summons, where part of the text deals with the renewal of a summons. An example of the efficiency of this text can be seen in the pages dealing with discovery, which is effectively dealt with in five pages. This approach is to be commended, as it makes the text very accessible as a reference for legal practitioners and also for anyone wishing to gain an understanding of important aspects of medical litigation practice.

This approach continues in Ch.10 dealing with expert evidence, which would also be a very useful chapter for relatively inexperienced practitioners/solicitors who wish to obtain an appropriate grasp of important aspects of how a case should be approached and built.

Where certain topics have required further scrutiny, they are divided into subsections that are effectively separate chapters. Therefore, consent is dealt with in three parts, consisting of Chs 5, 6 and 7. Negligence is dealt with in two parts, consisting of Chs 8 and 9, and mental health law is also dealt with in two parts, in Chs 11 and 12. This approach allows for an appropriate delving into the substantive and practice aspects of medical law.

The authors have managed to provide an up-to-date, accessible, efficient and practical text which is an important contribution to medical law in practice and substance. The foreword appropriately describes the status quo for this text—one that solicitors, barristers, academics and students will be keeping close at hand, a "position it well deserves".

The authors are to be congratulated for this contribution to the field and this text will make an extremely useful addition to the library of existing jurisprudence in the area of medical law. It can only be highly recommended to those who work in this area and to others who are involved in it.

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