



HSLA <http://hsla.com.au/>

President's Letter

Welcome to the HSLA's third newsletter for 2007. The signs are here that the year is already drawing to a close – I couldn't believe it when I saw Christmas decorations in the shops last week!!

As I mentioned in my last letter, we held a most successful workshop "The Role of Insurers in Hospital Complaints" in June with very positive feedback. Evaluation feedback showed 100% of participants rated satisfaction with the presentation as excellent (57%) and good (43%). Satisfaction with content also rated highly with 50% rating 'excellent' and 50% 'good'. Respondents were asked to nominate suggestions for future workshops. The three most desired topics were "Dealing / Communicating with Difficult People", "Letter Writing" and "Grief Counselling".

In response to this survey we have arranged a morning seminar "**Unreasonable Behaviours – managing the angry, intimidating or threatening complainant**". This seminar will be presented by **Dr Grant Lester** – Forensic Psychiatrist, Director of Advanced Training in Forensic Psychiatry, Victorian Institute of Forensic Mental Health. This promises to be a most valuable session as Grant's expertise in this area is renowned. Full details of this seminar are included in this newsletter. **Please share this information with staff in your organisation who may be interested in attending.**

Many of you would have attended the Ausmed symposium "The Power of Apology in Health Care" which was held earlier this month. The symposium provided interesting and challenging scenarios. References of interest included:

- "On Apology" - Prof Aaron Lazare – Oxford University Press
- www.elderabuse.org.uk
- Journal of Psychiatry & Psychology 2007 Vol 14 No 1
- "After Harm" (Medical Negligence" by Nancy Burlinger
- "Apologies – A Practical Guide" – NSW Ombudsman 2007
- "Healing Words - The Power of Apology in Medicine" by Michael Woods, Joint Commission Resources, 2007

On Wednesday 21 November we will be holding the Annual General Meeting of the HSLA. This meeting will be held at the office of the Health Services Commissioner in Melbourne at 5 pm and you are all welcome to join us. The AGM always provides a good opportunity to network with like-minded colleagues and hear about HSLA's work over the year. We are looking for new committee members and I would encourage you to contact me for more information if you would like to consider joining this dynamic group. I am happy to speak with anyone who is interested and we can offer you the option of teleconferencing for the meetings if this is preferable.

We are always on the lookout for useful information to share with our readers. If you have any suggestions for content and articles for our newsletter, or are aware of any education sessions of interest, please let me know.

Regards

Ann Howell

President, HSLA
a.howell@cgmc.org.au

HSLA Committee Membership - 2007

Ms Ann Howell – President – a.howell@cgmc.org.au
Stella Tsamitrou – Treasurer (on leave) - stella.tsamitrou@rwh.org.au
Caroline Rose – Acting Treasurer - caroline.rose@rwh.org.au
Bronwyn Barrow – barrowb@dhs.vic.gov.au
Lynn Griffin – lynn.griffin@dhs.vic.gov.au
Greg Hann – g.hann@alfred.org.au
Michael Janssen – michael@continence.org.au
Eileen Thompson – eileen.thompson@petermac.org
Deidre Watson – deidre.watson@southernhealth.org.au

New Committee members welcome!

The old saying says that there is strength in numbers. If you would like to contribute to HSLA as a Committee member, please contact the HSLA President Ann Howell on her email address as above.

HSLA Peer Support Helpline

The Helpline is there to assist any CLO who may be seeking advice, support or just wants to talk through issues arising from the job.

Metropolitan Melbourne

Ann Howell	Caulfield General Medical Centre, Vic	03 9076 6127
Greg Hann	The Alfred, Vic	03 9076 8001

Rural Victoria

Lois Abraham	Ballarat Health Services, Vic	03 5320 4828
Jan Phillips	Goulburn Valley Health, Vic	03 5832 2258

Queensland

Sue Geiszler	Toowoomba Health Service District, Qld	07 4616 6152 0417 649 978
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Have you

If in Victoria, have you attended an orientation session at the Office of the Health Services Commissioner?

If not give them a call on (03) 8601 5200.

It is a very worthwhile experience and particularly for those CLO's who have just started in the role.

Future Conferences/Seminars:

1. Unreasonable Behaviours - Managing the angry, intimidating or threatening complainant.

HSLA ½ day seminar 5th October 2007 conducted by Dr Grant Lester Forensic Psychologist – see details on flyer below. **Registration required before 29th September.**

2. HSLA Annual General Meeting 21st October 2007 at 5 pm – will be held at the offices of the Victorian Health Services Commissioner, Level 30, 570 Bourke Street, Melbourne. All welcome.

3. Improving Health Service Delivery and Outcomes Conference 2007.

29th and 30th October 2007, Mercure Hotel, Brisbane – go to www.liquidlearning.com.au for more information.

4. Bold Aims – Bold Outcomes 6th Australasian Conference on Safety and Quality in Health Care. 1–3 September 2008, Christchurch, New Zealand

Hosted by the Australasian Association for Quality in Health Care. For more information, visit: <http://www.aqhc.org.au/>

5. Short course: Quality & Safety in Health & Aged Care

Murdoch University School of Nursing in Western Australia is pleased to announce the introduction of a stand alone course in Quality and Safety in Health and Aged Care commencing in early September 2007.

The short course consisting of two hours over 12 weeks will cover three main areas of continuous quality improvement and risk management with a focus on providing health care professionals with a practical understanding of quality improvement and risk management and applying these in the workplace.

The course can also be structured to be delivered at the workplace and in future may also be offered on an external basis (subject to demand).

To register your interest please contact: C.Gray@murdoch.edu.au.

Interesting websites:

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/web/live-from-the-delivery-room-/2007/08/07/1186252688934.html> - it might be possible to monitor complainants on the web one day too!

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/news/delays-lost-luggage-complaints-soar-in-us/2007/08/08/1186530410838.html> - and you're fed up with complaints about lost property!

<http://airconsumer.ost.dot.gov/problems.htm> - complaints section of the US Department of Transportation. Follow the link to their "Air Travel Consumer Report".

<http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2007/09/02/1188671795835.html> - bungled investigations into resident care in low care nursing homes.

<http://www.isqua.org/> - Based in Melbourne is the International Society for Quality Health Care. Check out their website for news on past conferences and future ones into 2008,

including the latest ISQUA Conference in Boston (unfortunately to be held shortly in September/October of this year!), and much more.

Recent journal articles of interest:

1. Quality matters: from clinical care to customer service

The Dental Complaints Service launched in May 2006, provides a previously unavailable outlet for resolving complaints involving private dental treatment in the UK. This article gives an overview of the Service and how it operates.

Ritchie, K. *British Dental Journal*. London: Jul 28, 2007. Vol. 203, Iss. 2; p. 112

2. Informal complaints on health services: hidden patterns, hidden potentials.

The objective of this study was to examine the prevalence of informal complaints about health services among clients of Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO's) in Israel, and determine if there was any correlation with patient demography.

After collation of telephone survey results about 25% of the respondents reported a cause to complain, but only 9.5% actually complained. About 75% of the complainants submitted their grievances informally at the local level. A minority (17%) appealed to official bodies established by law. Minority groups and recent immigrants had significantly lower rates of reasons to complain and actual complaints.

The study concluded that outreach efforts be made to socially vulnerable groups and developing organisational mechanisms for capturing and using future complaints submitted informally to front-line employees, which were the bulk of the complaints in this study. Further research is needed regarding factors affecting customers complaining and non-complaining behaviour, including factors that specifically affect the behaviour of minority groups.

International Journal for Quality in Health Care. 19(3):158-63, 2007 Jun.

4. Care of dying patients and safety dominate commission's report on NHS complaints

Complaints about the care of dying patients and patient safety dominate a report that reviewed complaints referred to the Healthcare Commission, the NHS watchdog in England. The report analysed 16,000 complaints sent to the commission for independent review between Jul 2004 and Jul 2006.

More than half (54%) of complaints about hospitals were about care surrounding a death. In many cases, families complained that they had received contradictory or confusing information from different staff caring for a relative. In other cases, relatives felt that they were unprepared for the death or had no time to arrange for family members to be present. Nearly one quarter (22%) of total complaints were about patient safety.

As a result of the findings, the commission is planning the first national audit of how NHS trusts deal with patients' concerns. It will look at good and poor practice, inspecting 50 trusts after analysing performance indicators covering all trusts in the country. Inspectors will check whether trusts give high enough priority to handling complaints and whether they learn from the issues raised. They will consider whether complaints systems are accessible and understood by people using services. If trusts are not up to standard, this will be reflected in their annual performance rating.

Major, S. *British Medical Journal (International Edition) London: Feb 10, 2007. Vol. 334, Iss. 7588; pg. 278*

<http://www.healthcarecommission.org.uk/homepage.cfm> - follow this link to the Healthcare Commission made reference to in the above article.

Original Article - Dana Farber Cancer Institute Rounders Program:

On a recent visit to Boston I had the opportunity to meet with one of the two Patient Relations Specialists employed at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute. The role of the Specialist is the same as that of Patient Advocate or Patient Liaison and sits within the Quality Unit of the Institute. The Specialists maintain a close link with the Dana Farber Patient & Family Advisory Council (PFAC), or our equivalent Community Advisory Committee, reporting patient feedback and complaints information to the Council on a regular basis.

Recently the Specialist has overseen the introduction of the Volunteer Rounding Program, an initiative of the PFAC to obtain feedback from patients & family members about their experience of the Institute.

The Program consists of a group of 10 Volunteer Rounders who have been hand selected by the Manager of Volunteer Services to interview patients and family in order to ask them about their experiences of the hospital and the care received. The Volunteers use a survey with scripted questions when interviewing the patients or family members.

The goals of the program are:

- to find out if Dana Farber is meeting the expectations of the patient
- to identify improvements
- receive compliments, feedback and suggestions
- provide information about support services available within the Institute

Qualifications required for Rounders are:

- excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- to be empathic
- history of working with patients or being in a "helping" capacity
- to be a patient or family member

Rounders are provided with a comprehensive orientation and training program prior to working alone. They initially "shadow" with a member of staff before working independently. Rounders who encounter pressing requests or concerns from patients or family refer these directly to the Patient Relations staff and inform the patient of the referral process.

Information obtained from the survey is given to the PFAC staff who then enter it into a database and communicate findings to the Council, Dana Farber management and leadership groups.

Rounders meet quarterly to share experiences, brainstorm, hear relevant speakers and receive updates on the work at Dana Farber. They are sent regular email updates on the activities in the Institute also.

The outcomes of the Rounding Program are positive and so far include:

- improvements to the facility and operations
- compliments are communicated to staff

- support services within the Institute are communicated to patients and family
- patients have expressed that they value the service

The Specialist whom I met really couldn't speak highly enough of the program and was very enthusiastic to be able to share her knowledge and experience with other Liaison Officers.

If anyone would like to discuss the program further or would like a copy of the survey Rounders use, please contact me via one of the means listed.

Eileen Thompson
Patient Advocate
Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute
PH: 9656 1870
eileen.thompson@petermac.org

Incident Information System – Consumer Feedback Working Group

The Incident Information System (IIS) Project is a collaborative project between the Victorian Department of Human Services, Victorian health services and other key stakeholder groups to determine an optimal solution for collection and review of statewide incident information.

As a part of this project a working group has begun to look at how feedback could be integrated into this system. In a similar fashion to the IIS Project, the feedback component of the project will examine the development and implementation of a standardised data set and methodology for recording details of feedback.

If the aims of the project are met, public health services will be able to use this data at a local level, and there will be the ability to collect de-identified feedback data statewide. The data collected could be used to gain a comprehensive understanding of the type and frequency of feedback.

We'll report any interesting developments on this initiative in future newsletters, but if you have any similar experiences in other states, we'd be happy to hear about them. Just send your comments to the editor - g.hann@alfred.org.au.

Australian Standard – Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations (ISO 10002:2004, MOD)

For information regarding the development of Standards contact:
Standards Australia Limited
GPO Box 476
Sydney NSW 2001
Phone: 02 8206 6000
Fax: 02 8206 6001
Email: mail@standards.org.au
Internet: www.standards.org.au

For information regarding the sale and distribution of Standards contact:
SAI Global Limited
Phone: 13 12 42
Fax: 1300 65 49 49
Email: sales@sai-global.com

HSLA PROFILE:

Getting to know the team on your Committee!

Each newsletter, we hope to continue this popular item usually asking a CLO to answer some questions. This time we have asked HSLA Committee member Deidre Watson from Southern Health what makes her tick!

Here it goes.....

Name:

Deidre Watson

Position:

Quality Systems Manager

How long have you been in this job?

16 Months

How did you get into this line of work?

Previously employed in quality and risk management at other Melbourne Metropolitan Hospitals

What is the favourite part of your job?

Troubleshooting and finding solutions with patients and staff. There is also a component of education and working with larger groups as well.

What gets under your skin in your job?

Not enough time to do all that I would like.

What would make your job easier or better?

Access to people straight away.

How do you relax & look after yourself?

Walk the dogs, listen to music and gardening.

What are you exultant about?

Going to the beach.

Favourite book?

Anything – I just love to read.

Favourite movie or TV show?

Fiddler on the Roof.

How do you deal with stress?

Could do better in dealing with stress, usually humour gets me through, however I recently had a day at a thermal springs and that was great (I think I should do this more regularly for stress management).

Favourite word?

Any made up word that looks ridiculous.

What word don't you ever want to hear again?

I'm not sure which word – but I don't ever want to hear 'Put Your Hands up for Detroit' – my daughter put it on my I-pod and it's the first song unfortunately I can't work out how to skip it and go straight onto the second song.

Tell us about the funniest situation that you encountered?

I tend to see the funny side of things so there is at least one funny situation a day.

What have you learnt from your work?

To be patient and take the time no matter how rushed you are.

Feedback:

I'd welcome your thoughts on the newsletter!

What do you think of the format and subject matter? Do you have any suggestions for future content?

Let me know - g.hann@alfred.org.au

See next page for registration details of HSLA morning seminar with Grant Lester!



HSLA

Health Services Liaison Association Inc.

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Melbourne Vic. 3001
ABN 11 066 654 742

TAX INVOICE

**"UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOURS
managing the angry, intimidating or threatening complainant"**

**Presentation: Dr Grant Lester - Forensic Psychiatrist
Director of Advanced Training in Forensic Psychiatry
Victorian Institute of Forensic Mental Health**

Date: Friday 5 October 2007

Time: 9.30 a.m. – 12.00 noon

**Venue: Office of Health Services Commissioner
Level 30, 570 Bourke St. Melbourne**

Cost: \$75 pp including light refreshments

More information: Deidre Watson 9594 4025 deidre.watson@southernhealth.org.au

REGISTRATION FORM:

Name(s): _____

_____ **Organisation:** _____

Number of people attending: _____ **@\$75 pp Total:** _____

Payment Options:

1. ELECTRONIC PAYMENT (EFT)	
Account Name	HSLA
BSB	063349
ACCOUNT NUMBER	10022284

2. Cheque made payable to HSLA

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Melbourne VIC 3001

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