

Injured Persons Association

Judith Marty, consulting lobbyist for the Injured Persons Association, Sydney

Formed in 1993, the Injured Persons Association has grown steadily in NSW. Hampered by a lack of resources, the IPA nevertheless had significant impact on the current Nsw Parliamentary Inquiry into the Motor Accidents Scheme. 18 of the 53 Recommendations in the Interim Report result directly from IPA research into the profitability of the current CTP Scheme and will require increased transparency of insurance industry gains out of the CTP Scheme. This occurred in a climate where the insurance industry sought to further reduce compensation for injured persons.

The IPA has also been active in compensation for those injured at work and we are currently preparing submissions to the Grellman Inquiry and the NSW Parliamentary Law & Justice Inquiry. While most of our work to date has been in NSW, we aim to become a national organisation.

Overwhelmed by injured persons issues - on the road, at work, medical negligence, etc - the most difficult challenge for the IPA is to meet the needs of our members and alert people to the fact that the IPA exists. The irony of the IPA is that you really don't want to know about it unless you are injured, and then it often takes time for people to find us. APLA could be of assistance simply by

members being aware that IPA is there.

The functions of IPA are to:

- provide a reference point for injured persons and their families
- provide independent advice and guidance
- maintain the rights of injured persons
- collate useful data on appropriate services and facilities
- lobby Government as required to advance the cause of the injured
- co-ordinate services for the injured
- establish support groups and networks

In recent weeks, IPA has received news that funding is available for a major research project we proposed into further development of IPA. We believe that the needs of injured persons are not being adequately met by the present system. This research will establish what further independent information, advisory and support services we can provide, and how these can be funded into the future.

For further information, contact (02) 9262 2188 or IPA, PO Box R699, Royal Exchange, NSW 2000.

Judith Marty from the Injured Persons Association recently addressed the APLA National Council meeting in Canberra.

Medical Malpractice for Plaintiff Lawyers Workshop

Elizabeth Hurn, Xenophon & Co, Campbelltown, South Australia

On the 22nd and 23rd March a small but enthusiastic group of participants attended at The Stamford Grand Hotel, Glenelg, Adelaide for a plaintiff lawyers workshop on Medical Malpractice presented by Mr Arnold Mann, general surgeon, of Melbourne.

Throughout the two day seminar Mr Mann sought to equip participants with some basic medical knowledge, together with giving the opportunity to discuss specific cases and queries in this area.

On day one Mr Mann prepared participants for the programme by

taking us through some basic anatomy and medical terminology, so that we could better understand the workshop materials, and in the long term, the medical reports medical experts provide to us in relation to these matters. Following this were sessions on the diagnostic process, the collection of information and the provision of material to a medical expert, including questions that should be put to the medical expert and the specific details that should be provided to him/her depending on the nature of the case.

In the afternoon and on the fol-

lowing day more specific medical treatment categories were covered, including drug therapy, surgery, circulation, bones and joints, and the spinal cord and brain. New forms of treatment and the associated risks were also discussed, in particular the increasingly "popular" laparoscopic surgery.

Given the success of the workshop another workshop is planned for next year.

Elizabeth Hurn is a solicitor with Xenophon & Co in Campbelltown, South Australia. Elizabeth is a member of APLA.