

# Foreword

Welcome to the Winter edition of the Journal for 2005.

## *This edition of the Journal*

This edition brings together three of the papers originally delivered at the Summer 2005 joint conference between this Journal and the Australian Clinical Legal Education Association, held in Melbourne in July.

The first paper, from Peter Joy from Washington University School of Law in St. Louis looks at issues of external interference with clinical programmes, picking up on a series of attacks on the work undertaken by law clinics in the United States by those interested in restricting the scope of the work that such clinics can undertake. It is an article of relevance to us all, reminding us not only of the value of what we can do in our clinics, but also our vulnerability in different ways, to different forms of institutional pressure which may be brought to bear. I challenge any reader to put himself or herself into the position of any one of the clinicians threatened by organisations, professional bodies and political groupings, and not to feel a sense of deep concern. In such an environment, is there a danger that there will be an insidious “chilling effect” from such challenges, reining back the scope of clinical teaching.

What is also implicit in Peter’s article is the way in which clinics can engage the commitment and enthusiasm of clinical students by recognising their particular passion for justice – and often an enthusiasm for justice in causes that may be less than popular with existing political and business interests – such as environmental challenges. Here there is common ground between Peter’s article, and the article from Liz Curran, Judith Dickson and Mary Anne Noone from La Trobe University in Australia. In their article they too look at the issues that arise from the particular societal responsibilities inherent in being a legal professional, and ask how we can most usefully structure our clinical programmes to maximise the benefits from the ethical and moral issues (in their broadest sense) that arise from almost every case that the students will encounter. Valuably, they identify the particular responsibility of the clinical teacher in both managing the learning experience but also in acting as a role model.

The final article broadens this theme yet further, by identifying a far wider issue for us as clinicians and for our students – what is it that we are teaching? Is it purely effective lawyering skills – or even ethical and socially conscious lawyering skills – to future professionals? Do we have a much greater opportunity to recognise the importance of personal fulfilment as a necessary component in any career? The pursuit of happiness is not something that is normally associated with legal careers, and Colin James, from the University of Newcastle, Australia, puts forward an enormously interesting article, challenging us to recognise that through our clinical learning and teaching we may be able to open up for our students (and indeed ourselves) a much more positive approach to self-development and self-fulfilment than we find through our more narrow professional concerns.

## *The Summer 2006 conference*

The Summer 2006 IJCLE conference returns to London – and even at this early stage it promises

to build on the success of the earlier years, with papers from almost every major jurisdiction, focusing on the broad theme of Emancipation through learning. Full details of the conference can be found at: <http://law.unn.ac.uk/IJCLE>. In view of the level of interest from delegates, the conference has been expanded to run over two full days (12th and 13th July 2006), but we have managed to keep the cost of attending unchanged from previous years.

The Journal conference will immediately be followed by the one day conference of CLEO, the UK clinical legal education organisation. This will be a very practically focussed conference, looking at the particular practical issues inherent in setting up and sustaining clinical programmes, and I am delighted that we have been able to organise matters so that the delegates attending the IJCLE will have free registration so as to enable them to attend the CLEO conference on the following day to contribute their own experiences from their own programmes.

As ever, I hope that many readers of the Journal will be able to attend the conference – and I look forward to seeing you there.

### *Student contributions and the Journal*

Can I take this opportunity to remind readers that the Journal has three sections.

The first section of the Journal is fully refereed, with two independent specialist referees reviewing every submission. It has been designed to fit with the highest standards of academic peer review. I am always happy to receive unsolicited articles, but please make clear that you intend your article for publication in this section.

The second section of the Journal is the Clinical Practice section. This is intended to be a less formal section and to provide a forum for more descriptive pieces, which are often of huge value in setting out the details of particular clinical initiatives or projects. I am always eager for material for this section since I know from feedback that readers often find it very valuable to learn more about particular ideas from other clinical programmes.

The third section of the Journal is dedicated to student submissions – preferably relatively short pieces, but focusing on any aspect of their clinical experience – whether a particular case, or a particular learning experience, or indeed a wider consideration of issues such as clinical organisation or assessment. This is probably the most underutilised section of the Journal and I think this is a shame since it has the scope to give a voice to the people for whom we run our clinics, and whose commitment and enthusiasm is an essential pre-requisite for any successful clinical programme: again, I would welcome submissions for this section.

*Philip Plowden*

Editor