

## PERSONAL INJURY LAW

## “Most responsible diagnosis” should match injuries

EMERGENCY  
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nosis. In the medical record, the physicians “Most Responsible Diagnosis” should reflect the treatment and match the injuries.

In the event of a suspected medication error, ensure that whenever possible, information regarding drug allergies, current medications and pre-existing medical conditions was obtained prior to medication administration. Consider possible drug/drug and drug/disease interactions. Medications given by a nurse must always be preceded by a physician’s order. Check that the doctors’ order is legible, that the medication was actually given to your client and was administered as ordered. Confirm that the “Five R’s” of medications are followed: The right drug

at the right dose, to the right patient at the right time, by the right route. Watch for written indications of adverse patient response to the medication in the nurses’ notes. Copies of pharmacy records and the daily narcotic sheet may be useful in determining details regarding medication dose and administration times.

If an adverse outcome is related to a medical procedure performed in the E.R., confirm that the procedure was necessary to your client’s treatment or diagnosis and obtain copies of relevant hospital policies. Confirm that the policy reflects care standards in place at the time of the incident and was appropriately followed. Identify the designation of the person performing the procedure and ensure that they were adequately trained or supervised, qualified to perform the pro-

cedure and acting within their scope of practice. Look for written or implied consent including evidence that the patient was aware of possible and expected side effects of the procedure.

Knowledge of E.R. practice is essential when analysing medical records, as the records can be scat-

tered, illegible and full of perplexing medical jargon. Abbreviations can have multiple meanings and diagnostic test results are difficult to interpret. Complicated injuries or serious client outcomes may require medical records’ review by nurse or physician experts.

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For a multitude of reasons, emergency room visits do not always proceed as expected. Photo by Pablo Fuchs