



Child Protection Practitioners
Association of Queensland Limited

CPPAQ Practice Paper Series

Upcoming Paper: 25 March 2014

Gathering evidence from children and young people in child sexual abuse cases-exploring agency and professional perspectives

Panel:

Chair: Judge Anne Demack of the Federal Circuit Court

Detective Sergeant Angela McCarthy from the Child and Sexual Crime Unit, Child Safety and Sexual Crime Group, Queensland Police Service

Dr Catherine Skellern, Paediatrician Child Advocacy Service Royal Childrens Hospital Brisbane

Ms Toni Cash, A/Manager, Sexual Abuse Specialist Support, Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services

Dr Nina Westera, Centre of Excellence in Policing and Security, Griffith University

This panel will explore the difficulties and challenges in gathering, responding and assessing evidence from children and young people in child sexual abuse cases. You will hear from police, health and child safety about their role in these cases, how they approach questioning, supports available for complainants and arrangements between agencies. Judge Demack will act as Chair and offer the courts perspective. An academic will offer a research perspective on the science behind gathering the most reliable and complete information from children and young people.

Date: Tuesday 25 March 2014
Venue: Grant Thornton, Level 18, 145 Ann Street, Brisbane
Time: 5:30 to 7:00 pm
Cost: Free for members or \$30 one off attendance

Registration closes 5pm Friday 21 March 2014

Run Sheet:

5:00 pm Registration

5:30-7:00 pm Practice Paper (1.5 hours)

Networking Drinks to follow

Please submit questions for the panel in advance by emailing CPPAQ at cppaq@officelogistics.com.au

About your panel:

Judge Anne Demack was appointed a Judge of the Federal Circuit Court (previously known as the Federal Magistrates Court) in 2008 with a jurisdiction that includes private family law. Judge Demack was formerly a barrister in private practice in Rockhampton with a strong commitment to legal aid work. She holds degrees in law and in social work and had earlier worked as a social worker. At the time of her appointment she was a member of the Children Services Tribunal, which was then the Queensland tribunal with responsibility for reviewing decisions made by the statutory child protection department, and had been a member of the Central Queensland parole board. Judge Demack has a particular interest in parenting matters, child protection issues and parents being assisted with the resolution of their disputes.

Detective Sergeant Angela McCarthy is the Principal Facilitator for ICARE (Interviewing Children and Recording Evidence). She has been a member of the Queensland Police Service since 1995. She began her career performing general duties at Inala Police Station, spent six and a half years at the Inala Juvenile Aid Bureau/Child Protection Investigation Unit and then spent five years as a Facilitator at the First Year Constable Program. In July 2012 she returned to her preferred field of child protection to work in the Child Safety and Sexual Crime Group training unit.

Dr Catherine Skellern is a forensic paediatrician who works in child protection at the Royal Childrens Hospital in the Child Advocacy Service in Brisbane. She is involved in the forensic assessment of children presenting to the Royal Children's Hospital with findings considered suspicious of harm and also undertakes expert review opinions for cases without direct clinical involvement. She completed a Masters of Forensic Medicine through the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine and has published several papers and presented at national and international conferences on medico-legal issues relating to forensic practices in child protection. Through accreditation by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians Dr Skellern is also recognised as a Specialist in Community Child Health.

Toni Cash is the Manager of Sexual Abuse Specialist Support and Sector Development (SASSSD), a specialist service located within Client Services and Practice Reform in the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. She is a social worker who has worked for over 25 years in the area of child and family welfare, primarily in the area of statutory child protection. She has worked in a variety of practice and policy positions within the Department and also has experience working in the non-government sector, particularly as the Programs Manager of Alternative Care for Save the Children in Queensland. She has a long held interest in and experience in the specialty area of sexual abuse and brings to this position extensive experience in the area including investigation and assessment, counselling and therapeutic intervention and court/tribunal experience. Ms Cash has a passion for professional development and reflective practice and integrated partnership in the area of child protection and this is demonstrated in a number of initiatives currently undertaken by SASSSD.

Dr Nina Westera is a Research Fellow at Griffith University in Queensland, where she specialises in the application of psychology to law. Her current research examines how interview methods and video recording can be used to improve evidence in cases of sexual and violent offending. Her research interests include investigative interviewing, eyewitness testimony, criminal investigation and evidence in cases of sexual and violent offending. Dr Westera has educated and advised police officers, lawyers, judges and other criminal justice sector professionals in Australia, New Zealand and around the world about best practice in investigative interviewing.