



Curriculum Vitae

7 March 2022

*Admitted to the Legal
Profession – July 2004*

*Called to the Brisbane
Private Bar – March 2011*

MELINDA ZERNER

Barrister-at Law

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Member of Hemmant's List

Summary

Melinda has a practice in coronial inquests; personal injuries; professional negligence, particularly medical negligence; commissions of inquiry; and mediations. She has acted for clients including the Australian Commonwealth Government, the State of Queensland and sizeable Insurers. Melinda has appeared in the Court of Appeal, Supreme, District and Magistrate Courts. In addition, she has appeared in over 40 coronial inquests as either Counsel Assisting the Coroner (including the State Coroner) or for parties granted leave to appear at inquests. Melinda's previous 17-year nursing career as a clinician, educator and manager is invaluable to her current work at the Bar.

Qualifications

Mediator Assessment Certificate – Bond University

Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice – Queensland University of Technology (QUT)

Juris Doctor – University of Queensland

Graduate Diploma in Vocational Education and Training – University of Southern Queensland

Bachelor of Nursing – Griffith University, Gold Coast

Post Registration Certificate in Aged Care – Princess Alexandra Hospital/QUT

Certificate in General Nursing – Ipswich General Hospital

High Profile Inquests/Commissions of Inquiry

2021 Inquest into the death of Tyson Jessen [**patient shot by a police officer**] (Counsel Assisting the State Coroner)

2020/2021 Commonwealth **Disability Royal Commission** (Junior Counsel assisting to Ms Kate Eastman SC for Public Hearing 6, Psychotropic medication, behaviour support and behaviours of concern; and Public Hearing 9, Pathways and barriers to open employment for people with disability)

2019 Inquest into the death of Omid Masoumali [**refugee from Nauru who self-immolated**] (Counsel for International Health and Medical Services ('IHMS'))

2019 Inquest into Queensland's worst maritime incident, the **sinking of the FV Dianne [death of 6 persons]** (Counsel for the owner of the FV Dianne and the deceased skipper)

2018 Inquest into the **triple fatality skydiving incident at Mission Beach** (Counsel Assisting the Northern Coroner)

2017 Joint Inquest into the **death of four persons** who died as a result of an **overdose from prescription opioid medications** – (Counsel for Dr Seton)

2016/2017 Inquest into the death of Hamid Khazaei [**refugee from Manus Island Detention Centre**] (Junior Counsel to Mr Geoff Diehm QC acting for IHMS and International SOS)

2016 Commission of Inquiry into the Closure of the **Barrett Adolescent Centre** (Junior Counsel to Dr Kerri Mellifont QC acting for Metro South Hospital and Health Service)

2014 Inquest into the **Slacks Creek House Fire [death of 11 family members]** (Counsel for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services)

Employment History

March 2011 to Current: Barrister, Hemmant's List

June 2011 to January 2012: Counsel Assisting the Brisbane Coroner (employed full-time by the Office of the State Coroner on a short-term contract to cover maternity leave while maintaining my practice at the Bar)

October 2008 – January 2011: Senior Legal Advisor, Department of Community Safety (formerly the Department of Emergency Services)

January 2004 – October 2008: Solicitor/Associate, Thynne and Macartney Solicitors (Professional Indemnity Practice Group)

July 2001 – February 2004: Clinical Nurse - Part-time (worked 40hrs/fortnight whilst studying law full time) – St. Andrew's War Memorial Hospital

March 2000 – June 2001: Nursing Unit Manager/Clinical Nurse Consultant – Medical Unit, St. Andrew's War Memorial Hospital

January 1997 – November 1999: Coordinator of Clinical Education, The Wesley Hospital Centre for Education and Training

March 1990 – January 1997: Various positions as a Registered and Clinical Nurse, The Wesley Hospital

Professional Achievements

Recognised in the Women Lawyers Association of Queensland 'Inspo' list - Barristers, 2020 and 2021

Recommended Counsel in Doyles Guide in the category of Leading Professional Indemnity Junior Counsel – Queensland, 2021; and Recommended Counsel in the category of Leading Insurance & Personal Injury Law Junior Counsel – Queensland, 2021.

Recommended Counsel in Doyles Guide in the category of Leading Professional Indemnity Junior Counsel – Queensland, 2020

Recommended Counsel in Doyles Guide in the category of Leading Insurance & Personal Injury Law Junior Counsel – Queensland, 2016

Awarded a Department of Community Safety Australia Day Medallion for the provision of exceptional legal services to the Department of Community Safety - 2011

Awarded the Wesley Hospital Johnson and Johnson Bursary (\$5,000.00 to attend the International Nurses Conference in London)

Awarded the Catherine Evans Memorial Prize from the Ipswich Hospital on graduation (based on nursing ability, leadership, personality and educational qualities)

Professional Associations

Queensland Bar Association

Medico Legal Society of Queensland (**Senior Vice President**)

Asia Pacific Coroners' Society (**Member of the APCS 2022 conference organising committee**)

Women Lawyers Association of Queensland (**Mentor**)

QUT Mentor (**recognised for 10 years of service in 2020 and current Mentor**)