



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
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Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

Tribunal reprimands practitioners for unprofessional conduct

13 January 2015

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal has reprimanded medical practitioners Dr Tam Dieu and Dr Mervyn Cass and placed conditions on their registrations.

The Medical Board of Australia alleged Dr Dieu engaged in unprofessional conduct of a serious nature and Dr Cass engaged in unprofessional conduct.

The conduct concerned their post-operative management of Lauren James, who died in January 2007 following complications from liposuction surgery at the Centre of Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery (COCAPS) in Caulfield, Victoria.

Dr Dieu was Ms James' treating surgeon, and Dr Cass was the medical director of COCAPS.

The coroner conducted an investigation into Ms James' death and, in August 2010, found that Ms James' death could have been prevented.

Both practitioners admitted the allegations made by the Board at the hearing, and agreed to the Board's proposed determinations.

Because the events occurred in 2007, the tribunal made the findings under the legislation then in force, the Medical Practice Act 1994 (Vic).

The tribunal was satisfied that both practitioners showed remorse for the tragic consequences of the failure to provide adequate post-operative care of Ms James.

The tribunal ordered that the practitioners be reprimanded in the strongest possible terms, and have conditions placed on their registration, requiring them to complete further education.

The reasons for the tribunal's decision are on the [AustLII website](#).

For more information

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