



Health Matrix: The Journal of Law-Medicine

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Preface

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HEALTH MATRIX

The Journal of Law-Medicine

PREFACE

Dean Peter M. Gerhart†

THE DECISION TO LAUNCH a journal like the new, and improved, *Health Matrix* is never made lightly. If it is to be done properly, such an enterprise takes many resources and much commitment. Faculty, students, staff, advisors, and money must all be in place. Even with appropriate resources, however, success is not guaranteed. Given the global electronic information explosion, the world probably does not know that it needs another scholarly journal. Amidst all of the babble, it may be more and more difficult to say something that has real impact.

Nonetheless, we launch this new and improved *Health Matrix* with great confidence and optimism, for we believe that we have both the resources and access to important information for waiting audiences.

Our foremost resource is our students, for they will be doing most of the work. It would be an unsupportive dean, indeed, who did not respond positively when a group of bright and energetic students came and asked to enhance their education, to work longer hours, and to assume greater responsibility by managing a major new journal. Here, enthusiasm and drive are in abundance and go a long way. Moreover, top-flight quality runs deep in our student body, and the Law-Medicine Center attracts to the law school students of great intelligence and ability, with substantial experience in the health professions.

The Law-Medicine Center itself, of course, is also a great resource. A home for outstanding faculty, with a broad and innovative curriculum in health law subjects, and a comprehensive

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research agenda, the Law-Medicine Center plays a supporting role that gives our journal unique strengths. Led by its director, Max Mehlman, our faculty are deeply involved with the international community of scholars, providing both connections and context for this endeavor. As our students write, think, and edit, they will be building on the rich tapestry woven by our curriculum, which features nine courses covering the range of health law topics from medical malpractice to genetic engineering. The intellectual arena within the Center is rich. The Oliver Schroeder Scholar-in-Residence Program, the Law-Medicine Forum discussion series, and conferences sponsored by the Center will provide both articles and insight to keep *Health Matrix* thoughtful and informative.

The Law-Medicine Center is also our link to a community rich in resources in the law-medicine field. Located in one of the great health centers of the United States, and within a short distance from an internationally renowned teaching hospital, a world-class research hospital, and excellent medical libraries, our community can be made a part of our enterprise. Again, tradition is on our side, for the community has been deeply involved in the growing strength of the Law Medicine Center.

Finally, the new and improved *Health Matrix* builds on the strengths of the old *Health Matrix*. Originally conceived as a cooperative venture of six of the professional schools at Case Western Reserve (law, medicine, nursing, management, dentistry, and applied social sciences), the journal was designed to provide an interdisciplinary forum for the exchange of information about innovations and improvements in numerous aspects of the health care field. Conception occurred on March 20, 1981, when Michael Witt, its first senior student editor (Law '82), and Duncan Neuhauser, Ph.D., its chief faculty advisor, met to discuss the organization and content of the proposed journal. The contract to publish *Health Matrix* was signed a year later and, produced by a commercial publisher, the first journal rolled off the presses within the following year. The achievements of that *Health Matrix* were significant; it did not toil in obscurity.¹ For example, two articles written by Professor Tom Gruler received Computer Press Association citations. In successive years, authors received honorable mention in the "Best Article" category of the Dean Conley Award

1. *Health Matrix* was listed as a key professional journal. Kigers, *A Guide to Key Journals in the Field of Hospital and Health Services Administration*, 3 J. HEALTH ADMIN. EDUC. 108 (1985) (articles had been referred to in periodicals such as the *New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*).

Competition of the American College of Health Care Executives — Rosemary Stevens in 1986 and Robert G. Evans in 1987.

Despite its successes, the original *Health Matrix* suffered from split personalities. By editorial direction, the journal began to focus almost solely on health care management issues, even though most of the students doing the work were law students. As its focus narrowed, the ability to retain the interdisciplinary character of the journal decreased. Support for the journal by a commercial publisher led to a product that was more practical than academic. When the commercial publisher bowed out in late 1989, we decided that we should preserve the interdisciplinary focus of *Health Matrix*, but put it on a broader academic, financial, and subject matter platform.

Thus, we launch the new and improved *Health Matrix* as a student-edited, faculty-supervised, interdisciplinary journal in health law and policy. We know that it will retain its interdisciplinary flavor, because the students who edit it bring broad experience in health care fields and health care management to the law school, and because the law school has strong ties with the other academic units at the University. We know that the journal will find a strong and growing market because, while academic, its pages will engage the most pressing issues of our day in the field that it addresses.

Time will pass judgment on our project, so let me make several predictions that reflect our expectations. I would expect that when we meet to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the new *Health Matrix*, many of those instrumental in its rebirth and charged with its stewardship will be playing major roles in the health care profession. I expect that when one looks over the audience of distinguished authors invited to a gala dinner, one will see some, if not most, of the leading names in the field of health law. And the name *Health Matrix* will have taken on a secondary meaning for “important to read; keep on top of the desk.”

