

## Australian Public Health Law: Contemporary issues and challenges

Belinda Bennett and Dr Ian Freckelton (eds), The Federation Press, 2023, pb \$160

Public health law is an area that has been at the forefront of people's minds for the past three years courtesy of the COVID-19 pandemic and its rolling effects. We have not seen such fast-paced legislative developments in most of our lifetimes and the evolution continues at lightning speed. As with other areas of societal change, such as the use of artificial intelligence and cybercrime, sometimes the law and associated regulation struggle to keep up with the rate of scientific advancements.

Accordingly, this book comes at a great time, when we have largely come out on the other side and have much to consider and many lessons learned to reflect on. No doubt much data is still to be analysed and released and the worldwide and Australian impacts of the pandemic will be examined for years to come, but it is never too early to start.

The book is edited by Belinda Bennett and Dr Ian Freckelton with each chapter authored by a subject matter expert. Drawing on the expertise of known subject matter experts, each topic is analysed by reference to the latest data, research and reputable research materials and the issues are covered in a forthright and analytical way.

Covering five larger subject areas: the scope of public health law; public health law,

rights and ethics; communicable diseases; non-communicable diseases; and public health law in society, the book covers much ground about topics that are highly relevant in society today, but also the subject of much recent legislative change.

The scope of public health law incorporates the evolution, ideologies and strategies for our society in terms of public health, and covers legal issues arising from the recent COVID-19 pandemic and consumer protections in terms of the promotion of health services.

Under the band of law, rights and ethics, the book discusses intergenerational health justice for First Nations people, mental health and genomics.

Communicable diseases includes discussions on governance, sex work, responding to pandemics and the vexed arena of vaccination laws across Australia.

Non-communicable diseases discussion covers alcohol, tobacco, food systems and illicit drugs.

Workplace regulations, environmental law, aged care and human rights, children at risk, natural disasters and coroners' investigations are all discussed in the society section.

Other areas that require deeper analysis – health profession regulation and fertility law – are excluded, but each deserves its own resource, such is the depth and complexity of each of those fields.

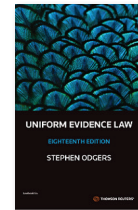
As a solid base for public health law issues in Australia at this time, this book is a fantastic resource. ■

**Jennifer Holdstock**, principal, Holdstock Law



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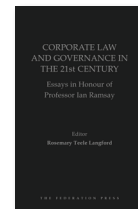
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