

Tribunal reprimands practitioner and imposes conditions on registration

13 November 2014

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal has reprimanded Dr William Fitzgerald and imposed conditions on his registration as a medical practitioner in Australia.

The Medical Board of Australia referred Dr Fitzgerald to the tribunal in relation to issues with his clinical treatment of a patient at the Mater Mackay Hospital in 2009.

On 5 January 2009, Dr Fitzgerald performed a laparotomy with adhesiolysis and cystectomy on a patient at the Mater Hospital Mackay. In the days following this procedure, while she was an inpatient and under the care and management of Dr Fitzgerald, the patient's condition progressively deteriorated. On 12 January 2009 she was transferred to the Mackay Base Hospital where she underwent emergency surgery for peritonitis. A long and difficult period of recovery followed.

Dr Fitzgerald admitted clinical error in not returning the patient to theatre on 10 January 2009, and failing to actively maintain and monitor the patient's health and care prior to her transfer to Mackay Base Hospital.

Dr Fitzgerald accepted that his conduct constituted unsatisfactory professional conduct, and agreed with the Board's proposed restriction on his registration.

The tribunal accepted the recommendation proposed by the Board and Dr Fitzgerald that he be reprimanded and have conditions imposed on his registration. The conditions will be noted on the [register of practitioners](#) for two years including that the practitioner participate in a two-year mentoring program and a surgical management course. The tribunal also ordered that the practitioner pay the Board's costs of the proceedings.

Read the [transcript of the decision](#) on the Supreme Court Library Queensland website.

For more information

- Visit www.ahpra.gov.au
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