

## **Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal**

### ***The Director of Proceedings v Nurse A and Nurse Cruzada — 3 April 2006***

On 3 April 2006 the HPDT upheld charges of professional misconduct against two ICU nurses involved in the care of a three-year-old burns victim from Tahiti. The Tribunal found that Nurse A had on three occasions administered 1g, instead of 250mg, doses of paracetamol to the boy, and that on discovering the error, Nurse Cruzada had failed to respond appropriately.

The Tribunal said that Nurse A's failure to administer the correct dosage of paracetamol on three occasions constituted a failure to adhere to the standards expected of a nurse in her position. It was mindful of the "trust which society has placed in nurses to accurately administer medications to patients. Nurses must always maintain the highest level of vigilance when administering medication." No penalty was imposed on Nurse A, who was granted permanent name suppression.

In the case of Nurse Cruzada, who observed the error recorded in the drug administration records, but did not alert the medical staff, complete an incident report, or tell the oncoming nursing staff, the Tribunal was in no doubt that her omissions constituted a significant departure from the standards expected of a nurse in her circumstances. She was ordered to practise under supervision, and to pay \$5,000 costs towards the prosecution.