

## Introduction

The “Precedent and Innovation: Health Law in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” conference, held in Edmonton, Alberta in September 2002, was the first time the health law community from across Canada had a chance to convene en masse, and was a wonderful opportunity for colleagues and professionals from related areas to discuss current issues and plan future collaborations. It was the first national health law conference of its kind and was unique in its many themed panels which illustrated the breadth, depth and multi-disciplinary nature of the area. From research on human subjects to genetics and new reproductive technologies, from health information to health reform, from disability to malpractice, the array of topics presented and the high quality of the presentations made for a stimulating starting point for many discussions over the course of the two days involving professionals well versed in the debate, along with students and others getting their first taste for all that the area encompasses. This special edition of the Health Law Journal contains a selection of papers from the conference.

We would like to express our profound thanks to our sponsors<sup>1</sup>, without whom this event could not have occurred. We would also like to thank all of the participants, including presenters, chairs, and registrants, and in particular our keynote speaker, Dr. Conrad Brunk. He delivered the Health Law Institute’s annual Picard lecture on the topic of risk which tied so neatly into every panel of the conference and promoted much discussion.

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<sup>1</sup> Alberta Law Foundation, CIHR Institute of Health Services and Policy Research, Genome Prairie (GELS), Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research, Bennett Jones LLP, Field Atkinson Perraton LLP, Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta, University of Alberta Conference Fund, Fraser Milner Casgrain LLP, Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP, Merck Frosst, and Stones Fontaine Carbert.

