

Without Due Care

Medical negligence is a subject that no one wants to talk about, until it happens to them.

Without Due Care, a book recently printed at Cooranbong Printing, and launched at the NSW Parliament House on 20 October, relates the story of Don Mackay, a quadriplegic husband and father from Port Macquarie, who needlessly died at the hands of the NSW Health Care System.

According to Lorraine Long from the Medial Error Action Group, "This is an account of a loving family's plight and fight for justice."

When a loved one dies from their medical treatment, it is human nature to want an explanation. We expect statutory authorities to act.

Therese Mackay, in demanding answers to what went wrong with her late husband Don's care and treatment in a major Sydney public hospital that led to his unnecessary death, was not only blocked by people with greater resources, but also not helped by those people whose help she needed most, because of institutionalised indifference.

Without Due Care, is a disturbing story of mistreatment by a health care system which at times is unaccountable. What makes it worse is that it is not a fictional story; it is the frighteningly real and harrowing account of how tenuous a person's health and well being can be.

Iatrogenic injury or death – originating from a physician's treatment – is a rising area of great concern as our health care systems become more complex. The term includes unintended and unnecessary harm and suffering arising from the health care.

There are still many in the health system who deny that such fatalities occur. They point to cause-of-death statistics in order to back up that claim. Yet, a hospital will not willingly attribute the death of a patient to his or her treatment, but rather to any other contributing factor.

The operation was a success, but the patient died? It was once considered a joke – that doctors in hospitals simply buried their mistakes – however, it is not a joke when the situation hits close to home.



Therese Mackay.

Without Due Care – An Australian Hospital Tragedy, was launched by NSW politicians, Andrew Stoner and John Hatton. It is available from the author, Therese Mackay, for \$27.99 plus \$6.00 postage and handling. Enquiries to PO Box 248, Port Macquarie NSW 2444.