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Dear Readers:

The Richmond Journal of Law and the Public Interest is pleased to present you with our annual spring issue. This issue focuses on health care—a topic presently at the forefront of political and policy debates. The issue is divided into two parts: two articles and two student comments.

The first article, Not So Hip?: The Expanded Burdens on and Consequences to Law Firms as Business Associates Under HITECH Modifications to HIPAA, by Megan Bradshaw and Benjamin Hoover, provides a history of HIPAA and analyses the implications of the recent HITECH amendments for law firms and lawyers handling protected health information.

In the second article, What Scribner Wrought: How the Invention of Modern Dialysis Shaped Health Law and Policy, Sallie Thieme Sanford provides a discussion of the invention and history of dialysis and its resounding impacts on ethical allocation of medical resources, public financing for health care, and decisions to terminate medical treatment.

Anisa Mohanty’s Comment, Medical Rights for Same-Sex Couples and Rainbow Families, discusses the shortcomings in the present state of the law for same-sex couples and their families regarding medical visitation and decision-making, proposes a Model Act to ameliorate those problems, and suggests ways for same-sex couples and their families to address problems in the absence of such a Model Act.

Finally, Kristen DiGirolamo’s Comment, Legal Preparedness for Pandemic Influenza: Is Virginia Ready?, discusses the implications of pandemic influenza, analyzes various legal authority to deal with a pandemic, and suggests how to improve existing legal authority and better plan for a pandemic.

We hope that reading this issue will provoke further thought about the recent health care legislation and about the legal implications of health care reform in general.

Sincerely,

Summer Laine Speight

Executive Editor