

Lawyer's Insurance Association of Nova Scotia (LIANS) introduces a new Risk and Practice Management Program and Advisor

As your new Risk and Practice Management Advisor, I'd first like to take a moment to introduce myself. I come to this position with twenty-six years experience in private practice in small and mid-size firms in Halifax and Bedford, most recently Gillis & Associates in Bedford.

I am a 1974 Business Administrative graduate from St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish and a 1978 graduate of Dalhousie University. I was admitted to the Nova Scotia Bar in 1979 and was appointed Queen's

Counsel in 2002. I have extensive litigation and trial experience. My practice included a large component of both Real Estate and Family Law.

In the June 2005 issue of the Society Record, we announced that upon proclamation of the Legal Profession Act, the Nova Scotia Barristers' Liability Claims Fund would be renamed the Lawyers' Insurance Association of Nova Scotia (LIANS). We also mentioned that a Risk and Practice Management Program — a new initiative for LIANS — would be developed.

OUR PROGRAM GOALS

To provide you with law practice management and loss prevention resources and tools that will help you manage your practice more effectively and minimize exposure to claims.

For the practitioner, there are many benefits to effective risk and practice management. The improved client service which results from effective risk and practice management produces happier clients, fewer mistakes and greater efficiency. This should help make the practice of law more satisfying and rewarding to the individual lawyer and his or her staff. Better practice management should also result in greater productivity and increased profitability.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In developing the Risk and Management (RPM) program, one of our objectives is to create an environment in which members will take advantage of risk and practice management assistance without the fear of recrimination. Information received by LIANS, and in particular, the RPM program, is confidential. We do not disclose information to the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society unless required by law or requested to do so by the member to whom the information pertains.

An underlying principle of risk management is that prevention is better than cure.

WHERE WE'RE HEADED

In addition to a regular feature in the Society Record, we will also be providing practice support through a series of articles, newsletters, precedents and checklists, as well as links to information and tools already in existence on other sites.

Take some time to visit our website at www.lians.ca to familiarize yourself with the site and to check out the valuable information and tools already there, including the publication "Safe & Effective Practice" — a publication of the Canadian Lawyers Insurance Association (CLIA).

INITIATIVES IN THE WORKS

Our initial program will focus on:

- Practice tips and protocols
- Real Estate resources
- Family Law resources
- Participation in educational programs relating to risk and practice management issues
- Technology — how it can be integrated into your law practice
- Maintaining a healthy work environment and lifestyle

I also hope to travel throughout the province to meet with the County Bars to provide more information about our program and to receive your feedback.

Deborah E. Gillis, Q.C.

