



Pride in Law

NSW CHAPTER

FEATURE ARTICLE

MISDIAGNOSED AND DISMISSED: THE SYSTEMATIC IGNORANCE OF WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

By Georgia Green (she/her)

Female anatomy is complex and multifaceted. Reproductive organs and the menstrual cycle are widely misunderstood. People of the ovo-uterine system are being underdiagnosed and overlooked by medical professionals.



Since its inception, the study of medicine has been predominantly centred on the male body, shaping a framework that often overlooks the complexities of female anatomy. Over time, this has contributed to a gender bias in medical practice, affecting diagnosis, treatment, and overall healthcare outcomes. The ovo-uterine system presents a range of physiological

functions and medical conditions that individuals with male anatomy will never experience, making it essential for medical education to reflect a more inclusive understanding of the human body.

Conditions like endometriosis, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), and other reproductive health issues often go undiagnosed for years, leaving many individuals suffering without proper medical intervention. On average, those with endometriosis wait 7–10 years for a diagnosis, despite experiencing debilitating pain and other severe symptoms. This delay is often due to the tendency of medical professionals to dismiss women's pain as a normal part of the menstrual cycle or attribute it to hormonal fluctuations rather than investigating underlying health concerns. This issue is even more pressing for LGBTQ+ individuals, who may already face barriers to competent and inclusive healthcare, further compounding the struggle for recognition and proper care.

The systemic dismissal of reproductive health conditions is not just a medical issue - it is also a legal and human rights concern. Gender discrimination in healthcare can lead to violations of the right to adequate medical treatment, bodily autonomy, and equality before the law. The persistent delays in diagnosing conditions like endometriosis and PCOS reflect broader issues of medical negligence and institutional bias, which can have legal implications when patients are denied proper care.

Beyond hormonal therapies, treatment options remain limited, with the only alternative often being invasive procedures such as surgery. This lack of medical innovation in reproductive healthcare restricts patients' choices and reinforces a system in which symptom management is prioritised over long-term solutions. The widespread reliance on birth control also comes with significant side effects, including weight gain, mood swings, depression, loss of libido, and increased risk of blood clots, which are frequently downplayed or dismissed by medical professionals.

The limited treatment options available highlight failures in government policy and regulatory oversight. Pharmaceutical companies and medical institutions have a legal and ethical duty to prioritise research and development for conditions affecting large portions of the population. However, the continued emphasis on hormonal contraception as the default solution, rather than advancing research into non-hormonal alternatives, suggests a failure to adequately address the healthcare needs of women and individuals with reproductive health conditions.

The hysterectomy dilemma reflects a broader issue in reproductive healthcare - offering extreme surgical interventions as a “solution” while failing to provide comprehensive, less invasive alternatives. While hysterectomy may relieve some symptoms, it is not a cure-all, particularly for individuals who wish to have children or seek treatment that preserves reproductive function. The normalisation of this procedure as a primary option raises ethical and legal concerns regarding informed consent and the right to access diverse medical treatments that do not force patients into irreversible decisions.

The systemic shortcomings in reproductive healthcare disproportionately impact LGBTQ+ individuals, transgender and non-binary people, and other marginalised communities. Access to appropriate medical care is already a challenge for these groups due to widespread discrimination, lack of provider education on gender-diverse healthcare, and financial barriers. For transgender and non-binary individuals, many reproductive health conditions - such as endometriosis and PCOS - are often overlooked or mismanaged due to biases in medical research and treatment models that primarily focus on cisgender women. The failure to provide inclusive and affordable reproductive healthcare exacerbates health disparities, leaving LGBTQ+ individuals and other minority groups to navigate a system that often disregards their specific needs. Addressing these inequities requires legal and policy reforms to ensure that healthcare is not only accessible but also affirming and tailored to diverse patient experiences. ■

Member Spotlight

Meet Georgia Green



Georgia Green (she/her) is a fourth-year law student and a graduate of a Bachelor of Communication, majoring in news media. With a strong academic foundation in both law and journalism, she is passionate about legal research, media, and public interest advocacy. Her studies reflect a deep commitment to the intersection of law and communication, particularly in analysing and reporting on critical legal and human rights issues.

Georgia is committed to the protection and promotion of human rights in all forms, recognising their fundamental role in ensuring justice, equality, and dignity for all individuals. She hopes to dedicate her legal career to advocating for and advancing human rights, using her expertise in law and communication to drive meaningful change through research, policy, and advocacy.

Thank you Georgia for your wonderful contribution to the Pride in Law NSW newsletter!

Want to write a piece?

*Send submissions to **communications.nsw@prideinlaw.org***

Meet Our New Committee Member!

As you may have seen on our social media, we have been looking for a new communications officer! Well, we are thrilled to announce that a hot new bombshell has entered the villa....

Meet Dion!

Dion (he/they) is a regional lawyer based on the Mid-North Coast of NSW. He is passionate about advocating for LGBTQIA+ people, whether they be professionals, students, or community members. He is particularly interested in ensuring that LGBTQIA+ people have equitable access to justice.

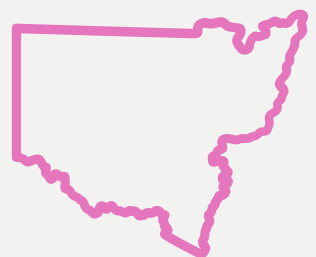
As a queer person, Dion understands the feeling of disconnection that can occur, especially in regional NSW. He strives to make others feel heard and connected to their communities. He firmly believes that the legal profession should be more accessible, inclusive, and diverse.

Dion's dedication to advocacy and helping others continues in his professional career. He assists injured workers in accessing their rights and entitlements by navigating the workers' compensation scheme. In previous roles, he advocated for those impacted by the criminal justice system.

Before entering the legal profession, he also completed a double degree in environmental (marine) science and management. During this time, he developed a deep interest in repurposing environmental management practices to protect indigenous fishers from unjust criminal prosecutions.

Outside of work, Dion spends most of his time at the gym or on the water. He has trekked to Everest Base Camp and enjoys building LEGO—perhaps a bit too much, according to some people.

What's Been Happening in NSW?



Upcoming Events

Anti-Discrimination and LGBTIQ+ Law Reform Panel



Ashurst

Join Pride in Law NSW and Ashurst on **Thursday 13 March**, to wrap up Mardi Gras season with an informative panel on **What is 'Free To Be': a Guide to Anti-Discrimination and LGBTIQ+ Law Reform**.

This event will be chaired by Devine (she/her) and Mike members the opportunity amongst the Pride in Law in a supportive and inform

mittee members Lauren e panel will give ous panelists, network , and ask some questions

Attendance is free but please book your tickets here: events.humanitix.com/pride-in-law-mardi-gras-panel-event

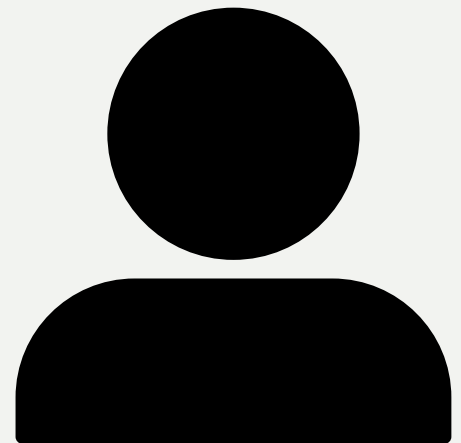
You might be wondering who is on the panel, but look no further...



Alex Greenwich MP (he/him)



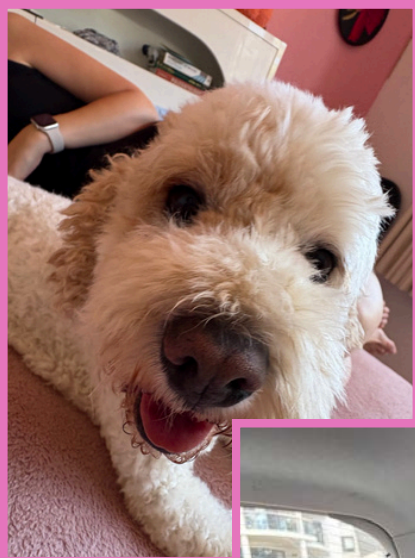
Anthony Venn-Brown OAM (he/him)



Surprise guest!

Proud Pets

With paws, purrs and pride... Pride in Law NSW is embracing diversity in our furry, feathered and scaly friends!



INTRODUCING...

OLLIE DEVINE

*Paw-rent: **Lauren Devine**, Pride in Law NSW Events Officer (she/her)*

This most distinguished gentleman is Ollie who lives a luscious life on the Northern Beaches of Sydney, frequenting his favourite beaches at Curl Curl and Manly.

Although he's not the cleverest little fella, he loves all animal-shaped toys - from Christmas dinosaur to rainbow octopus!

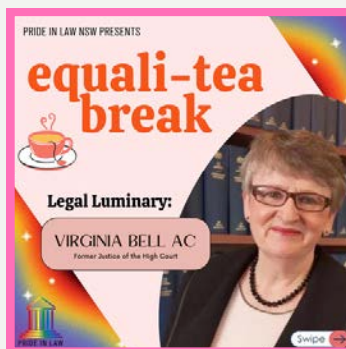
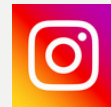
Ollie is a master of making human friends and love to jump and play with everyone big and small. Ollie gets nervous to meet new doggie-friends but loves to meet his regular play-mates and their paw-rents at the oval next to his house.

Ollie's favourite snacks include scrambled eggs and sausages (boy what a spoiled pup!) and he loves to feel the breeze in his fur at any beachside cafe.

Do you have a Proud Pet (or two)? Introduce them to us with some photos and fun facts! Send submissions to communications.nsw@prideinlaw.org

Want more Pride in Law?

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OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE: <https://www.prideinlaw.org/>

Write for us!

This newsletter is a place for you, our members and sponsors! We accept all kinds of submissions, including:

- Feature articles about LGBTIQ+ news or issues
- Spotlight on legal professionals, students or organisations doing great things for LGBTIQ+ people
- Letters from our sponsors or members, about your work, aspirations or journey
- Proud Pets (incl. photos!)
- Any other ideas you might have!

Send submissions to communications.nsw@prideinlaw.org