



Rich pickings in this edition

Editorial

by **Treasa Kenny, Editor**

This edition of our Journal brings together an interesting collection of five articles and two book reviews. Among the topics covered:

- an historical analysis of influences on mediation
- understanding the work of the Traveller Mediation Service in prisons
- research findings on the role of mediation in medical negligence
- the importance of apology in how mediation proceeds, and
- what we can learn from the enforced shift to online mediation from March 2020 as a result of the pandemic.

Tony Whatling's article on 'In the beginning was...the word' offers an historical analysis of seminal influences on the evolutionary development of mediation principles, values and practice models. It focuses on the ideas of pioneering individuals who had a significant role and influence on contemporary mediation principles and practice. This article sets out to inform or remind reflective practitioners, trainers and practice consultants of what constitutes the foundations of best mediation practice.

The article 'An overview of the Traveller Mediation Service Peer Mediation in Prisons Programme 2016 to 2019' outlines how TMS developed a unique and innovative approach to conflict prevention and resolution within the Irish Prison Service (IPS). In this article, we learn how the initiative came about, how it was implemented, who participated in it, what the outcomes were and also what the hopes are for the future of this unique programme.

Deirdre Curran and Alec Coakley, in their article 'The importance of apology in mediation', explore the role of apology in the resolution of conflict through



mediation. The article outlines the distinctive features of mediation that contribute to its unique potential to help restore relationships and explains how apology can play a transformative role in this. Their insights are drawn from both a review of the literature and empirical data from an online survey, coupled with in-depth interviews with practicing mediators. Ultimately the authors argue that mediation can incorporate apology as a potent means of repairing relationships and that the mediator can play a key role in this.

Breda Mitchell's article 'Look who's (not) talking: the use of mediation in medical negligence claims in Ireland' focuses on why mediation is not more widely used in medical negligence claims in Ireland. Eight solicitors working in the field of medical negligence shared their experience and perspectives on both the use and the absence of mediation in this area. She finds that if the parties' needs and interests are to be served, a more facilitative, people-centred mediation style should be adopted, supported by a coherent, government-sponsored, restorative justice strategy in which mediation would have a much larger role.

The final article shares the findings from a piece of research which I undertook which contrasts the use of online mediation in Ireland from February 2019, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, and from then until March 2021. The article considers the context for online mediation in Ireland and the challenges this poses. It also considers the experience of online mediation from the perspectives of mediators and participants in mediation.

Also in this issue are two book reviews. One, by Delma Sweeney, is of the book 'Mediation and Dispute Resolution, Contemporary Issues and Developments', by Tony Whatling. The second is my review of 'How Mediation Works: Resolving Conflict through Talk', by Angela Cora Garcia.

Please feel free to share the knowledge we offer in the **Journal of Mediation and Applied Conflict Analysis**. Details of the rules for submission of articles are on our home page.