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## Section 6: Regulating for health

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Judith Healy was an early leader at RegNet on health regulation, examining the ways in which responsive regulation might be used to improve the performance of the healthcare sector. Scott Burris's visits to RegNet were crucial to the work on nodal governance, as well as its application to health policy and regulation (see his 'Governance, microgovernance and health' in *Temple Law Review*). RegNet doctoral students such as Buddhi Lokuge and Warwick Neville undertook hugely important work, the former on managing the risks of pandemics and the latter on one of Australia's most important health initiatives, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. Buddhi Lokuge has gone on to pioneer initiatives in the complex field of Indigenous health (see Lokuge and Burke 2014). The governance of health, as the chapters in this section demonstrate, has grown into an area of major work for RegNet.

The extraordinary and almost daily advances in medical technology seemingly open the door to a possible world in which it is the best of times for the health of citizens everywhere. But, as Sharon Friel makes clear in her chapter, many regulatory institutions impact on the health of citizens, distributing risks in very unequal ways. Inequality stalks capitalism and probably nowhere is this more evident than in the case of health outcomes. For example, patent cartels and patent globalisation mean that access to medicines is massively unequal both within and across countries. Scott Burris introduces the reader to the methods being used to probe the causal fields that surround health outcomes. Judith Healy, using the assumptions of meta-regulation, argues that approaches

derived from responsive regulation and nodal governance can be used by patients to turn themselves into active regulators in their own cause rather than remaining passive regulatees shuffling through a world of medical command. The National Research Centre for OHS Regulation has been one of RegNet's longest running centres, with funding from the Australian Research Council and Safe Work Australia. Harmful work environments kill about two million workers globally each year. Elizabeth Bluff, one of the directors of the centre, opens her chapter with this startling estimate and analyses how good uses of the broader version of regulation described in Chapter 1 of this volume can save lives.

## References

Burris, S 2004. 'Governance, microgovernance and health', *Temple Law Review* 77(2): 335–61.

Lokuge, B and Burke, T 2014. *A Doctor's Dream: A Story of Hope from the Top End*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

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