

Cunningham Meyer & Vedrine Partners Moderate Panels at CBA Medical Litigation Summit 2011 and Present at American Conference Institute

Along with other leaders in the medical malpractice arena, CMV partners William F. Cunningham and Michael R. Slovis participated as moderators in the three-day educational program in Napa, California, September 11 -14, 2011. Bringing together insurers, judges, plaintiff counsel and defense attorneys at one summit conference under the mantle of the Chicago Bar Association, topics were timely and practical in their application to all attendees.

William F. Cunningham moderated a panel on *Avoiding Expert Witness Traps at Trial*. With both plaintiff and defense attorneys from notable Chicago firms and the Honorable Thomas Hogan as panelists, Mr. Cunningham presided over a lively exchange of techniques and experiences.

Michael R. Slovis moderated a panel on *Handling the Effects of Popular Media and Social Media on a Jury*. With Facebook, Twitter and other electronic media in the legal news daily, Mr. Slovis presided over a distinguished five person panel that included a representative from the State's Attorney's Office and the Honorable Clare McWilliams along with a social media researcher and plaintiff and defense counsel. The sharing of ideas from five different facets of the topic was revealing to all participants

Earlier in the summer, July 27-28, 2011, William F. Cunningham participated as a presenter on the topic of "Obstetric Malpractice" presented by the American Conference Institute in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The seminar brought together physicians, attorneys, and insurance personnel who examined the problems and various facets of the state of obstetric malpractice. Those of us privileged to defend doctors and medical institutions in these cases know that there is a wide array of physicians who deal with these issues. These include the obstetricians, maternal fetal medicine specialists, placental pathologists, pediatric neuro-radiologists, and pediatric neurologists, among others.

Some of the more prominent names in these medical fields were present and gave their presentation on these issues over the two days of the program. These included Richard Henderson, a Vice President of Transatlantic Re Insurance Company; Dr. Carolyn Salafia, a placental pathologist from Larchmont, New York; Dr. Avrum Pollock, a pediatric neurologist at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia; Dr. John Elliott, a clinical professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of California—Irvine; Dr. Barry Schifrin, a consulting obstetrician from Encino, California; Dr. David Clark, a pediatric neurologist from Albany Medical College; Dr. Robert Zimmerman, a pediatric neuro-radiologist from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia; Dr. Nancy Roberts, Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Main Line Health in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania; Robert Costello, Director of Process Improvement at Northwestern Memorial Hospital; Dr. Frank Manning, a maternal fetal medicine specialists from

Hawthorne, New York; Dr. Arnold Cohen, Chairman of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Albert Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Dr. Robert Gherman, Director of Maternal Fetal Medicine at Prince George's Hospital Center in Cheverly, Maryland; and Dr. Edith Gurewitsch Allen, Associate Professor of Gynecology and Obstetrics at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

Topics under discussion included the state of obstetric malpractice litigation; neonatal brain injury, its causes, prevention, and the standard of care; assessing causation by using placental pathology to determine etiology and timing of the injury; infections, metabolic disorders, and genetic defects as they relate to injuries in these cases; implementing preventative measures in order to help minimize risk and manage adverse outcomes; handling premature delivery; the use of experts to support causation and standard of care; and the management of shoulder dystocia. In addition, Mr. Cunningham participated in a workshop with attorneys, Kathleen Natri of Bridgeport, Connecticut, and Luke Pittoni of New York, New York, which was focused on the successful trial of an obstetric malpractice case from start to finish in which the workshop leaders were involved with the participants in a hands-on question and answer session that went on for several hours, covering all aspects of the trial, jury selection, use of experts, and theories to use in approaching opening statements and final arguments.

All in all, every aspect of a medical malpractice case was examined with experts from all over the country. Mr. Cunningham commented, "It was my privilege to be a part of this group. I would recommend participation in the 11th annual advanced forum on obstetric malpractice scheduled for the summer of 2012, sponsored by ACI."