

The Karen Ann Quinlan Case: Its Legacy and New Jersey's Contributions to End-of-Life Jurisprudence Between 1975 and 2025

Seminar or Event

11.24.25

Event Sponsor: *New Jersey Annual Judicial College*

Newark, NJ

John Zen Jackson, Of Counsel in the firm's **Healthcare** practice, was a member of a panel presentation at the New Jersey Annual Judicial College, which was held on Monday, November 24, 2025, in Newark. The topic of the presentation was "The Karen Ann Quinlan Case: Its Legacy and New Jersey's Contributions to End-Of-Life Jurisprudence Between 1975 and 2025."

The program was moderated by Judge Jack M Sabatino, PJAD. The panelists included individuals who had participated in various aspects of the *Quinlan* case in 1975-76. Judge Paul W. Armstrong, JSC (Ret.) was the attorney for the Quinlan family and had ongoing involvement with bioethical developments in New Jersey. Judge Donald G. Colleser, Jr., JAD (Ret.) was the Morris County Prosecutor who argued the case at the trial level and in the New Jersey Supreme Court. Attorney Thomas R. Curtin was the court-appointed guardian for Karen Ann Quinlan while the matter was considered by the Supreme Court. John Zen Jackson was a law clerk to Chief Justice Richard J. Hughes, who authored the opinion on behalf of a unanimous court. Judge Maritza Berdote Byrne provided the perspective of a high school girl aware of the evolving case who would later become a judge with duties in the Chancery Division. The panel provided an in-depth discussion of the *Quinlan* case and reviewed legal and societal developments that were the result of the influential New Jersey Supreme Court decision.

John's healthcare practice emphasizes litigated matters in judicial and administrative forums, including professional liability claims, licensure and credentialing issues with administrative agencies and health care entities, reimbursement and insurance fraud disputes. He is Certified by the Supreme Court of New Jersey as a Civil Trial Attorney and has extensive experience in trying jury cases to a verdict and has tried numerous individual medical liability cases for a variety of healthcare providers. He has served as *amicus* counsel for the Medical Society of New Jersey, the American Medical Association, and the New Jersey Hospital Association in

appellate matters before the New Jersey Supreme Court and Appellate Division. He has been involved in numerous reported opinions. As the author of over 80 published articles in medical and legal publications on a broad range of topics, John has been a member of the Editorial Board of MDAdvisor, a peer-reviewed journal for the New Jersey medical community, since its inception in 2007.

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