

# Professional liability in Urology for patient death in Catalonia (Spain) from 1986 to 2023

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Vargas-Blasco C<sup>1</sup>, Martin-Fumadó C<sup>1,2</sup>, Pujol-Robinat A<sup>3</sup>, Morales-Ferrero J<sup>1</sup>, Arimany-Manso J<sup>1,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> College of Physicians of Barcelona <sup>2</sup> Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

<sup>3</sup> Universitat de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

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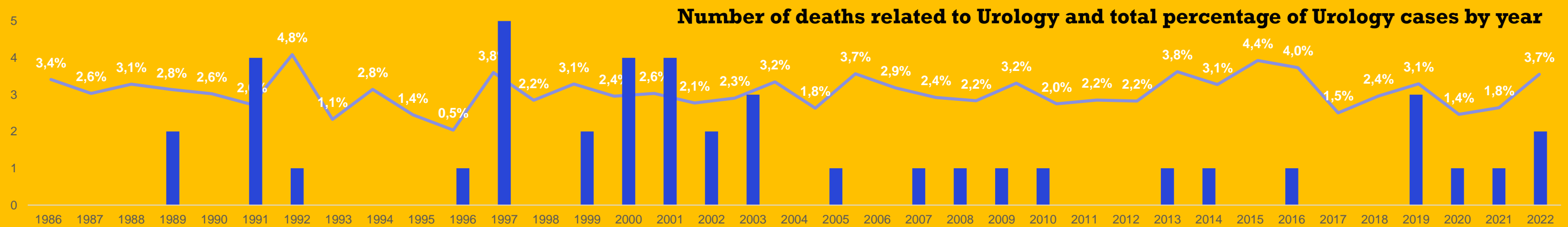
[cesar.vargas@med.es](mailto:cesar.vargas@med.es)

**Introduction.** Learning from error is a basic tool of clinical safety. Learning from medical claims error is a validated and recognised strategy. Furthermore, learning from claims cases where there has been a bad outcome, such as a death, can be highly relevant to daily clinical practice.

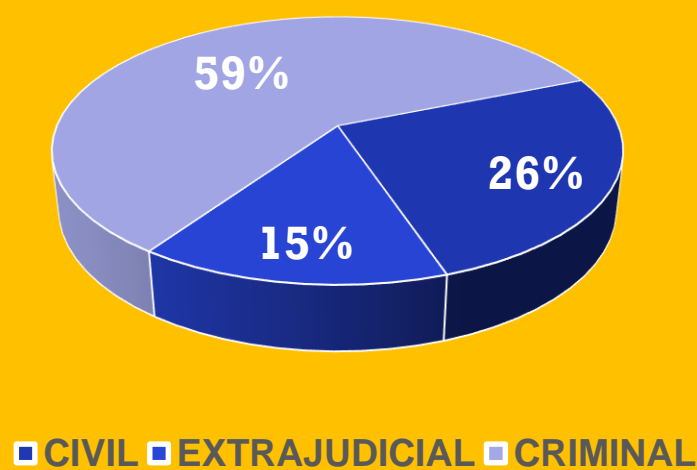
**Methods.** The Professional Liability Service of the Council of Medical Associations of Catalonia (CCMC) manages the majority of professional liability policies in Catalonia (more than 26,500 doctors) and has been recording all claims against insured professionals since 1986.

**Results.** Between 1986 and 2023 11,092 claims were identified, of which 288 (2.6%) related to the specialty of Urology.

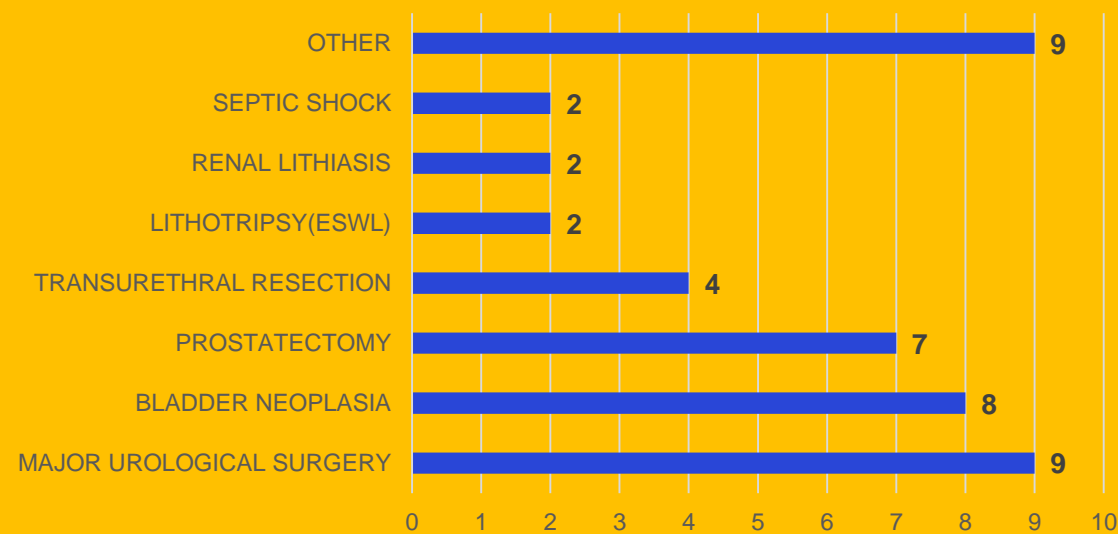
Of the total 288 claims in Urology, 14.93% (n=43) were due to the death of the patient. The analysis of the annual number of cases related to patient death during this period showed a stable trend.



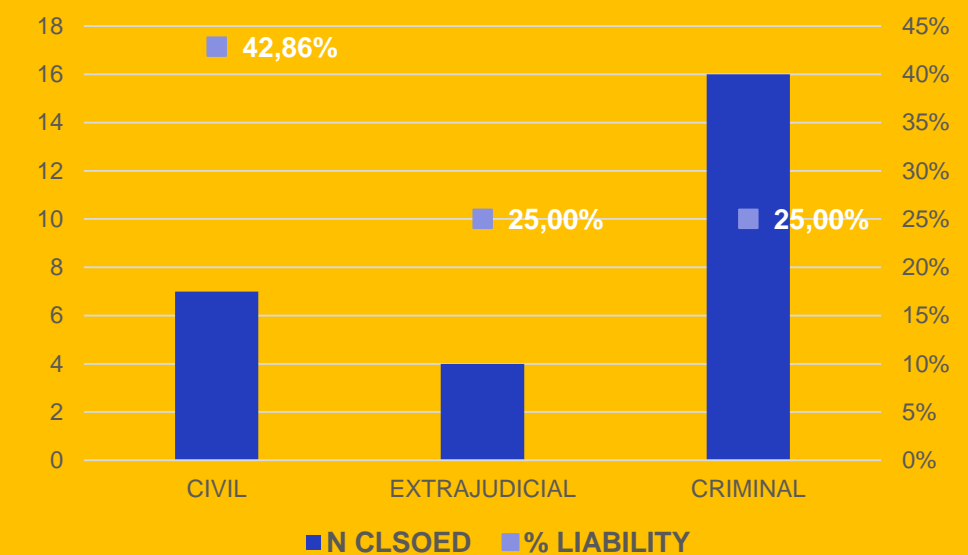
In terms of cases where the procedural route was registered, 15% of complaints were out-of-court, 26% were civil and 59% were criminal (showing a significant increase in this route in relation to the percentage of criminal cases in the Urology specialty as a whole -31%-).



In 9 of the 43 cases, the complaint was related to major urological surgery (20.9%) of which 4 cases of nephrectomy, 3 of renal transplantation and 3 of nephroureterectomy respectively, in 8 to bladder neoplasia (18.6%) and in 7 (16.3%) to prostatectomy.



Regarding the existence of professional liability in the cases registered, either by sentence or out-of-court settlement, of the 27 cases closed (62.79%) in the period 1986-2023, professional liability was assumed in 29.63% of the cases (n=8), with an uneven distribution according to the procedure: 42.9% (3 of 7) in civil proceedings (same percentage as in the total of the Urology specialty) and 25.0% in criminal proceedings (4 of 16) and in out-of-court proceedings (1 of 4).



**Conclusion.** The stability of the claim rate in Urology over the period studied by the CCMC, the current rate of out-of-court claims and the relatively low rate of compensation show that Urology is a specialty with a medium risk of professional liability in our scenario. The analysis of cases involving deaths allows to focus on different scenarios of possible error in order to establish clinical safety measures.



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