



CATHERINE FINNERTY

In June 2018, I suffered an unexpected major heart attack. My heart completely stopped beating. I made it just inside the hospital doors and they were able to use the defibrillator to restart my heart. While I was up in the Cardiac ICU a few hours later, I was on the phone scrambling to call colleagues. I am very thankful to the colleagues who stepped in for me the next morning and who took over my bankruptcy and real estate matters. But I cannot even begin to tell you how stressful it was to have a heart attack as a solo practitioner and then be forced to find coverage at the last minute. In many ways, I felt so unprepared and that I had let my clients down -- a horrible feeling to have on top of all the things I was going through physically and emotionally.

While I was in the ICU, I asked my family to bring me some law journals and magazines and, in a twist of fate, it was the issue where President Keefe wrote about his experience battling his illness. It was great to find out I was not alone in the struggle of coping with health issues. I am looking forward to a comprehensive approach from the NJSBA and believe it will help many other attorneys out there.