

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Medico Legal Adviser

Accountable to: Legal Director

Introduction

Action against Medical Accidents (AvMA) is the specialist charity which supports people affected by medical accidents, clinical negligence lawyers and medical experts, and promotes both patient safety and access to justice. The Medico-Legal Adviser will be part of a highly respected team of professionals with a mix of clinical and legal knowledge and experience in this specialist field. The role of the Medico-Legal Adviser is summarised as:

- a) To provide advice and information to clinical negligence solicitors as part of AvMA's Lawyers' Service in order to help them provide an effective service to people seeking redress through legal action and, subject to organisational priorities and if required,
- b) To provide advice, support and information through written casework and via the helpline in order to assist people affected by medical accidents obtain an understanding of what has happened, their rights, and the most appropriate option(s) for resolving their concerns and meeting their needs.

Whilst the primary focus of this post is on advising claimant solicitors and supporting the work of the Lawyers Service, the Medico-Legal Adviser will be part of a wider team which also provides advice and services to people affected by medical accidents. We will aim to provide opportunities to diversify. Flexibility will also be required in order to be able adapt to different roles when required.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

Primary Responsibilities

1 Lawyer Services

- To identify and recommend appropriate medical experts to clinical negligence solicitors contacting AvMA for this service and help maintain and develop the medical expert database
- Review expert medical reports for claimant solicitors and offer appropriate feedback and advice on how to proceed.
- To answer other enquiries from member solicitors and when appropriate, to research clinical issues and provide advice
- To assist in the organising of regional lawyers' support group meetings, and advise on suitable speakers for conferences
- To assist the Legal Director with identifying suitable articles for inclusion in the AvMA Medico-Legal Journal (within *Clinical Risk*) and the AvMA newsletter

- To assist with the annual process of seeking subscriptions to the Lawyers' Service from solicitor firms and barristers and donations from medical experts

Potential Alternative / additional Responsibilities

Subject to primary responsibilities being met / organisational priorities, the post holder will have the opportunity to / be required to take on some of the following responsibilities (where necessary training will be provided):

2 Client Helpline

- To take part in the rota for the helpline and provide advice, information and signposting for clients over the telephone in relation to the issues described above.
- To be involved with the supervision and training of helpline volunteers

3 Client Casework

- To manage own caseload of clients. This will involve in depth assessments of written enquiries and advising on appropriate courses of action. These may include any or a combination of the following: explanation and no further action; referral to emotional/practical sources of support; referral to a specialist clinical negligence solicitor for a possible claim; use of the NHS or private sector complaints procedures; referral of health professionals to the fitness to practise procedures of their regulatory body; applications to special 'redress' or compensation schemes where they exist (for example, the Welsh NHS redress scheme); seeking or making the most of an Inquest; public law remedies such as Judicial Review or Human Rights Act challenges.
- Dependant on service developments and corporate priorities, to specialise in providing particular types of advice and support. For example:
 - referrals to health professional regulators / fitness to practise cases
 - supporting clients with Inquests
 - assisting in house solicitor(s) with small claims or NHS redress scheme claims

4 Other Duties

- To contribute to service and policy development for example, by feeding-in policy issues and case examples to the management team, and assisting with new initiatives
- Where appropriate, to assist with the process of assessing and accrediting / re-accrediting specialist clinical negligence solicitors

- To represent AvMA to external organisations through attendance at meetings and events. Residential attendance at AvMA's Annual Clinical Negligence Conference is a particular expectation.
- To undertake other duties as required commensurate with this post

29/07/2010