

April 2012

WELCOME TO OUR LATEST UPDATE ON ISSUES CONCERNING PATIENT SAFETY AND JUSTICE

ACT NOW - LAST CHANCE TO PROTECT ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Although the House of Lords failed to change the worst aspects of the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill, some amendments were passed which will significantly limit the damage to access to justice for people affected by medical accidents. Please contact your MP now to ask for these amendments not be reversed in the House of Commons when they debate the Bill on 17th April. [Click here](#) for a quick and easy way to identify and contact your MP by e-mail. There is even a standard letter which you can use or amend to put more emphasis on the needs of clinical negligence victims. Thank you.

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PASSED

The controversial health bill has now completed its passage through parliament. AvMA's biggest concern is the effect of the reforms on patient safety. Not only is the National Patient Safety Agency being abolished, but work on patient safety across the board may suffer. AvMA has consistently asked for any evidence that the risk to patient safety has been properly considered in developing the reforms. A recently leaked draft to the Department of Health risk assessment (which has been kept secret but a tribunal has ruled that the Government must publish) suggests that the risk to patient safety was not even considered. See the Guardian article [here](#).

HIP AND BREAST IMPLANT SCANDALS UNDERLINE THE NEED FOR REGULATION

The recent scandals over De Puy hip replacements and PIP breast implants have underlined the need for better regulation of the private healthcare industry, and of medical devices. AvMA is calling for full insurance cover to protect patients affected by poor treatment or faulty devices in private healthcare to be made a compulsory condition for legislation with the Care quality Commission. This would avoid the NHS having to pick up the cost as it is having to over removal of breast implants, and more importantly would avoid private patients being left with no redress. AvMA is also calling for a review of the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulation Authority (MHRA). The MHRA has failed to adequately protect patients in a number of instances.

"DUTY OF CANDOUR" NOT YET "ROBBIE'S LAW"

The Department of Health is expected to announce further details soon of how they propose to roll out their "contractual" duty of candour (a duty to be open with patients/their families about incidents which cause harm). The duty will only apply to NHS Trusts in England at least initially and not GP's, and it is a contractual issue between commissioners and providers of NHS care - not a statutory duty. However, it is at least a step in the right direction which has only been achieved as a result of the ongoing campaign for a statutory duty ("Robbie's Law"). AvMA will be pressing for as robust arrangements as possible, monitoring the application of the duty, and continuing to press for a statutory duty. Already, Health Minister, Earl Howe, has been forced to concede that the duty will apply to all incidents - not just those that are already reported to the national reporting and learning system as set out in the consultation.

MARATHON RUN TO HELP AvMA

You don't have to do it yourself! Christian Moody is running the London Marathon to raise money for AvMA. Click [here](#) to sponsor Christian and help our work for patient safety and justice!

CQC FACES FURTHER CRITICISM

The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee has published the findings of its review of the CQC, which is highly critical. To access the report including the evidence provided by AvMA's Chief Executive Officer, Peter Walsh, click [here](#).

AvMA IN THE NEWS:

26.02.12 BBC 1 Sunday Politics South East: Legal Aid Bill: http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b01cbmlk/Sunday_Politics_South_East_26_02_2012/ (fast forward to 37 minutes)
27.02.12 BBC Radio 4 "Doctor, tell me the truth" <http://bbc.in/ACF6bF>
29.02.12 The Guardian: Legal Aid... Bill: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2012/feb/28/scrap-legal-aid-clinical-errors-damages?newsfeed=true>
01.03.12 The Guardian: Legal Aid... Bill: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2012/feb/29/legal-aid-bill-concessions-justice-ministry?newsfeed=true>
01.03.12 The Guardian online: Legal Aid... Bill <http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2012/mar/01/jackson-reforms-no-win-no-fee?newsfeed=true>
06.03.12 The Independent: Legal Aid Bill
12.03.12 BBC Radio 3 counties: SUI s
13.03.12 ITV News: Hip replacements
19.03.12 BBC Radio Kent: re GMC
10.04.12 BBC Radio Kent pressure ulcers
10.04.12 The Guardian: hypoglycaemia in babies: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2012/apr/09/nhs-blunders-babies-brain-damage>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

25th April: Bristol- Charity Gof Day in aid of AvMA
28th April: Newcastle - Dinner Dance in aid of AvMa and McMillan
For information visit the [events](#) page of our website or e-mail conferences@avma.org.uk

300 FAMILIES SUPPORTED IN LAST MONTH: WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT:

AvMA relies on its charitable fundraising to continue to develop and provide support to people affected by medical accidents and to campaign for patient safety and justice. If you would like to make an online donation to AvMA easily and securely, simply click [here](#). If you would like to make a regular donation please complete and return the form from [here](#). We have also developed a whole range of opportunities to raise money for the charity and have fun at the same time. These range from holding a coffee morning to doing a sponsored parachute jump. Some other ideas include organising a charity golf day or quiz night in support of AvMA, or doing a sponsored run or other activities. Our events team will provide you with all the help and support you need. Contact them at conferences@avma.org.uk or visit "[Support Us](#)".