

# AvMA's written advice & information service

## Terms and conditions for use of this service

- **AvMA provides advice and information only:** You are not obliged to take our advice and are free to seek a second opinion from any other source you consider appropriate including a solicitor.
- **AvMA will not represent you in court,** we will not issue proceedings on your behalf or represent you in any litigation or process including professional regulatory work.
- **That we deal with one nominated person:** This will usually be the injured person, or someone nominated by the injured person to act on their behalf.
- **English as a second language:** Where English is not the person / family's first language then the person appointed on behalf of the family (the Client) is expected to have reasonable communication skills and/or has arranged for someone to translate on their behalf. AvMA cannot necessarily commit to incur the costs of a professional interpreter or be responsible for any misunderstanding that arises due to a language barrier
- **Assessment of papers:** It is your responsibility to provide AvMA with copies of all the relevant documents for consideration. This does not mean everything to do with treatment / full medical records. If in doubt, ask us for advice. Please do not send in incomplete documents or hold back key information. If you do delay or fail to send in all relevant information, we may be unable to provide you with the relevant advice and information you are seeking.
- **Communicating with AvMA:** Where AvMA takes on a written A&I case the client is expected to deal with correspondence as swiftly as possible and in any event within a reasonable time unless there are extenuating circumstances which AvMA has been informed of. You should always quote your File Reference Number in any written communications with us.  
  
The written Advice and Information service provides most of its advice in writing by letter or email: In exceptional cases if a telephone call is required an appointment system is used and an email request for such an appointment should be forwarded to the advice and information service.
- **Case review:** Where cases are ongoing, AvMA will periodically review the case to ensure that the core criteria continues to be met, check on the quality of advice and that we remain confident that our assistance can help you achieve an outcome that addresses avoidable harm in healthcare.
- **Use of AvMA's resources:** if AvMA considers there has been an excessive or disproportionate use of our resources, we reserve the right to withdraw help and assistance, but you can expect to be informed of this situation in advance.
- **Second reviews of evidence:** Where AvMA has already considered your documents, we will not reconsider your concerns unless there is significant evidence of one of the following:

- (i) That new and additional information not previously available has come to light since our advice was given and that evidence is likely to have a substantial bearing on the outcome of your case
- (ii) The caseworker assessing your case did not understand your original concern and if those concerns had been properly considered a different conclusion would have been reached in relation to your case.
- (iii) Information that was originally available was not properly considered when it should have been, and that information would have altered the advice we gave to you.

### **Zero tolerance of abuse**

**AvMA has a zero tolerance policy towards anyone who treats its staff, including its volunteers in an abusive or threatening way.**

The use of bad language, swearing and/or verbal insults will not be tolerated. Any form of racial abuse or sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Persistent or unrealistic demands that cause stress to staff will not be accepted. We reserve the right to immediately cease and withdraw from any further communication where this type of behaviour is displayed. We welcome and encourage the public to access our services when needed but we do ask that AvMA's staff and volunteers are treated courteously at all times, you are entitled to expect the same treatment and respect from AvMA staff and volunteers.

## **Action against Medical Accidents (AvMA)**

AvMA is the charity for patient safety and justice. We provide free specialist advice and support to people when things go wrong in healthcare and campaign to improve patient safety and justice.

For advice and information visit our website  
**[www.avma.org.uk](http://www.avma.org.uk)**

Or call our helpline (10am-3.30pm Monday-Friday)  
**0345 123 2352**

Registered charity in England & Wales (299123) and Scotland (SCO39683)

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**avma**  
action against medical accidents