

Guidelines for awarding the title of Honorary AvMA Panel Membership

Introduction

1. Honorary AvMA Panel membership is awarded in order to recognise the longstanding and significant contribution that an individual has made in the field of clinical negligence and patient safety as well as to the work of AvMA and to enable these individuals to continue to contribute their knowledge and expertise to AvMA in the interests of patients and their families.
2. Honorary AvMA Panel membership is intended for members of the AvMA Specialist Clinical Negligence panel who have stepped back from front line clinical negligence practice but who are committed to having a continuing role and involvement in promoting the interests of patients who have been harmed during the course of medical treatment. The individual may be in a management or supervisory role within their clinical negligence practice or alternatively, in a broader role working on policy relating to clinical negligence, access to justice or patient safety.

Who is eligible to apply?

3. The title of Honorary AvMA Panel member will be conferred on the basis of the particular contribution that the former or retiring AvMA Panel member has made in their capacity as a specialist clinical negligence practitioner and more generally in terms of their broader contribution beyond their day to day legal practice. They will normally have been AvMA Panel members of at least 10 years standing. The title signifies an individual's continuing involvement and commitment to supporting AvMA and promoting patient safety and justice for patients and their families.

Criteria for awarding Honorary AvMA Panel membership status

4. Applicants will:
 - Normally have been AvMA panel members of at least 10 years standing;
 - Continue to work within a firm that specialises in clinical negligence and where there are current AvMA Panel members: and/or
 - Continue to have an active involvement in the field of clinical negligence and/or in policy relating to patient safety and justice
 - Have made a demonstrable contribution in protecting and promoting the interests of patients whether through their clinical negligence practice, lecturing, academic articles, or broader policy work.
 - Will abide by and promote AvMA's Code of Conduct for AvMA Panel members

Application Process

5. Interested current and former AvMA Panel members should write to AvMA setting out why they would like to be appointed as an Honorary AvMA Panel member, the basis on which they are applying (see above), the contribution that they would like to make and how they believe they meet the requirements as set out above.
6. Applications to become an Honorary AvMA Panel member will be considered by the AvMA Panel Committee in conjunction with AvMA's Chief Executive.

What are the responsibilities and entitlements of Honorary AvMA Panel membership?

7. We anticipate that individuals conferred with this title will continue to be active supporters of AvMA and will, subject to their availability, be available to advise or assist on specific policy issues or projects on a voluntary basis.
8. Individuals may use the title of 'Honorary AvMA Panel member' but in using this title, it should not be used to imply that they are a current member of the AvMA Specialist Clinical Negligence Panel. The award of this title cannot be used for the purposes of qualifying for a Legal Aid Agency Clinical Negligence contract or any equivalent benefit of this nature. The individual will not be entitled to use the AvMA Panel accreditation mark as this is designed to identify practitioners who are able to accept AvMA client referrals.
9. Honorary AvMA Panel members may only speak on behalf of and/or represent AvMA at AvMA's request and/or following prior agreement.
10. Individuals holding Honorary AvMA Panel membership will be invited to attend the annual AvMA Panel meeting on a voluntary basis as their contribution would be welcomed.
11. The title is conferred for a renewable term of 3 years and by application as above but holders of this title should advise AvMA in the event that they retire from practice and/or are no longer involved in the field.

If you would like further details, please contact Liz Thomas at AvMA at policy@avma.org.uk