

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR
AvMA LAWYER SERVICE MEMBER SOLICITORS IN
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Action against Medical Accidents (AvMA) is the UK based charity which promotes patient safety and justice for people affected by medical accidents or negligence. AvMA has over 40 years' experience of working closely with the legal profession and other key stakeholders to develop good practice in advising and representing injured patients and/or their families (clients or claimants) in medical negligence and other clinical disputes.

It is implied that any firm of Solicitors in either Republic Ireland and/or Northern Ireland, who subscribes to AvMA's Lawyers' Service will adopt this code of conduct. Any firm who wishes to become a member of Lawyers Service but who does not wish to comply with the code of conduct will have to specifically notify us by emailing Norika@avma.org.uk and giving reasons for your decision.

Membership of Lawyer Service and compliance with this code of conduct are important, they demonstrate that firms who are members of AvMA's Lawyer Service are committed to providing their clients with a quality service. It also shows support for AvMA's charitable aims.

The code of conduct requires that medical negligence solicitors, who are acting for the patient and/or their families will:

1. Regularly and actively represent injured patients in clinical negligence claims in the Republic Ireland, if that is where your practice is based and where you are issuing proceedings on behalf of your client (patient) or, in Northern Ireland if that is where the client is based and where proceedings are to be issued. Firms must issue proceedings representing the Claimant/Plaintiff, not the Defendant. Firms representing Claimants/Plaintiffs in these jurisdictions must be experienced in the operation, process and procedures of litigating clinical negligence claims within the relevant legal jurisdictions, as well as having full advocacy and practicing rights in the relevant jurisdiction.
2. Be sensitive and supportive of the needs of people affected by medical accidents or negligence; to recognise clients' wider needs in addition to, where appropriate, pursuing litigation or obtaining compensation.
2. Work with AvMA and other stakeholders in seeking improvements to patient safety and access to justice for people affected by medical accidents; to share lessons learnt (whilst respecting confidentiality) from the cases they deal with.
3. Keep up-to-date with developments in medical negligence and other relevant areas of law and policy; to attend AvMA and / or other appropriate medical negligence training / events and, as far as is practical, network and share knowledge and experience with other specialists.
4. Be open and honest with clients and potential clients from the start and as the case evolves about their chances of success in legal action.
5. Explain any other alternatives to litigation which may be open and appropriate to the client's circumstance.

6. Explain the firm's charging policies and all means of funding legal work in an open, straightforward and transparent way which they are satisfied their client understands.
7. At all times put their client or potential client's interests above any other interest, even if this means advising clients that another solicitor may be better equipped to meet their particular needs.
8. Comply with the professional requirements of the Law Society of Ireland, and to conduct legal work in a professional and timely manner on behalf of their client.
9. Maintain the high standards expected of AvMA member solicitors and safeguard the reputation of AvMA and its members.
10. Avoid advertising, marketing or other activity likely to bring AvMA or its members into disrepute.
11. Charge reasonable fees, obtain appropriate damages and recovery of costs from the other side for clients when appropriate.