

CONFIDENTIAL - FOR AvMA EXPERTS ONLY - New Firms - Responses to 2015-16

Speciality	Increase in new firm instructions?	What increase in numbers?	Difficulty with quality of instructions?	Explain reasons/Common complaints	Pagination issues
Dermatology	Yes	3 to 4	Yes	No details from instructing solicitors. These are usually RTC cases with minor skin problems, hair loss etc from stress.	
Rheumatology & General Medicine	No	N/A	No		
Midwifery	Yes	Approx 6	No		
Bariatric Surgery	Yes	2x	Yes	I haven't been paid. My fees due by 1 firm.	
Emergency Medicine (A+E), Intensive Care	No		No		
Paediatric Neurology	Not particularly... possibly in the last 3-4 months	~10%	No		
Orthopaedics	Yes	10-15%	No		
Paediatric Surgery	No		Yes	Instructions through 3rd parties are particularly difficult (eg Capita) clinical records arriving unpaginated, in digital form with different on screen orientation	
Orthopaedics and Trauma					
Paediatric Respiratory Medicine	No		Yes	Agencies acting on behalf of solicitors	
Obstetrics & Gynaecology	No				
Hand Surgery (Orthopaedics)	No		Yes	Intermediary medical reporting agencies are poor in giving clear instruction.	
Clinical Psychology	Yes	At least 25%	No		
GP	I have noticed organisations like Speed Medical/Med Prof Servies appearing.	They have contacted me frequently asking me to prepare reports, but I have frequently declined as too busy. At one stage they were asking me to prepare 8-10 reports a week and I had to decline.	Yes	Poor quality of instructions. Poor preparation of papers. Case obviously not going to succeed.	
Neuroradiology	Yes	10-20%	No		
Anaesthesia	No - seems to have levelled off		Yes	Still many firms unable to formulate instructions in complex medical cases. Essentially "Here's what's happened - did anything go wrong?"	
Adult Psychiatry					
Orthopaedics	Yes - [?] instructions are of poorer quality.		10% Yes	Non-specific trawling instructions. Non paginated notes. No chronology. Reluctance to pay.	
General medicine, diabetes, life expectancy					
General practice	Yes	100% increase	No		

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GP	Yes	About 20 new firms have contacted me and mentioned AvMA.	No		
Cardiology	No		No		
Paediatric Cardiology	Yes	50%	No		
Paediatric Orthopaedics	No		Yes	Getting notes & records	
General and Vascular Surgery	Yes, but this may simply be random variation	Perhaps 6-8 new names	Yes	Provision of bundles of unsorted, unpaginated records, which are time consuming to work with and therefore had to [?] fees/costs.	
Anaesthesia	Yes	Doubled	Yes	Poorly copied, unpaginated	Yes
Obstetrics & Gynaecology	Yes	3-4 new agencies	No		
Vascular Surgery	Yes	50%	Yes	Very poor understanding of medical/surgical conditions	
Orthopaedics	No		No		
Anaesthesia			No		
Nursing	No		No		
Emergency Medicine	Yes	30%	Yes	Missing Clinical Records	Yes
Respiratory Medicine	Yes	10%	No		
Orthopaedics	Yes	Almost daily requests to complete a report	No		
Midwifery	No		Yes	Inexperienced firms do not distinguish the key issues	
Paediatric neurology	No	None	No		
Paediatrics	Yes	50%			
Neurology	No		No		
Ophthalmology					
General Practice					
Vascular Surgery					
Breast Surgery	Yes				
Public Health	Yes	50%	No		
Gynaecology	No		Yes	Records are unpaginated	Yes
Oncology					
Plastic Surgery	No		Poor client details, date of negligence		
Psychiatry					
Orthopaedics	Yes	4	Yes	But only PI instructions	
Ophthalmology	No		Yes	Imprecise	
Midwifery	Yes	Triple	No		
Speech therapy	Yes	1 or 2	No		
Orthopaedics					
Accommodation expert	No		Yes	Third Party Instructions	

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GP	Yes		Yes	Templates that do not reflect the specifics of the case	
Clinical Psychologist	No		No		
Orthopaedic Surgery	Yes	15%	Yes	Causation requested before breach of duty. Wrong expert instructed for client's condition	
Pharmacy	No		No		
GP	Yes	20%	No		
Orthopaedic surgery	No	None	No		
Microbiology	Yes	Ten	Yes	Increasing number of preliminary brief reports rather than full report	
Neuropsychiatry	Yes		No		
Obstetrics & Gynaecology	Yes	20% increase - please continue to recommend me!	No		
Brain injury, neurological conditions	No		No		
Optometry, vision					
Nursing Oncology/IV therapy	No		No		
Neonatology	No		No		
Colorectal Surgery	Yes	20%	No		
Obstetrics & Gynaecology					
Nursing, Paeds, Midwifery, Health visits	Yes	Approx 20	Yes	Very late payment - if at all - of fee	
Diagnostic Imaging	No, probably a decrease		No		
Immunisation	No	N/A	No		
Spinal	Uncertain	Uncertain	No		
Gastroenterology	Yes	100%	No		
Ophthalmology	No		No		
General Dental Practice	No				
General & Colorectal Surgery	Yes	plus 10	No		
Midwifery Maternity	Yes	10 per month	Yes	Muddled instructions as not understanding medical negligence. Wrong expert is requested as required an obstetrician and not midwife.	
Physiotherapy	No	None	No		
Paediatrics/Neonatology	No		No		
Orthopaedics/Spine	No	N/A	No		
General Practice/Vasectomy	Yes	Very few	Yes	Poorly sorted/paginated medical records	Yes
Orthopaedics and Trauma	Yes	<10 per year	No		
Dental/Peridontal	Yes	30%	Yes	Mixing up causation/liability with condition and prognosis; unclear want initial screening or full reports.	

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General Practice	Yes	5 to 6 this year (2014 to 2015)	No		
Medical record collation and chronology	No	N/A	Yes	Insufficient information and items missing	
Obstetrics & Fetal Medicine					
Orthopaedics (Hands)	Yes	10 to 15 new cases in the last year	No		
Psychiatry	No	None	Yes	Lack of patient details on referrals. NB: Non-payment or late payment of fees a <u>major problem</u> with XXXXXX	
Obstetrics & Gynaecology	A few	minimal	Yes	Only rarely	
Neurologist					
Midwifery	Yes	30%	No	BUT Have had problems with solicitors not giving all relevant information to me +/- seeking my opinion on matters relevant to my area of expertise at key time.	
Gastroenterology/Hepatology	Yes	10%	No		
Dental Practice - Restorative & Forensic					
Neurology	No			Always poor presentation prevails some instructions	
Psychologist/Nurse					
Physiotherapy					
Gastroenterology	No	None	Yes	Short reports turn into 'long reports'	
Paediatric Surgery	Yes	5/year	Yes	Poor & sloppy instructions; no collation and pagination of notes; poor or late payment	Yes
Orthopaedic & Trauma Surgery	Yes	20 to 30 !	No	I don't accept agency instructions and these constitute the majority of "new firms". They are very persistent!	
Orthopaedic Surgery					
Otorhinolaryngology (ENT)	No	N/A	No	N/A	
Social Care	Yes		No		
Paed. Neurosurgery & Craniofacial Surgery					
ENT/Head & Neck Surgery	No	N/A	No		
Anaesthetics	No				
Dentistry General	Yes	25%	No		
Upper & Lower Limb Prosthetics	No		No		
Anaesthetics	Yes	20%	Yes	Some very poorly prepared instructions & medical records	

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Ophthalmology	No		No		
Pharmacy & Pharmacology					
Cardiac Surgery (Adult)	No		No		
General Practice			Yes	Particulars written without expert evidence	
Obstetrics & Gynaecology	Yes	30%	Yes	Poor notes	
General Practice	Yes		Yes	Pagination of notes	Yes
Plastic & Cosmetic Surgery & Pressure sores	No		No	There are some Irish firms whose preparation of the case leaves much to be desired.	
Gynaecology	No		No		
General/Vascular Surgery	Yes - mainly agencies	plus 40 to 50%	Yes	Inefficiency, lack of understanding of clinical negligence mainly from agencies dealing predominantly with personal injury (eg whiplash)	
OT and Care	No		No		
General Surgery/Colorectal	The same		No		
General Medicine/Clinical Pharmacology	Yes	20%	Yes	Lack of specificity of instruction or inappropriate	
Clinical Psychologist					
General Surgery	No		Yes	Agencies like Capita who issue a series of chase letters after I have responded. Medical records sent as a single unindexed PDF. Instructions that state "Please review records and write a report"	
Gynaecology	Yes	10	Yes	No specific questions	
Neuropsychology	No		No		
Orthopaedics					
Orthopaedics	Yes	~25%	No		
Midwifery & Gynae Nursing	Yes	Approx 2 new solicitors a month	Yes	V unclear instructions. Bundle poorly prepared	
Respiratory Medicine	No		No		
Paediatric Liver Disease					
Respiratory Medicine	Yes	5%	Yes	Often they don't realise what the problem may have been - but this doesn't really matter if I do my job properly	
No longer doing ML work					
GP	Yes	100%	Yes	Notes not paginated	Yes
Dentistry	No		No		
Paramedic & Ambulance	Yes	About 30% - but I only have about 8 to 10 cases in total per year	Yes	Often brief and vague instructions "comment on the standard of care"	

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Prosthetics	No	N/A	No	N/A	
Paediatrics					
Cardiology					
ENT - nose and sinuses	Yes	10%	No		
Accommodation	Yes	3 or 4 new instructions	Yes	Lack of information and a lack of their understanding of the process.	
Obstetrics & Gynaecology	Yes	Yes	Poor instructions		
Neuroradiology	No - but I have been instructed by agencies working on behalf of solicitors, which seems to me an unnecessary extra layer of administration		Yes	Unpaginated records; very brief summaries; CDs which can be accessed only certain computer programmes eg. Windows XP	Yes
Accident & Emergency	No		No		
Paediatric & Adult Congenital Cardiology	No - most seem to be going through agents/established practices	Not seen	No		
Orthopaedics & Trauma	Yes	50%	Yes	Vague instructions	
GP, Minor Surgery, Lasers, Anaesthetics	Yes	100 -> 150%	No		
ENT					
Audiology	Yes	Small	No		
Orthopaedics	No		No		
Vascular Surgeon	Not especially		Yes	Fishing expeditions; instructions with no clear indication on the nature of the potential claim and instructions with incomplete or very disorganised medical notes	
Ophthalmic Surgeon					
Radiology	Yes	20%	Yes	Poor understanding of medical issues	
Emergency Medicine					
General/Gastro-Intestinal Surgery	Yes	4 to 5	No	No difference - mt synopsis of event [?] is frequently not accurate/[?]	
ENT	No		No		
Paediatric Hepetology	No		No		
General Surgery	Yes	~10%		Sending a letter of instructions and a bundle of records before any letter requesting my opinion or receiving my terms and conditions.	
Neuroradiology	Yes	3 to 4	Yes	From referral companies	
Dermatology					
Colorectal and General Surgery	Yes	200%	Yes	Just not thought through.	

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Neurology	Yes	20%	No		
Obstetrics & Gynaecology	No		No		
Paediatric Urology	No		Yes	Initially asking for overview report and then sending a detailed letter of instruction which far exceeds an overview.	
Respiratory Medicine					
Gastroenterology					
Plastic and Hand Surgery	Yes	2 or 3 cases	No		
Pain medicine	No	N/A	No	N/A	
General Practice	Yes	Increase by 50%	No	Quality of instructions has increased. No problems experienced	
Dental	Yes	50%	No		
Diabetes					
Emergency Medicine (A+E)	No		No		
Oncology	No		No		
Neurosurgery	Yes	30%	Yes	Often no passwords for CDs provided	
Orthopaedics	No		Yes	Poor pagination (if at all)	Yes
Clinical Psychologist	No		No		
Plastic, Reconstructive, Anesthetic/Cosmetic Surgery	Yes	5 to 10%	No		
Colorectal Surgery	Yes	Moderate	No		
General Surgery - HPB surgery	No		No		
Urology	No		Yes	Premex have asked for screening reports, but the solicitor usually wants a lot more.	
Accident & Emergency	Yes	25% instructions received	Yes	Requests for screening reports by email and without even a diagnosis! Lack of clarity from others on type of report required.	
Anaesthesia/Critical Care	No		Yes	Some very limited - Agencies eg Premex!	
Anaesthetics	Yes	2 to 3	No		
Endocrinology	Yes	20%	Yes	1) A lack of detailed instructions 2) Providing summary/review of medical records by an agency nurse instead of original records.	
Oncology	Yes	10%	Yes	Poor instructions	
GP Clinical Negligence	Yes, there is an increase	Two or three in 2015	No	Claimants like solicitors who can win their cases. Expert witness has to be impartial.	
Dental Surgery	Yes	15%	No		
General Surgery	Agencies rather than solicitor firms	20% rise	Yes	Appear generic and written by less experienced people	
Orthopaedic & Trauma Surgery	No	None	No		

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Obstetrics & Gynaecology					
General Surgery	Yes	About 50% increase	No		
Obstetrics & Gynaecology	Yes	20%	Yes	Low quality cases in general	
Neonatal Paediatrics	No		Yes	Solicitors requesting opinion for small fees, requests analysis of volumes of poorly organised records.	
Community sexual and reproductive health; General practice	No	N/A	Yes	Lack of specifics required in report. Multiple questions and requests for revision after final report written.	
Paediatric Neurology	No		No		
General Surgery	Yes	10%	Yes	Often limited to breach of duty without clear instruction	
Orthopaedic & Trauma Surgery	Yes	25%	Yes	Poor understanding of medical negligence matters and the role of experts in particular	
ENT	Yes	25% up	Yes	Not specific enough with instructions - vague	
Ophthalmology					
Radiology	I only recently started med legal work.		No		
Urology	No	N/A	No		
Paediatric Respiratory medicine	Yes	30%	No		
Medical Microbiology	Stable	Stable	Yes	Poorly indexed CD rom files	
Paediatrics			No		
Urology			No		
Brain and spinal injury/case management	No		No		
Medical Records Pagination	No		No		
General Surgery	Yes	25%	No		
General Practice	Yes	~20%	No		
Plastic Surgery					
Geriatrics & General Medicine	Yes	Getting requests 2 to 3x month as opposed to 1x month	No		
ENT/Head and Neck Consultant					
Paediatric Endocrinologist	Yes	~20%	No	N/A	
General surgery & Surgical Oncology	No		No		
Paediatric Oncology					
Urology	Yes	20%	No		
Ophthalmology	Yes	10%	Yes	Poorly prepared medical records/notes need paginating	Yes

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Orthopaedic & Trauma Surgery	Yes	5 to 6 per year	Yes	1) Vague or incomplete 2) Multiple types of electronic records and images often encrypted which are time consuming to review compared to hard copy	
Clinical Oncology	Yes	10 to 20%	No		
Child, Adolescent & Family Psychiatry	No		No		
Practice Nurse	Yes	20%	Yes	Not following covered procedures. Trying to use a screening report to exchange evidence.	
Neurology					
Cardiothoracic anaesthesia & intensive care				With only a few high value cases every year, I am not in a position to comment on new firms.	
Intensive Care	Yes	50% increase	No		
Neuroradiologist; paediatric neuroradiology					
OT/Care/Rehab					
Oncology					
Respiratory Medicine	Yes	20%	No		
Gastroenterology Clinical Nutrition	Yes	5 to 10	No	None	
Paediatric Neuropsychology	No		Yes	Requests for terms and then no further correspondence - an email update would be courteous if they have decided not to instruct after all or to let you know how long if they have.	
Foot & Ankle Surgery					
Psychiatry	Yes	Doubling of numbers (clients and soli firms)	No		
General Practice					
Mental Health Nursing, Intellectual Disability Nursing	Yes	30% in the last year	No		
Plastic Surgery	Yes	6	No		
General Surgery	Yes	5	No		
Paediatric Cardiology	No	N/A	No		
Dentistry					
Neurosurgery and spinal surgery	Yes	20%	Yes	Just the usual: poor instructions; notes not arranged/paginated; no chronology	Yes
Paediatric Nephrology					
Psychology/Neuropsychology	No		No	None - most are happy to clarify.	

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Obstetrics	Yes - for claimant's it seems many are 'amalgamations'	25%	Yes	Very short instructions with no indication of area of concern	
Paediatric Surgery (Urology)	No		Yes	Instructions too vague or reflect a basic misunderstanding of the issues involved.	
Paediatrics	Yes	50%	No		
Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon	About the same		No	Records which are unpaginated and not mounted in a ring file. X-ray CDs which can't be opened!	Yes
General Adult Psychiatry	No			Main problem is getting paid in a timely manner.	
Neuropsychologist					
Endocrinology, diabetes, lipids, metabolic medicine.	Yes	30%	Yes	Poor instructions, poor records management	
Gynaecology	Yes	10% of my approaches for instruction.	Yes	Incomplete - inaccurate as a rule	
Nephrology/General Medicine	Yes	50%	No		
Psychiatry					
Endocrinology and diabetes	Yes	5 to 10	No		
Neonatal & Paediatric Surgery	Yes	30% are from new firms	Yes	Legally illiterate	
Spinal Surgery					
Dietics, bariatric surgery, obesity, nutrition					
Plastic Surgery					
Clinical Pharmacology and General Medicine	No		No		
Nursing and care	Yes	10%	Yes	Usually a fishing expedition and have had to help them focus their instructions	
Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery	No - continue to be instructed by the same firm	N/A	No		
Neurology	Yes	20-30 cases pa	No		
Collation of records and case preparation					
Radiology			No		
Virology	Yes	100%	No		
Hand & Wrist	Yes	30%	No		
Physiotherapy	No		No		
Oncology	Yes	10%	Yes	Poor preparation from firms involving agencies such as Premex.	
Gen Surgery	Yes	25%	No		
Obstetrician & Gynaecology	No		No		
Podiatric Consultant	Maybe a little		No		

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Neonatology	No		No		
Radiology	Yes		No		
Plastic Surgery	No		No		
SALT	Yes	10-20%	No		
Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon	Yes	15%	Yes	Inadequate case rate copying, incorrect case rates, no radiographs, asking to examine patients without first seeing case notes.	
ENT	Yes	20%	No		
Psychiatry	No	None	Yes	Poor information	
Breast cancer and delay in diagnosis	Yes	20%	Yes	Agencies the worst - bill payments horrendous. Notes not paginated.	Yes
Obstetrician & Gynaecology					
General Practice	Yes	~20%	Yes	Instructions not clear enough. Notes out of order. Irrelevant notes sent whilst relevant notes missing. No pagination.	Yes
A&E	Yes	20% increase	Yes	Requests for pro bono opinions - requests for screening reports - it is clear the solicitors have no idea of the complexity of the issues.	