

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Litigation Assistant
Department:	Clinical Negligence
Responsible to:	Heads of Department
Responsible for:	N/A
Location:	Newport (with flexibility to work from other Harding Evans premises if required)

1. Role/Job Purpose

- To provide direct support to Senior Fee Earners in the Department in a range of matters relating to clinical negligence and manage all client work allocated in accordance with the Firm's standards.
- To effectively undertake all assigned tasks allocated and where necessary provide support to the wider Department and/or Firm with a high degree of self-management and initiative.
- To support accounts management on behalf of the team to prepare all bills, Legal Aid Funding and disbursement requests from the ATE insurer.
- To effectively manage aspects of new matters allocated by keeping accurate and up to date logs and to prepare a monthly report to FRU Supervisor and HOD detailing the number of referrals received and converted.
- To assist the team with new Clinical Negligence enquiries, by taking initial instructions from potential new clients, either over the telephone or face to face. Completing the new client questionnaire, sending matters to fee-earners for screening, setting up new matters on the case management system, and sending out client care packs to clients via post and electronically and ensuring that these are signed and returned expeditiously.

2. Role Requirements

The post holder will undertake tasks including but not limited to:-

- To act in a semi-fee earning capacity and to accurately record and submit regular time recording in line with the firm's/departments policy.
- To undertake basic fee earning duties under supervision, such as taking detailed client instructions in person or over the phone and managing conduct of files, where assigned by a senior fee earner.
- To achieve agreed levels of billing and time recording, where applicable.
- To ensure all financial controls procedures are followed particularly in respect of billing procedures and collection of monies.
- Read through medical notes and highlight salient points for senior fee earners attention.
- Carry out research into medical conditions/treatments to assist senior fee earners in progression of cases. Also, quantum research and case law.
- Carry out eligibility calculations to determine whether potential new clients are eligible for Legal Aid Help/Advice/funding.
- To ensure that all client work relating to files is processed correctly and expeditiously and that the client is kept regularly informed of progress and costs.
- To manage and deal with all correspondence associated with files on a daily basis.
- To maintain and update files with relevant correspondence to ensure files remain current and up to date.

- Updating the case management system efficiently and effectively in accordance with departmental processes and procedures.
- When required, arrange and attend conferences with Counsel, instruct experts and review expert reports.
- Liaise with legal representatives including counsel, costs drafts persons, experts etc.
- Preparing Legal Aid Agency (LAA) forms/online applications.
- Manage periodic payments on account as agreed by the relevant fee earner.
- To follow file review procedures ensuring that these are dealt with promptly.
- Carry out periodic costs checks on files as requested by the relevant fee earner.
- Assist with and undertake tasks relating to fee earner's clinical negligence caseloads when required.
- Assist the department in developing work processes for clinical negligence cases when required.
- To undertake administration work on files and support senior fee earners with the same.
- To support senior fee earners with all typing (audio and copy typing) requirements.
- To deal with enquiries, calls and correspondence from clients/other professionals, which do not need input from a senior member of the Dept.
- To undertake all filing, copying, scanning duties as required to support the Dept.
- To administer the opening, closing, storage and retrieval of client files in accordance with the firm's procedures.
- To prepare daily mail and enclosures for dispatch.
- Manage diaries/calendars for senior fee earners and where relevant own diary management.
- To ensure that support staff allocated are progressing your work in a timely manner.
- To prepare bundles of documents for counsel and experts and trial bundles when required.
- To attend to clients both in person and on the telephone and to provide such support in a professional and friendly manner in keeping with the firm's standards for client care.
- To provide support to the firm's support staff and fee earners as required.
- Greeting and dealing with "walk in" clients, to the office to take initial instructions or brief updates on their matter.
- Preparing draft bills.
- To maintain flexibility to attend conferences with clients which, on occasions may be outside of 'normal working hours.'
- To ensure the confidentiality of all the firm's and client's documentation and information.
- To undertake any other duty as reasonably requested of you and within your capabilities including reception cover, post room cover and court run cover (full training provided.)

3. Person Specification

Knowledge, Training and Qualifications

Essential

- Law Degree or Recognised Equivalent
- Excellent English verbal and written communication skills are essential including the ability to relate to people at all levels
- Demonstrable knowledge of the law relating to Clinical Negligence and related procedures
- High Proficiency in all Microsoft Office Packages including word, outlook e-mail, outlook diary functions.

Desirable

- LPC graduate or recognised equivalent.
- An understanding of accounts ledgers and dictation systems.
- Knowledge of the various types of funding available for clinical negligence work.
- Knowledge of the NHS Wales Redress Scheme
- Knowledge of Law Society guidelines and procedures of the Legal Aid Agency

Experience

Essential

- Demonstrable experience of providing excellent customer/client service.
- Experience of successfully supporting senior fee earners

Desirable

- Experience of working in a legal practice in a similar role.
- Experience of working with Case Management and Digital Dictation Systems
- Experience of working on and/or running 'issued' cases.
- Experience of working on legal aid funded matters.

Personal Skills and Qualities

- Ability to listening carefully and ask questions to ensure full understanding tasks
- Demonstrable ability to handle difficult/ upset clients and respond accordingly in sensitive situations
- Ability to carry out research quickly and efficiently
- Professional telephone manner.
- The ability to work as part of a team and also take personal responsibility and ownership of own work.
- Ability to maintain attention to detail and accuracy when recording information, carrying out a tasks
- Excellent communication skills both written and verbal.
- Good prioritising and planning skills to ensure that tight deadlines are achieved under pressure
- Ability to work with confidential and sensitive information with discretion
- Flexibility to work outside of normal office hours that may be required from time to time.