



Patricia Hitchcock QC

Year of Silk/Call: 2011/1988

Call Clerk on 020 7827 4000

PRACTICE AREAS

Clinical Negligence | Personal Injury | Professional Discipline

HIGHLIGHTS

"She is extremely clever and unflappable in court. She is always very well prepared, insightful and an absolute joy to work with." *"She is vastly knowledgeable, thorough and extremely astute."* *"She is a very strong barrister."* *"She's helpful and responsive."* **Chambers & Partners 2020**

"Her attention to detail is exceptional and she provides pragmatic advice." *"She is equally great in complex liability and quantum issues."* *"Thorough, authoritative, clear, approachable and good with clients."* **Legal 500 2020**

OVERVIEW

Patricia Hitchcock QC's practice focuses on clinical negligence and personal injury.

Patricia is regularly instructed in substantial matters in the higher courts on both liability and quantum, especially brain and spinal injuries; cancer; psychiatric negligence; fatal accidents. She is also a trained mediator, accredited by CEDR (the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution) since 2003.

Before coming to the Bar, Patricia read English at Oxford and then worked for 10 years as an academic and non-fiction book editor in the UK and USA. She was elected "Mother" of the NUJ chapel at Hutchinson Books, discovering an aptitude for advocacy; she was called to the Bar in 1988 and became a tenant at Cloisters in 1990. She joined the Free Representation Unit while at Bar School, conducting a number of successful cases whilst still a student; she has been a member and supporter of Advocate (formerly the Bar Pro Bono Unit) since its inception, and is now a case reviewer.

Her early practice was dominated by criminal defence work, with over 100 Crown Court trials including murders, rapes, armed robberies and major drug importations, many at the Central Criminal Court. She developed a special interest in young and mentally disordered clients charged with serious offences, and a parallel interest in educational judicial review, with several successful reported cases. She also represented clients in employment and discrimination cases; at inquests; before the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority; and in both criminal and civil courts at all levels.

Patricia developed a particular interest in mental health and medical issues and at under ten years' call left the criminal courts to focus on medical law. She has since built a substantial specialist reputation and is consistently ranked highly in both Chambers & Partners and Legal 500 clinical negligence and personal injury. Patricia was appointed Queen's Counsel in 2011 and has maintained her varied and extremely busy practice in silk.

Patricia is regularly invited to speak at and/or chair medico-legal conferences

and co-authors the Claims of Utmost Severity division of Butterworths Personal Injury Litigation Service and writes the Experts chapter in Lewis & Buchan: Clinical Negligence (Bloomsbury Professional).

REFERENCES

Recommended as a leading practitioner in both clinical negligence and personal injury by **Chambers & Partners UK** and **Legal 500** for many years:

Chambers & Partners 2020: "She is extremely clever and unflappable in court. She is always very well prepared, insightful and an absolute joy to work with." "She is vastly knowledgeable, thorough and extremely astute." "She is a very strong barrister." "She's helpful and responsive."

Legal 500 2020: "Her attention to detail is exceptional and she provides pragmatic advice." "She is equally great in complex liability and quantum issues." "Thorough, authoritative, clear, approachable and good with clients."

Chambers & Partners 2019: (Personal Injury) "Praised for her reassuring client manner and impressive command of high-end catastrophic injury cases. Her expertise in complex RTAs is lauded, as is her grasp of complex medical information. Her caseload often includes claims with a criminal element. She has noted expertise in cases involving issues of liability and quantum." "Her client care skills are fantastic. "She has a great knowledge of the law and is very thorough. She goes through things with a fine-tooth comb."

(Clinical Negligence) "Particularly admired for her work on catastrophic spinal and brain injury cases, she is known for her extensive knowledge of her subject. She is also sought after to provide representations at inquests and in fatal accident claims. She has a strong understanding of mental health issues." "The speed of her brain is impressive. She gets to the nub of a problem very quickly and she is very approachable."

Chambers & Partners 2018: (Clinical Negligence) "Particularly admired for her work on catastrophic spinal and brain injury cases, she is known for her extensive knowledge of her subject. She is also sought after to provide

representation at inquests and in fatal accident claims." "The master tactician. Her ability to dissect complex evidence and get to the heart of the issue quickly is one of her major strengths." "Extremely clever and a very steady hand. A pleasure to work with."

"She has tremendous empathy and warmth. Clients really love her." "She has great attention to detail and is very up to date with legal developments. Really helpful and works well as part of a team."

Legal 500 2017: "She fights very hard to get the best outcome for her clients."

Chambers & Partners 2017: "She's just a fountain of all knowledge, and brilliant with clients"; "she's empathetic and intuitive with clients, and she provides thorough advice quickly."

Legal 500 2016: "She is vastly experienced and provides logical and detailed advice."

Chambers & Partners 2016: "She's very good at brain-work, understands the issues and sticks to her guns. She's clear, good with clients, and down to earth"; "she is one of the groundbreaking leaders in the quantum field. Excellent client manner."

Chambers & Partners 2015: "She has wide-ranging knowledge and gives very level-headed advice." "She is absolutely meticulous, very warm and very good with clients."

Chambers & Partners 2014: "Combines a rigorous approach and command of the detail with a fantastic client manner"; "adept handling of complex catastrophic and psychiatric injury claims and fatality claims."

APPOINTMENTS AND MEMBERSHIPS

QC 2011

Recorder 2017

Council member of Justice

Senior Associate of Royal Society of Medicine

Reviewer for the Bar Pro Bono Unit

Volunteer Panel Member for Lambeth Young Offender Service

Memberships:

AvMA lawyers' and inquest groups

Inquest

Association of Personal Injury Lawyers

Personal Injuries Bar Association

MIND Legal Network

Liberty

Amnesty International

PUBLICATIONS AND TRAINING

Butterworth's Personal Injury Litigation Service, Division VI: Limitation (with Lisa Sullivan, to 2014); Division XV: Claims of Utmost Severity (with Martyn McLeish, from 2014)

Bloomsbury's Clinical Negligence Ed. Lewis & Buchan, (Experts chapter)

Various articles on aspects of medical law - Publisher: Clinical Risk (AvMA Journal); Solicitors' Journal

QUALIFICATIONS

BA (Hons) English Language and Literature, Oxon 1978

Dip Law, City University 1987

Languages:

French

German

Some Spanish and Italian

HIGHLIGHT CASES

[2018] 3 major cases (multiple RTC injuries including rare condylar skull fracture and ABI; delayed diagnosis of meningitis; tetraplegia secondary to mismanagement of SCI) settled

[2017] 3 major cases (brain injury, cancer) settled; 2 cases (originally settled in 2011 and 2017 respectively, with provision for recalculation in the event of a discount rate change) attract substantial additional damages following change in discount rate

[2016] 5 major cases (brain injury, cancer, tetraplegia; 2 p.i., 3 clin. neg.) settled.

[2015] 3 major brain injury cases (2 p.i., 1 clin. neg.) settled.

P v Central & NW London Mental Health NHS Trust [2014]: clinical negligence/psychiatric management of schizophrenic in-patient; patient murdered father; claim brought by mother and sister; issues on duty of care/breach/causation/ quantum; settled at mediation.

Davies v Surrey & Sussex NHS Trust [2013]: clinical negligence/delayed diagnosis of spinal abscess; incomplete tetraplegia; issues on liability and quantum.

Re McCormick [2013]: inquest/ clinical management of liver abscesses and co-morbidities; co-ordination between trusts; PFD letter sent to 2 Trusts.

P v Bedford Hospitals NHS Trust [2012]: clinical negligence/death in hospital from rare blood disorder (thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura); liability and quantum in issue; widower with pre-existing spinal injury left to raise infant; settled at mediation.

RWRO v 2 GPs [2012] : clinical negligence/ misdiagnosis of subarachnoid haemorrhage; paraplegia and cognitive damage; very substantial settlement with PPO; all parties anonymised.

U v Dr Sarker & St George's Healthcare NHS Trust [2011]: clinical negligence/ misdiagnosis of infant bronchiolitis; catastrophic brain damage; liability and quantum.

D v. Epsom & St. Helier NHS Trust [2011]: clinical negligence/birth brain damage; C now 18; breach of duty admitted but major causation and quantum issues.

AXL v. Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust [2010] clinical negligence/very severely brain damaged infant, limited life expectancy; crucial birth records missing, disputes of fact, major causation issues.

Chapman v. Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust [2010]: clinical negligence/misdiagnosis of breast cancer; shortened life expectancy.

Burch v. Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust [2009]: clinical negligence/premature mobilisation post-RTA causing C7 paralysis.

Quenum v. University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust [2009]: clinical negligence/wrongful birth;sickle cell anaemia testing error.

Sowter v Cardiff & Vale NHS Trust [2008]: clinical negligence/ isolated limb perfusion for melanoma; settled in full after first day of trial of all issues.

Dei-Ceci v Armstrong [2008]: personal injury/ catastrophic brain damage to teenager.

Lloyd v Ministry of Justice [2007]: personal injury/ loss of career following assault by prisoner; issues on duty of care, breach, causation, quantum; damages awarded at trial exceeded C's Part 36 offer, punitive interest awarded: Lawtel Case Code: ACO115242.

Nunns v RJ Cannon Ltd [2007]: personal injury and clinical negligence/ tetraplegia from RTA; severe brain injury suffered during consequent operation. Multi-million pound settlement pre-issue.

Mead v. Dr Lai & Dr Beck [2006]: GP negligence/ failure to refer teenager with rare osteomyelitis, "Pott's puffy tumour"; catastrophic brain damage.

Ditta v Ahmed [2005]: personal injury/ RTA; teenage tetraplegia.

W v West London Mental Health Hospitals NHST [2005]: psychiatric negligence/assault on voluntary patient by in-patient.

Darley-Jones v Ling [2004]: clinical negligence/anaesthetic accident during minor operation; catastrophic brain damage.

Dean v Barking, Havering & Redbridge NHST [2004]: clinical negligence/delay in diagnosing breast cancer; shortened life expectancy.

Masterman-Lister v Jewell & Home Counties Dairies; Masterman-Lister v. Brutton & Co [CA: 2003; 2002] professional negligence/personal injury/medical law/definition of legal incapacity: Times Law Reports 28/12/2002; [2003] 1 WLR 1511; Lawtel Case Code: AC0302169

Re Howard [2002]: clinical negligence/inquest following medical mismanagement of sickle cell crisis in custody; jury verdict of natural causes contributed to by neglect.

Warriner v Warriner [2002 CA]: personal injury/multiplier discounts/defendant tortfeasor: [2002] 1 WLR 1703; Lawtel Case Code: AC9600442