

Richard Furniss

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Introduction

Richard Furniss has more than 20 years' experience of clinical negligence, personal injury, and solicitors' and other professional negligence. He is an expert in medico-legal work, has appeared in innumerable inquests, and has wide experience of judicial review and Court of Protection matters, especially where they concern medical issues.

He has always acted for both claimants and defendants in all areas of his work.

He is straightforward and firm, but personable and sympathetic with lay and professional clients. He brings an imaginative approach to cases, but is sensible and realistic when advising.

Richard was educated at Downing College, Cambridge, and called to the Bar in 1991.



Clinical negligence & personal injury

Richard is a well-known specialist in medical law, and has vast experience of all aspects of clinical negligence and personal injury work.

He acts both for claimants and for defendants.

His clinical negligence cases have encompassed almost all aspects of that area of work. He is regularly

instructed in cerebral palsy and other catastrophic cases, and has been sole or junior counsel in very many cases worth in excess of £1 million.

Related accreditations

- Widely known for his extensive experience acting on behalf of both claimants and defendants. He routinely handles cases concerning cerebral palsy, as well as a range of catastrophic injury claims. He is also renowned for his personal injury advocacy.
- Strengths: *“Pragmatic and sensible.” “Prompt, thorough and concise. He always gives sound advice and instils confidence in clients and lawyers alike.”*
- Recent work: Acted for a claimant who contracted an infection after undergoing surgery on his fractured wrist, rendering him unable to use his wrist. Chambers and Partners 2018
- In 2014 edition of Chambers & Partners, Richard is described as *“a top-rated junior...who is widely appreciated for his comprehension and expert analysis of voluminous complex information: ‘He has the ability to sort through large amounts of information and come up with sensible suggestions, and gives a strong opinion about matters, which is often what is needed. He takes control of cases and gives a good sense of direction. Pleasingly, he is realistic and sensible in his assessment of cases, which is a real plus.’*
- And in the 2015 edition, he is *“A well-regarded clinical negligence advocate, who is recognised by market sources for his approachable manner and technical skill. His practice covers both the claim and defendant side and takes in cases relating to cerebral palsy and catastrophic injury. ‘He can cut through a case, see what the main issues are and give you really practical solutions when you’re trying to settle cases.’ ‘He’s great with clients and really leads the way when it comes to round-table meetings.’*
- *“Clients appreciate his ability to provide... straightforward advice given in a manner which is readily understandable by those without either legal or medical training.”*

Court of protection

Richard’s Court of Protection work is largely but not exclusively ancillary to his main specialism in medical law.

For example, he acts for NHS Trusts, individuals and the Official Solicitor in cases where the court is asked to determine what medical treatment is in the best interests of a patient who lacks capacity to give or withhold consent.

He also has experience of deprivation of liberty cases, especially where there is a dispute over medical issues, often concerning elderly people who are said to have lost capacity due to age-related dementia, but also those who are being held securely in hospital.

Related accreditations

“Clients appreciate his ability to provide... straightforward advice given in a manner which is readily understandable by those without either legal or medical training.”

Inquests

Richard has enormous experience of all types of inquest and coronial law.

He has acted in nearly a hundred Article 2 inquests, especially those concerning deaths in prison, including the inquests into the deaths of Gareth Myatt, Michael Bailey, Wayne Reid and Aleksey Baranovsky.

He has also acted in innumerable inquests arising from deaths in hospital and concerning the adequacy of medical care. He represents both the families of the deceased and doctors/NHS Trusts. He acted for London Air Ambulance (Bart's Health NHS Trust) in the inquests for the victims of the London 7/7/05 bombings.

Richard is especially well known for his ability to tackle complex medical issues (and has particular experience of positional asphyxia cases).

Related accreditations:

"Clients appreciate his ability to provide... straightforward advice given in a manner which is readily understandable by those without either legal or medical training."

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Judicial review

As a specialist in medical law, Richard has experience of various aspects of judicial review, but is particularly well-known for cases which involve medical issues. Frequently, these arise in the setting of a prison or other secure establishment.

Related accreditations

"Clients appreciate his ability to provide... straightforward advice given in a manner which is readily understandable by those without either legal or medical training."

Accreditations

- Recognised for his abilities in catastrophic injury and costs litigation on behalf of claimant clients. He has deep knowledge of the Fatal Accidents Act and vast experience in industrial disease cases, lower limb amputations and complex spinal injuries claims. Sources further note his ability to assist in cases involving psychiatric and chronic pain injuries. Chambers and Partners 2018
- Widely known for his extensive experience acting on behalf of both claimants and defendants. He routinely handles cases concerning cerebral palsy, as well as a range of catastrophic injury claims. He is also renowned for his personal injury advocacy.

- Strengths: *“Pragmatic and sensible.” “Prompt, thorough and concise. He always gives sound advice and instils confidence in clients and lawyers alike.”*

Recent work: Acted for a claimant who contracted an infection after undergoing surgery on his fractured wrist, rendering him unable to use his wrist. Chambers and Partners 2018

- *“Clients appreciate his ability to provide... straightforward advice given in a manner which is readily understandable by those without either legal or medical training.”*
- *“a top-rated junior...who is widely appreciated for his comprehension and expert analysis of voluminous complex information: ‘He has the ability to sort through large amounts of information and come up with sensible suggestions, and gives a strong opinion about matters, which is often what is needed. He takes control of cases and gives a good sense of direction. Pleasingly, he is realistic and sensible in his assessment of cases, which is a real plus.’ – 2014 Chambers & Partners*
- A well-regarded clinical negligence advocate, who is recognised by market sources for his approachable manner and technical skill. His practice covers both the claim and defendant side and takes in cases relating to cerebral palsy and catastrophic injury. ‘He can cut through a case, see what the main issues are and give you really practical solutions when you’re trying to settle cases.’ ‘He’s great with clients and really leads the way when it comes to round-table meetings.’ – 2015 Chambers & Partners

Professional memberships

- PNBA
- PIBA

Selected cases

- T v Foster and others – RTA causing brain damage to a 16-year-old – settled for £3.75 million after discount for contributory negligence.
- Gunn v Essex Strategic HA – Community midwife negligently failed to diagnose meningitis in new-born baby – child survived with brain damage – damages £1.7 million.
- M v King’s College Hospital – Wrongful birth after hospital failed to discover genetic abnormality – child born with lobar holoprosencephaly – liability admitted shortly before trial – quantum ongoing.
- O v Queen Mary’s Sidcup NHS Trust – Cerebral palsy as a result of perinatal hypoxia – liability admitted during proceedings -quantum ongoing.

Education

- MA (Cantab)