

John Coughlan KC

Call: 1999 | Silk: 2021

"John is a trusted and safe pair of hands offering sound and balanced advice. He adopts an extremely thorough and methodological approach to cases, and his analysis is second-to-none."

Legal 500 2024 (Clinical Negligence)



John Coughlan KC is a leading practitioner in the fields of clinical negligence and personal injury, acting for seriously injured Claimants, Defendant Trusts (NHS Resolution), medical indemnity providers and insurers.

John has forged his career and is regularly instructed in cases at the cutting edge of evolving law, including wrongful birth, IVF accidents, secondary victims, consent, material contribution and heavy quantum issues including periodical payments, accommodation and statutory funding.

John is often instructed to advise in cases where serious accidental injury has been followed and worsened by inadequate medical treatment. He is noted for his Trial experience and willingness to take on challenging cases.

Heavy serious injury cases and complex clin neg claims require adept expert witness handling, sensitive client care (injured Claimant and clinician witnesses alike) and close teamwork with the solicitor client. John is regularly commended in these regards and has for many years enjoyed Top Ranked (Chambers UK Bar) and Leading Individual Tier 1 / Leading Silk (Legal 500) status.

John prides himself on his approachability, sensitivity, directness and attention to detail.

John is Head of the Clinical Negligence Group and Director of Recruitment for No5. He is also co-Director of Advocacy Training for the Midland Circuit and an advocacy trainer for the Middle Temple.

Expertise

Clinical Negligence

John is Head of the Clinical Negligence Group at No5 and a senior member of the Personal Injury Group.

As a junior, John forged a reputation as a fearless and fierce Trial advocate and sensible compassionate negotiator in cases that require settlement. His practice encompassed all aspects of clinical negligence work. He extols the virtue of seeing both sides of these cases: Claimants (and their families) whose lives are profoundly altered by their injury, and clinicians who are facing criticism that no professional

Birmingham

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person would ever wish to endure.

In silk, John accepts instructions in cases involving injuries of the utmost severity, principally those affecting brain and spine, amputation and serious psychiatric injury.

These cases require a detailed understanding of the interface between medicine and law, particularly in relation to causation and insight into the needs of a seriously injured Claimant.

John welcomes instructions at the earliest stages of these complex cases, whether for Claimant or Defendant, and has wide experience and appreciation of the benefits of rehabilitation and collaboration in bringing these cases to conclusion.

John is consistently recommended in the directories and has for several years achieved Top Ranked status from Chambers UK Bar and Leading Individual Tier 1 status from Legal 500.

Amputation

John welcomes the specific challenges presented in amputation cases, often made more complex by a background of complex pre-existing injury, vascular disease and diabetes.

John regularly acts in cases involving heavy care regimes, accommodation issues, periodical payments and issues of statutory funding.

These cases often require a detailed understanding of the interface between medicine and law, particularly in relation to causation and insight into the needs of a seriously injured Claimant.

John welcomes instructions at the earliest stages of these serious injury cases, whether for Claimant or Defendant, and has wide experience and appreciation of the benefits of rehabilitation and collaboration in bringing these complex cases to conclusion.

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Brain Injury & Cerebral Palsy

John's practice has long involved cases of the utmost severity arising from obstetric, paediatric and adult acquired brain injury. John's current workload includes many birth injury claims of very high value, and has recent experience of complex claims involving stroke, neurosurgical and anaesthetic error, and delays in treatment resulting in worsened outcome.

These cases require a detailed understanding and analysis of the mechanisms of brain injury and insight into the needs of a seriously injured Claimant. John welcomes instructions at the earliest stages of these complex cases, whether for Claimant or Defendant, and has wide experience and appreciation of the benefits of rehabilitation and collaboration in bringing these complex cases to conclusion.

Cancer

John's practice has long involved cases involving delayed diagnosis of cancer, one of the most devastating of all medical mistakes.

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In such cases, the focus is often on causation and likely outcome in the presence of reasonable care, requiring sensitive and adept handling of expert witnesses and client care.

These cases require a detailed understanding and analysis of the mechanisms of brain injury and insight into the needs of a seriously injured Claimant. John welcomes instructions at the earliest stages of these complex cases, whether for Claimant or Defendant, and has wide experience and appreciation of the benefits of rehabilitation and collaboration in bringing these complex cases to conclusion.

Gynaecology & Obstetrics

John has wide experience of claims arising from obstetric and gynaecological failures across the full spectrum of value. These claims are often sensitive, personal and tragic in nature.

John's current workload includes many such cases including shoulder dystocia/BPI, wrongful birth, stillbirth giving rise to serious psychiatric injury, PPH and endocrine consequences and severe maternal bladder and pelvic injury.

John welcomes instructions at the earliest stages of these complex cases, whether for Claimant or Defendant, and has wide experience and appreciation of the benefits of rehabilitation and collaboration in bringing these complex cases to conclusion.

Medical / Surgical

John has worked over the years on countless cases involving failures in GP care, and a wide range of medical errors including prescription errors, errors in paramedic and A&E assessment, missed diabetic conditions and mismanagement of diabetic complications, failures to assess and investigate early signs of cardiac and respiratory complications, failures to act on signs of sepsis, ophthalmology failures and failures in psychiatric care.

John's surgical cases have involved failures to admit or refer for surgical opinion, inappropriate and wrong-level surgery, surgical mishap, failures to diagnose post-operative infection, radiology failures and cases involving issues of informed consent.

John's current workload includes many such cases with devastating outcomes.

John welcomes instructions at the earliest stages of these complex cases, whether for Claimant or Defendant, and has wide experience and appreciation of the benefits of rehabilitation and collaboration in bringing these complex cases to conclusion.

Spinal Injury

In both his Serious Injury and Clinical Negligence practice, John has extensive experience of litigating spinal injury claims.

Alongside his catastrophic traumatic injury caseload, these cases include failures to diagnose or manage cauda equina syndrome, inappropriate and wrong-level surgery, failures to diagnose spinal infection, radiology failures and cases involving issues of informed consent.

John's current workload includes many such cases with devastating outcomes.

John welcomes instructions at the earliest stages of these complex cases, whether for Claimant or Defendant, and has wide

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Personal Injury

John is Head of the Clinical Negligence Group at No.5 and a senior member of the Personal Injury Group.

As a junior, John forged a reputation as a fearless and fierce Trial advocate and sensible compassionate negotiator in cases that require settlement. His practice encompassed all aspects of personal injury work.

In silk, John accepts instructions in cases involving injuries of the utmost severity, principally those affecting brain and spine, amputation and serious psychiatric injury. He has handled group litigation and is often instructed in cases involving multiple Defendants, where he is skilled at exploring and distilling complex issues of causation and quantum.

John regularly acts in cases involving heavy care regimes, accommodation issues, periodical payments and issues of statutory funding. John is also heavily instructed in high value Fatal Accidents Act cases.

These cases often require a detailed understanding of the interface between medicine and law, particularly in relation to causation and insight into the needs of a seriously injured Claimant.

John welcomes instructions at the earliest stages of these serious injury cases, whether for Claimant or Defendant, and has wide experience and appreciation of the benefits of rehabilitation and collaboration in bringing these complex cases to conclusion.

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Catastrophic Injury

John's Personal Injury practice is now devoted to cases of the utmost severity, principally brain and spinal injury, amputation and serious psychiatric injury.

He has handled group litigation and is often instructed in cases involving multiple Defendants, where he is skilled at exploring and distilling complex issues of causation and quantum.

John regularly acts in cases involving heavy care regimes, accommodation issues, periodical payments and issues of statutory funding. John is also heavily instructed in high value Fatal Accidents Act cases.

These cases often require a detailed understanding of the interface between medicine and law, particularly in relation to causation and insight into the needs of a seriously injured Claimant.

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Inquests, Public Inquiries & Coronial Law

John practices the following areas:

Inquests, Public Inquiries & Coronial Law (Clinical Negligence)

John's Clinical Negligence practice has often seen him instructed from the outset for the Inquest and thereafter the litigation. He handles these cases with utmost sensitivity and rigour, often before expert evidence is available.

Inquests, Public Inquiries & Coronial Law (Personal Injury)

John's Serious Injury practice has often seen him instructed from the outset for the Inquest and thereafter the litigation. He handles these cases with utmost sensitivity and rigour, often before expert evidence is available.

Awards



Appointments

- Deputy Head of Clinical Negligence Group
- Director, No.5 Chambers
- Head of Recruitment, No.5 Chambers
- Director of Education & Training, Midland Circuit

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Qualifications

- LLB Hons Law (Bris) BCL (Oxon)

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