

ROBERT SOWERSBY

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Rob works in three areas: [Clinical Negligence](#), the [Court of Protection](#), and coroners' courts.

He has had a specialist clinical negligence practice for over 20 years, and acts principally for doctors, health boards and hospital trusts. He has a reputation for success in unusually difficult cases and is well regarded for being strongly client-focused, 'down to earth', and skilled in dealing with experts. He has been recommended by the leading legal directories for many years, and is recognised for his ability to simplify complex cases.

Rob undertakes health and welfare cases in the Court of Protection. He is a member of CoPPA, and is committed to his growing Court of Protection practice. His work as a coroner – which also requires a non-adversarial approach in a very sensitive field – has given him a well-developed skillset for CoP work, and he has a wealth of experience dealing with unrepresented family members and taking evidence from vulnerable witnesses.

Rob has acted in numerous large or high-profile inquests as an advocate, and sits locally as an Assistant Coroner.

Expertise

Clinical Negligence

Rob works across the full spectrum of Clinical Negligence work. Most of his cases arise from a serious untoward outcome, and many involve allegations of surgical negligence.

Rob often deals with claims of unusual factual or medical complexity. In terms of financial value; the majority fall within the £50,000 to £1m range.

He regularly provides advice and representation in cases involving allegations of:

- Surgical negligence

- Failings in the provision of primary and/or emergency care
- Failure to diagnose cancer
- Negligence in the provision of psychiatric care
- 'Secondary victim' psychiatric claims

Personal Injury

Whilst most of Rob's work is clinical, he still undertakes a small amount of Personal Injury work. This is generally of high value, with added complexity or an unusual aspect, such as complex procedural, liability, or causation issues.

Inquests

Rob sits part-time as an Assistant Coroner in Avon and has extensive experience of large and high-profile Inquests work as an advocate.

Featured Inquests cases

Re Ellie-May Clark (2018)

A 5-year old girl died after her GP refused to see her when her mother was minutes late for an emergency appointment.

Re Carl Smith (2015)

Mr Smith died of methadone toxicity while on remand in Exeter Prison. He was on a methadone stabilisation programme but had obtained illicit methadone in addition to his prescribed dose. The jury returned a conclusion of 'drug-related death', adding a narrative which indicated that both the welfare checks performed by the prison's healthcare provider and the overnight observations carried out by the prison staff were insufficient for a prisoner in Mr Smith's vulnerable position.

Re Shaun Beasley (2012)

Acted for Mr Beasley's family in the inquest following his suicide in a privately run prison. Mr Beasley had killed himself while purportedly under a scheme of increased observation in the prison's healthcare unit. Both the prison and the unit were run by different companies: there was a double finding of neglect by the jury.

Court of Protection

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committed to his growing Court of Protection practice. His work as a coroner – which also involves a non-adversarial approach in a very sensitive field – has given him a well-developed skillset for CoP work, and he has a wealth of experience dealing with unrepresented family members, who often find the legal process alien and confusing, and taking evidence from vulnerable witnesses.

Appointments

- Assistant Coroner (Avon)

Education

- BVC, ICSL
- PgDip Law, UWE
- MA, History & Anthropology
- First Class Hons, History, UCL

Memberships

- PIBA
- The King's Fund
- The Coroners Society