

## ROBERT SOWERSBY

CALL: 2000

"The work he produces is always of a high standard. He is very down to earth and is well received by clients."

*Chambers UK*

Email: robert.sowersby@guildhallchambers.co.uk

Tel: 0117 930 9000



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Rob undertakes personal injury and clinical negligence work, but specialises particularly in clinical cases: he is well regarded in the field, and is consistently recommended as a leading junior in the main legal directories. He has been praised for being down to earth and client-friendly, and for his skill in dealing both with experts, and with unusually difficult cases.

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### PRACTICE AREAS

- Clinical Negligence
- Inquests
- Personal Injury

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### CLINICAL NEGLIGENCE

Rob's clinical negligence cases almost all involve a serious untoward outcome or death. They are often claims of unusual factual or medical complexity. In terms of financial value; the majority fall within the £50,000 to £1m range. He undertakes both claimant and defendant work, providing robust practical advice.

He regularly provides advice and representation in cases involving:

- Surgical negligence
- Errors in the provision of primary and/or emergency care
- Failure to diagnose cancer
- Negligence in the provision of psychiatric care
- "Secondary victim" psychiatric claims

Examples of his recent case load include claims arising from:

- Alleged attempts by a GP to deliberately poison one of his patients with opiate drugs
- Complex cardiac surgery involving multiple procedures
- The misprescription of drugs leading to permanent impotence

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### INQUESTS

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

The majority of his instructions are on behalf of bereaved families, and he has been involved in a large number of cases where the coroner or jury have concluded that neglect contributed to the death.

## RECENT CASES

- **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 (<http://www.itv.com/news/wales/2012-06-29/prisoners-suicide-contributed-to-by-neglect/>).
  - **Re Charles Lowden (2011)** - Represented the dependants of Mr Lowden, a 20-year old scaffolder who died when the hospital he attended failed to follow its own deep vein thrombosis protocol and wrongly discharged him. Liability was admitted after the inquest, leaving an unusual dependency claim: Mr Lowden had been the biological father (through sperm donation) of two children born to his aunt's same sex partner (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/8229868/Secret-sperm-donor-fathered-aunts-children.html>).
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## PERSONAL INJURY

Although the majority of Rob's work is clinical, he undertakes a wide range of personal injury work, and receives instructions in high value, complex or unusual personal injury claims. He advised the family of one of the victims of the July 7th bombings in London, and has represented a multi-national energy company following the death of one of its workers at an on-shore gas storage facility: he is also happy to take on more 'straightforward' personal injury cases!

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

### CHAMBERS UK 2019

#### Clinical Negligence

Regularly handles surgical negligence claims as well as those concerning negligent care of individuals. His practice predominantly centres on acting for claimants. He garners particular praise from commentators for his user-friendly approach.

"The work he produces is always of a high standard. He is very down to earth and is well received by clients." "Very straightforward."

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### LEGAL 500 2019

#### Personal Injury & Clin Neg

'A very grounded barrister, who always provides pragmatic advice.'

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### CHAMBERS UK 2018

#### Clinical Negligence

Leading Junior - Band 2

Regularly handles surgical negligence claims as well as those concerning negligent care of individuals. His practice predominantly centres on acting for claimants. He garners particular praise from commentators for his user-friendly approach.

Strengths: "I find him an excellent all-rounder. He has a very good understanding of what the client and a lawyer needs. He's tenacious and fights his corner, and his advocacy is first-rate." "He is a dedicated barrister and shows repeated good judgement." "He is very good at getting to grips with the issues and holding conferences with clients and experts in complex matters."

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## LEGAL 500 2017

### Personal Injury & Clinical Negligence

Leading juniors

'He skilfully explains complex legal issues to lay clients.'

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## CHAMBERS UK 2017

### Clinical Negligence

Leading Junior - Band 2

Praised by sources for his ability on technically complex claims. He handles a wide-ranging clinical negligence caseload, often tackling matters concerning surgical negligence and substandard care.

Strengths: "He's very efficient, helpful and friendly. He is one of those people that can take something complex and simplify it for everyone and get to the heart of the matter. He is also excellent at dealing with sensitive cases. You want him in your corner."

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## LEGAL 500 2016

### Personal Injury & Clinical Negligence

Leading juniors

'A top-quality barrister with a unique ability to simplify the most difficult cases.'

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## CHAMBERS UK 2016

### Clinical Negligence

Leading Junior - Band 2

A clinical negligence specialist, he is frequently instructed by a wide range of clients including a spectrum of niche clinical negligence firms nationwide. Sowersby is especially highly regarded for his expertise in genital injuries and bowel issues.

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## LEGAL 500 2015

### Personal Injury & Clinical Negligence

Leading juniors

'He ensures that all aspects of a case are investigated thoroughly'.

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## CHAMBERS UK 2015

### Clinical Negligence

Leading Junior - Band 1

Handles a wide range of clinical negligence work, with noted niche expertise in male genital injuries and issues of the bowel. Although he has a national client base, a strong portion of his caseload originates from Wales.

Expertise: "He is a dogged, tenacious advocate." "He's focused on client management and is particularly good with sensitive issues."

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## LEGAL 500 2014

### Personal Injury & Clinical Negligence

'A clinical negligence specialist who attracts instructions nationally'.

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## CHAMBERS UK 2014

"A respected clinical negligence practitioner at the Western Bar...He is especially well known for his skills with inquests and chronic pain cases."

Expertise: "He comes into his own when dealing with difficult cases: he excels with them."

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## LEGAL 500 2013

'...recommended for [his] clinical negligence expertise...'

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## CHAMBERS UK 2013

### Clinical Negligence

Band 1

'Roberts Sowersby's practice is almost entirely concentrated on clinical negligence claims, although he does also undertake some personal injury work. His caseload is predominantly made up of complex and high-value claims. Commentators note that "he is very persuasive as an advocate," because of his "ability to make the most technically difficult case seem straightforward." He is also highly regarded for "skill in dealing sensitively with clients on difficult cases - he's very approachable and down to earth".'

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## CHAMBERS UK 2012

### Clinical Negligence

Band 1

'Robert Sowersby recently joined Guildhall from Devereux Chambers in London and is emphatically praised as "thorough, well-informed and emphatic individual who is very good with clients".'

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## LEGAL 500 2011

'The [Guildhall] team was enhanced by the addition of Robert Sowersby, who exhibits "a ruthless professionalism in court", provides advice that is "to the point and easy to understand", and is "superb with experts".'

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## CHAMBERS UK 2011

## Personal Injury

Band 1

'Robert Sowersby is [a] highly regarded practitioner, who has a good deal of experience and expertise in this area. He is noted for his "willingness to fight difficult cases" and the fact that he "always complies with deadlines quickly".'

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## CHAMBERS UK 2010

'...thought to be particularly good on fatal cases. He was described as having "a good analytical mind and a relaxed manner with clients". He was further commended for the fact that "he fights his corner in court, remaining impressively calm and unflappable at all times".'

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## APPOINTMENTS:

- Assistant Coroner (Avon)
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## MEMBERSHIPS:

- PIBA
  - The King's Fund
  - The Coroners Society
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## EDUCATION:

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

- Rob Sowersby comments on Inquest heard yesterday of little girl who died of asthma after being turned away from doctors
  - Personal Injury Case Updates - December 2015
  - Rob Sowersby - Appointed Assistant Coroner
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Guildhall Chambers, 23 Broad Street, Bristol BS1 2HG Tel: 0117 930 9000 DX: 7823 Bristol

robert.sowersby@guildhallchambers.co.uk | www.guildhallchambers.co.uk

