



Legal Service Newsletter - May 2017

The Legal Service is provided by Stewarts Law's pro bono team as part of the Firm's commitment to help people with serious injury.

The service offers free advice to patients when they need it most.

To make a referral to the Legal Service, please contact your dedicated pro bono representative. Alternatively, you can contact Kara Smith in the pro bono team at ksmith@stewartslaw.com or by phone on 020 7822 8000.

Q&A with Legal Service client

By Sarah Atkinson

This month Sarah Atkinson, paralegal at Stewarts Law speaks to the mother of Fred, about the help the family has received following her son being admitted to an ICU following a neurological disorder in May 2016.



What were your main concerns prior to the initial meeting?

On 6 May 2016 my son and my world changed forever when he suffered a neurological disorder and was admitted to hospital. My son, Fred, was taken ill very suddenly. I felt very upset and overwhelmed as I had never been in this situation before and so I was unaware of what I needed to do and who I needed to contact.

As a result of this disorder my son was very confused and could not deal with his financial affairs. I tried to help Fred but I encountered several difficulties. Firstly, because he is registered blind and his paperwork is in braille and secondly, because the financial institutions refused to speak with me as they required authorisation from Fred. However, he was unable to provide such authorisation as he lacked mental capacity.

I discovered that Stewarts Law provide a free legal service to patients who have suffered serious injury and I arranged an appointment for the following week.

What benefit was the Legal Service in helping you deal with these concerns?

Soon after the meeting, I received a letter from Stewarts Law explaining how they could provide assistance. This was a huge relief as I did not have a clue what had to be done. Immediately, Stewarts Law contacted various financial institutions on Fred's behalf to inform them of his circumstances. For example, Fred's mobile phone had been stolen and when I contacted his operator to inform them of this, they refused to terminate his contract. However, when Stewarts Law wrote to his mobile phone operator they immediately agreed to terminate his contract with them and waive any early cancellation fees.

Prior to his illness, Fred was in receipt of various welfare benefits and Stewarts Law assisted me to contact the relevant provider to inform them of Fred's hospitalisation to ensure that he was not overpaid. All of this assistance took the pressure off me, as I was near to breaking point.

I was informed that Fred lacks mental capacity and so Stewarts Law explained that I may wish to consider making an application to the Court of Protection for Deputyship, which would enable me to

make decisions on his behalf. Stewarts Law assisted me to complete all of the paperwork, which was very helpful as this was new to me and I was out of my comfort zone.

What is the current situation?

It is a year since Fred was admitted into hospital and with the assistance of the Legal Service I have now obtained a Deputyship order. This enables me to deal with Fred's finances myself.

What would you say to someone in the same situation as you and would you recommend the service?

I would advise anyone in the same situation as myself to seek help from the Legal Service. Since receiving advice and assistance from the Legal Service, I am now aware of what steps need to be taken to assist Fred and I now have authority and feel able to complete these tasks myself. I could not have coped without the assistance of the Legal Service and I am sure that I would have had a meltdown. I will always be indebted to you, so thank you.

News

Please click on the images for more information about a particular news story



Shaun Whiter - Case Study

April was limb loss awareness month, and Stewarts Law highlighted the case of Shaun Whiter, their client who suffered a double amputation after being hit by a car in July 2016.



Congratulations to Josh! #LifeBeyondInjury

Everyone at Stewarts would like to congratulate Josh, who recently featured in our Life Beyond Injury series, who recently made the GB para climbing team. Well done Josh.



Inter Spinal Unit Games 2017

Stewarts Law was pleased to co-sponsor and attend the Inter Spinal Unit Games, which took place at Stoke Mandeville Stadium from 25 to 27 April 2017.

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