

Spinal Injuries Association Personal Injury Lawyers Code of Conduct

All of the solicitors listed in this publication, hereafter known as “SIA solicitor members” agree to abide by the following code of conduct, as a condition of their entry. This is to ensure that anyone using this publication to choose a solicitor can have confidence in the quality and expertise of their chosen firm.

SIA solicitor members recognise the need to:

- Provide a professional service.
- Keep themselves informed, educated and up to date with current law and procedure.
- Keep themselves informed and up to date with the SRA code of conduct to be found at www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/handbook/code/content.page
- Ensure the client is properly compensated and receives appropriate rehabilitation services.
- Ensure that clients are fully aware of and fully advised, on all costs issues, including public funding, where appropriate.
- Ensure that clients have the opportunity to receive financial advice on the investment of damages.

SIA solicitor members will:

- At all times treat clients, both prospective and existing, with sensitivity and understanding and consider the distressing circumstances that individuals experience after spinal cord injury.

LAWYERS CODE OF CONDUCT

- When asked to do so by users of this publication, provide a free initial consultation, answer questions and provide information about their firm suffice for an informed choice to be made.
- Recognise the right and good practice of prospective clients to consider other solicitors before making a decision on who will represent them.
- Provide independent legal advice and always act in the best interests of the client.
- Proceed expeditiously with all personal injury claims.
- At all times behave and act in a manner which will uphold the standing and good reputation of claimant personal injury lawyers and SIA.
- Recognise their duty to avoid sexual, financial or emotional exploitation and not use their professional relationship to establish or pursue a sexual or improper emotional relationship with a client.
- Only pay or receive a fee for the introduction of clients where permitted by the rules of the relevant legal professional regulatory body.
- Ensure all solicitors in their firm, who will be handling spinal cord injury compensation claims, are fully familiar with the firm's complaints procedure.
- Regularly attend SIA training courses to help understand fully the needs of those with spinal cord injury.

SIA solicitor members will NOT:

- Make uninvited approaches to prospective clients within settings which may be deemed inappropriate (ie: hospitals

or rehabilitation centres) considering the distressing circumstances individuals may be experiencing.

- Personally, or through a representative, directly contact a prospective client (except through permitted advertising), where there has been no request for such contact ('cold calling'). "Permitted advertising" is defined as advertising which complies with the Code of Practice of the Advertising Standards Authority and with the rules of the SIA solicitor members' relevant legal professional regulatory body.
- Put pressure on prospective clients to appoint their firm to act on their behalf.
- Knowingly make any statement, whether in publicity material to a prospective client, an existing client, or otherwise which may give the client false expectations.
- Pursue a frivolous claim, issue or position; but no SIA solicitor member should refrain from taking or pursuing any claim, issue or position which is believed to have merit.
- Make excessive or unnecessary monetary charges to the client.
- Personally or through an agent make representations of experience or specialist skills which they do not possess.
- Undertake false, deceptive or misleading advertising.
- Knowingly accept a referral from a person who obtained the representation by means contrary to this code.
- Pressurise SIA to endorse their firm or services offered by them.