

Laura Hibberd

Call: 2013

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Laura Hibberd has a busy court and paper practice and is instructed in a range of civil, criminal and family matters. Her varied practice provides for a versatile advocate; she has experience of multi-day trials and discrete applications across each practice area.

In her civil practice, Laura is regularly instructed in multi-track cases in personal injury and clinical negligence. Her family practice largely involves public care cases, representing Local Authorities, respondents and interested parties. Laura's criminal practice includes prosecution and defence work in both adult and youth matters across London and the Home Counties.

Laura has considerable experience attending inquests on behalf of families or interested parties. She has recently developed a Court of Protection practice and is keen to expand her work in this area. Laura is confident in approaching new areas of work and working with lay and professional clients.

Before joining Chambers, Laura worked for a sole practitioner solicitor working exclusively in mesothelioma cases. She was also an intern for the prosecution at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, and worked on the Stanišić and Župljanin case under HHJ Jo Korner CMG QC.

Outside of work, Laura is a keen swimmer particularly open water marathon swimming and has competed in endurance events on several occasions. Laura is a mentor for Bridging the Bar and for Inner Temple.

Areas of Expertise

Personal Injury

Laura accepts instructions on behalf of claimants and defendants in all areas of personal injury. She is frequently instructed to advise on liability, evidence and quantum in a range of cases. She has been instructed in industrial disease cases, particularly asbestos exposure causing mesothelioma, and is keen to increase her industrial disease practice. Laura worked in this area prior to joining Chambers.

Laura is regularly instructed in multi-track matters, often six-figure claims, and will advise and draft statements of case. She has

experience of interim hearings, including budgeting, and multi-day trials. Laura has been instructed in JSMs, including recently against a silk and senior junior in a group action against a care home. She is able to negotiate and discuss complex issues and provide clear, practical advice to clients.

Laura has developed a practice involving care home claims which usually involve allegations of negligence causing pressure sores or falls. These cases can straddle personal injury and clinical negligence. She is confident in her ability to grasp the issues in these cases, which often include challenging causation arguments due to claimants' pre-existing conditions. Laura is interested in furthering her expertise in these claims.

Laura has also undertaken appeals against the CICA and for Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit.

Notable Personal Injury cases

G v SSWP [2021]

Laura represented a police officer appealing SSWP's refusal to grant Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB). Laura successfully persuaded the Tribunal to distinguish the appeal from *Faulds* [2002] and that there was sufficient nexus from the material incident to the officer's development of PTSD. The Tribunal agreed the officer should be entitled to IIDB.

L v FP NHS Trust [2020]

Laura acted for the Claimant in a multi-track case concerning a manual handling claim against her employer. Laura was successful at trial and beat her Part 36 offers. She also represented the Claimant at mediation.

Clinical Negligence & Healthcare

Laura has an expanding clinical negligence practice and is frequently instructed to advise on merits, evidence and quantum at various stages of claims. She has experience in a range of cases which include delayed diagnosis and treatment, negligent surgery/treatment, injuries during birth and fatal claims.

Laura is well able to advise on complicated issues surrounding breach, causation and evidence and is confident in approaching matters with experts in conference. She has represented families at inquests where the death may result in a civil claim. As with personal injury, Laura frequently receives instructions in care or nursing Home claims where pressure sores are alleged to be the result of negligent care or treatment.

Notable Clinical Negligence & Healthcare cases

KL v an NHS Trust

This was a complex claim concerning a failure to diagnosis an ultimately fatal port-a-cath infection, liability was denied and required conferences with multiple experts. Laura drafted statements of case including a large dependency claims. The case successfully settled.

MP v an NHS Trust

The claimant suffered an injury to his dominant hand and there was a failure at the hospital to identify the extent of the injuries which led to multiple procedures and fusion surgery with an increased risk of arthritic deterioration in other finger joints. The case settled.

B v an NHS Trust

This case concerned a complication during a forceps delivery causing permanent injury to the child. The issues included how the forceps were applied and the training of the individual involved. Liability remained denied; Laura had conferences with experts, drafted statements of case and advised on quantum. The case settled successfully pre-issue.

Family Law

Laura's family practice is predominantly public care work. She frequently appears for Local Authorities, parents, grandparents/interveners and guardians in all aspects of public care cases and emergency applications including Deprivation of Liberty applications. She is regularly instructed in final hearings, and has been praised by judges for her efficient and professional presentation of cases. Laura is experienced in representing vulnerable clients during care proceedings, particularly young mothers, and solicitors instruct her due to her sensitive approach.

Laura has also advised Local Authorities regarding disclosure of care proceedings into criminal proceedings, and has attended the Crown Court on behalf of the Local Authority.

Having experience of criminal and personal injury cases means Laura is able to use her knowledge when family cases intersect these areas – such as when there are concurrent criminal proceedings and allegations of non-accidental injuries requiring medical evidence.

Notable Family Law cases

EA, A Local Authority v EL & Ors [2022] EWFC 163

Laura represented a local authority in care proceedings where a special guardianship order was sought in favour of a family friend to care for EA, this care plan was opposed by the father. The court approved the local authority's care plan as sought. In the judgment Laura was praised for sensitively putting questions on behalf of all parties to the mother, who was herself very vulnerable and required assistance from an intermediary throughout the case.

Re A (2021)

Laura represented the local authority in proceedings which concluded with a fully contested final hearing regarding threshold and care plans. The court made findings in line with Laura's submissions and threshold document. She then represented the local

authority in injunction proceedings against the parents following threats being made towards staff and to abduct the children.

Re P (2020)

Laura represented a father throughout care proceedings, successfully resisting two application for interim separation by the local authority. The case concluded with the three subject children remaining in his care, one child not being his own biologically.

Re M (2019)

Laura represented the paternal grandmother in highly sensitive and acrimonious care proceedings following the mother killing the father.

Re K (A Child) [2018] EWCA Civ 2044

Laura represented the respondent mother, at the final hearing and during the appeal process.

Crime

Laura accepts both prosecution and defence work. She is a Grade 3 Prosecutor for the Crown Prosecution Service and regularly appears in London and across the South Eastern Circuit. Laura accepts instructions to appear as a court appointed advocate.

Laura has completed vulnerable witness training. She has been instructed in trials concerning vulnerable defendants and complainants where intermediaries and ground rules hearings have been required. For example, Laura was recently instructed in a serious case with charges of oral rape and sexual assault where the complainant and defendant were both youths.

Court of Protection

Laura accepts instructions in all aspects of Court of Protection work. She has represented family members during contested deputyship applications and in s21A Mental Capacity Act cases, including advising, drafting grounds and attending hearings.

Laura has frequently dealt with Deprivation of Liberty cases concerning adults and children. Further, Laura has been instructed on nearest relative disputes under the Mental Health Act. She is keen to further her Court of Protection practice.

Due to her multi-disciplinary practice, Laura is able to use her knowledge from both family and personal injury/clinical negligence cases when Court of Protection cases straddle these areas. Laura's family practice, and particularly her Local Authority work, includes welfare proceedings where the issue of capacity is raised. Laura is well placed to represent and advise vulnerable clients and their families, which lends itself to Court of Protection work.

Inquests & Inquiries

Laura accepts instructions to act for interested parties, including bereaved families and regulatory bodies in inquests conducted at the Coroners' Courts.

She has been instructed in numerous inquests, including representing families where the death has touched upon clinical negligence and/or personal injury litigation. Laura has represented families and interested parties in inquests where suicide has been the key issue.

Education

- LLB Law and Politics, Cardiff University
- BPTC Kaplan Law School

Memberships

- Court of Protection Bar Association
- Association of Lawyers for Children
- Family Law Bar Association
- Criminal Bar Association
- Personal Injury Bar Association
- Association for Personal Injury Lawyers

Awards

- CPS Level 3

Accreditation Logos

