

12

King's Bench Walk

Vanessa Cashman

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AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Clinical Negligence, Personal Injury, Inquests, Costs

Vanessa is a very experienced advocate whose main area of practice is clinical negligence. Her practice encompasses a range of medical specialities and value, including up to multi-million pound claims. She also has considerable experience in the fields of personal injury, inquests and costs.

Vanessa combines a friendly approachable manner with her warmth and sensitivity towards both vulnerable and demanding clients.

Acting on behalf of both claimants and defendants, Vanessa is often instructed to assist leading Counsel. She has a strong paperwork practice which includes pleadings, advices on liability, quantum, procedure and tactics and drafting schedules and counter schedules.

Inquests

Vanessa has appeared at numerous inquests and pre-inquest reviews on behalf of families and other interested persons. She has acted in article 2 inquests and inquests with juries. The inquests have involved all types of case, including deaths arising out of clinical negligence, road traffic accidents, accidents at work and neglect. Her recent inquests included:

Clinical negligence

- Single lung transplant, primary graft dysfunction leading to death
- A toddler with congenital cardiomyopathy with suspected mitochondrial disorder who suffered three cardiac arrests. He was treated for viral infection rather than myopathy. The third arrest was fatal.
- A 61- year old lady with a very complex medical history, admitted with a recurrent history of urinary tract infections. Underwent surgery (a colposuspension, a clam cystoplasty and reimplantation of the ureters) which eventually led to her becoming septic and developing necrotising fasciitis. She died of multi organ failure.
- Death of a three month old baby girl as a result of liver failure.
- A lesion on an adrenal gland was thought to be metastatic tumour from breast cancer. The operating surgeon misinterpreted the vessels and ligated a crucial artery supplying blood to all internal organs. The error was not picked up and the patient died as a result of ischaemia.
- Abdominal compartment syndrome developed following routine surgery leading to widespread ischaemia and death

Road traffic accidents

- Ten- day inquest into the death of an undercover police officer who was pursuing a suspect when a car pulled into his path
- Seven- day inquest into the death of a mental-health patient who absconded from hospital
- The Bestival Bus Crash inquest into the death of two teenagers and the driver
- Inquest into the death of a mental-health patient who hijacked an ambulance during his transfer to a specialist hospital. Vanessa has been instructed to act in the civil claim arising out of this incident.
- Inquest into the death of a cyclist who hit a pothole and was then hit by a vehicle which was overtaking

Many of these inquests have generated instructions to act in the civil claim.

Qualifications & Awards

Bar Vocational Course (Very Competent), City University, London

Graduate Diploma in Law (Commendation), City University, London

B.A.(Hons) Music (First Class), St Hilda's College, Oxford

Lord Denning Scholarship, Lincoln's Inn

Music scholarship (St Hilda's College, Oxford)

Memberships

Personal Injuries Bar Association, Lincoln's Inn, South Eastern Circuit, Professional Negligence Bar Association