

# Rachel Pearce

Head of Clinical Negligence & Personal Injury

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Rachel Pearce is Head of the Clinical Negligence and Personal Injury department, having joined the firm in 2016.

Having qualified in 2006, she has over 16 years' experience, including eight as a Partner. She previously worked at firms in Essex and London before relocating to Cornwall and joining Coodes. In 2022, she was invited to become a business owner of the South West firm in recognition of her commitment to driving the future direction of the team and business.

Rachel is highly experienced in acting for clients with particularly complex and challenging cases and enjoys presenting them to the defendants to try and negotiate a settlement, either over the telephone or at face-to-face meetings. She acts for clients in complex, high-value clinical negligence cases, including birth injuries, surgical errors, misdiagnosis, substandard midwifery and nursing care and fatal claims.

In Chambers & Partners 2022, Rachel is ranked as 'Up and Coming', acknowledged for her work in misdiagnosis and delay in treatment claims, with further experience in birth injury cases.

In Legal 500, Coodes' Clinical Negligence team is ranked in Tier 2 and Rachel is described as 'capable and extremely well-organised'.

Another said, "Rachel works very hard to produce the best results for the client. She is dedicated and very experienced in clinical negligence work. She is an excellent asset to the firm."

## Expertise

### Clinical Negligence and Personal Injury

As well as representing clients with maximum severity claims, Rachel has built upon her strong links with INQUEST to develop a reputation in Devon and Cornwall for representing and acting for clients at inquests involving mental health issues and preventable suicides of psychiatric patients and has gone on to secure settlements in these cases. These cases are hugely important in raising awareness of issues and instigating system changes, as well as seeking answers for bereaved families.

Rachel has a track record of securing results for clients, particularly in difficult cases and is committed to delivering the highest levels of client care.

#### Falmouth

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## Notable Clinical Negligence and Personal Injury cases

### Complex Brain Injury / Neurological Damage

Leading a successful £2.6 million clinical negligence claim for a 52-year-old female client who was admitted to hospital with chest pain, breathing difficulties and unresolved cough, which was treated. She was discharged home, however, she suffered irreversible catastrophic neurological injuries after the hospital failed to act on her grossly abnormal test results which showed dangerously low sodium levels. She was readmitted four days later in a critical condition. Despite urgent efforts to reverse the abnormal result, she suffered life changing neurological injuries, requiring lifelong care, adapted accommodation, aids and equipment.

### Birth Injuries

Rachel recently represented a 17-year-old identical twin who suffered injuries and disabilities at the time of birth due to the defendant failing to diagnose and treat Strep B infection. The client has cerebral palsy, hearing loss and speech impairment. Although the defendant admitted liability in March 2012, proceedings had to be stayed for five years for the client to be assessed by experts once he had reached maturity. Initially the defendant would not accept the severity of the clients' injuries and the future damages claimed and a trial was fixed for September this year, however, Rachel fiercely fought this and eventually settlement was agreed at £2.2 million.

### Obstetrics & Gynaecology

Rachel also secured £230,000 for a client who sustained an undiagnosed fourth-degree maternal birth injury during the birth of her third child in January 2005 or during the birth of her fourth child. The injury was not diagnosed until February 2013. This case was particularly difficult as the client had not reported any symptoms including incontinence. She underwent remedial surgery and now has a lifelong colostomy.

## Awards & Scholarships

- Shortlisted for 'Leader of the Year' and 'Solicitor of the Year', Devon & Somerset Law Society Awards (2023)
- Shortlisted as a Finalist for 'Clinical Negligence Lawyer of the Year', Personal Injury Awards (2022)

## Qualifications & Accreditations

- Accredited specialist with the Law Society Clinical Negligence Accreditation Scheme
- APIL Senior Litigator and Accreditation Clinical Negligence Specialist
- Solicitor (2006)

## Memberships

- Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL)
- INQUEST Lawyers Group

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