



Putting members first



Interested in a career as a
Medicolegal Adviser
with MPS?

What is a Medicolegal Adviser?

MPS Medicolegal Advisers (MLAs) manage a substantial caseload requiring discretion and expert judgment. The MPS telephone advisory service alone fields more than 18,000 calls a year. All MLAs play a central role in providing this service, drawing on their knowledge, skills and experience to offer first-class advice to callers.



A career as an MLA is interesting and varied, with plenty of scope for exercising initiative. MLAs manage any situation where a member's professional reputation is at risk, e.g. clinical negligence claims for damages, tribunals, or ethical or disciplinary matters. The role requires stamina, confidence, an eye for detail, strong analytical and communication skills, and effective time-management.

MPS deals with 11,000 claims for damages each year and MLAs play an active part in dealing with them, providing detailed instructions to solicitors and independent experts, and contributing to meetings with barristers and the rest of the defence team. MLAs are often present at the subsequent trial or hearing to support and advise the practitioner in question.

MLAs are drawn from a wide range of clinical backgrounds, reflecting the variety of MPS members. All are expected to complete a relevant postgraduate law qualification, such as an LLB or LLM and to obtain membership of the Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine.

Learning about the wider aspects of MPS's business and understanding the needs and interests of the wider profession internationally is part of the role. You will also be involved in promoting MPS externally and internally by lecturing, running workshops, serving on committees and in working groups, and writing articles for publications. As senior members of staff, MLAs are expected to show leadership and support team members.

Travel between the three MPS offices in London, Edinburgh and Leeds is a necessary part of the job, as is travelling on case-led business. Doctors across the world rely on MPS for help, so international travel may also be required.

MPS is accredited by the Investors in People; all MLAs benefit from a detailed in-house training programme and mentor scheme. A programme of continued professional education is in place, which caters for individual requirements. Full registration with the GMC is required and MLAs are expected to be licensed and to revalidate.

All you need to know to become a **Medicolegal Adviser for MPS**

Frequently asked questions

Do I need a legal qualification to be considered for an MLA position?

No, this is not a requirement. However, MPS expects all MLAs in training, who do not currently hold a legal qualification, to obtain one during their training. This would need to be approved by MPS, and would typically be an LLM in Medical Law or Medical Law and Ethics (or equivalent).

MPS supports MLAs in training to obtain such a qualification through study leave and the payment of course fees.

How are MLAs trained?

MPS provides in-house training that is regularly updated and reviewed. In the first six months, trainees work closely with a mentor and receive detailed training in key areas. Case and telephone advisory work is introduced during this period, with support and monitoring, until the MLA in training is confident and competent to handle matters independently.

Training will normally last three years, and MLAs are expected to mark the end of their training by obtaining membership of the Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine (MFFLM) by examination.

Do I have to stay on the register, and have a license to practise?

Yes. MPS requires all MLAs to be registered and licensed with the General Medical Council. All three medical protection organisations are designated bodies, with their own responsible officer. MLAs must undergo annual appraisal, and are subject to revalidation.

Can I work and train part-time?

MLA training takes three years, and this is usually on a full-time basis. Some MLAs, who have finished their training and have post-training experience, do work on a part-time basis. However, the nature of MLA work is such that the handling of complex cases is difficult unless the MLA works for the majority of the average week.

Can I work from home?

MPS does allow and facilitate home-working. This has to be on a planned basis; and in line with current business needs.

MLAs in training are expected to work from the office, apart from those occasions where it would be more practical for them to work from home on a particular day.

How does MPS recruit, and how often?

MPS advertises in the BMJ and also through the careers section of the MPS website. Recruitment takes place on an “as required” basis; whilst it is difficult to say with any certainty, the pattern over the last decade has been for a recruitment process roughly every 12-18 months.



What are the pay and conditions?

In broad terms, a fully-trained MLA's salary is comparable to the NHS consultant salary. There are a variety of other benefits, including:

- six weeks' annual leave
- car allowance
- private health insurance
- generous defined contribution pension.

Can I speak to an MLA about a position, or arrange to visit your offices?

We receive a significant number of inquiries on a regular basis, so offering to speak to everyone individually is quite a challenge. Consequently, as a matter of fairness, we deal with all these contacts equally by providing standard written material, including these FAQs. This means that we are unable to provide individual discussions, or arrange visits to our offices.

"With ever increasing pressure on doctors with regards to standards of care, patient expectations and ever decreasing resources, it is nice to be able to make a difference to doctors who are going through perhaps some of the most stressful times of their lives. It feels good to be able to give something back to the profession and acquire a great deal of knowledge and experience in the process."

Zaid Al-Najjar, MLA with general practice specialty (previous role: full time GP)

"The job is intellectually stimulating and every day brings a new challenge. The satisfaction of helping colleagues through the most difficult and challenging times of their careers is unparalleled. You feel like you are standing up for your colleagues at a time when they may feel isolated and afraid. I am proud of what MPS stands for and its doctors for doctors ethos."

Pallavi Bradshaw, MLA with an interest in media (previous role: Ophthalmology Registrar)

"I enjoyed working as a GP and I acquired many skills that translate directly to the role of an MLA. I haven't regretted the career change as it has presented new and engaging challenges, and opened up opportunities that I wouldn't have pursued as a GP. I have spoken at national conferences, published articles in national and trade press, and have even been involved in live radio broadcasts."

Richard Stacey, Senior MLA with an interest in criminal cases (previous role: GP partner)



An example of a working week

	Morning	Afternoon
Monday	Accompany member to hospital trust investigatory meeting	Case work including review of new cases Two-hour session on MPS telephone advisory line
Tuesday	Tele-conference with member, and instruct solicitor preparing for inquest Two-hour session on MPS telephone advisory line	New cases allocation MLA weekly meeting Case work including review of new cases
Wednesday	Compose article for <i>Casebook</i> regarding medical negligence claims Case work	Meeting with MPS member and solicitor in preparation for disciplinary hearing New cases allocation and review
Thursday	Difficult cases forum with other MLAs – across all offices Prepare new instructions to external panel solicitor to assist member with response to GMC letter	New cases allocation Lecture on “Consent and Capacity” to consultant surgeons at Nottingham NHS Trust
Friday	Two-hour session on MPS telephone advisory line Case work, including telephone and written advice to member facing criticism from the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, and review of new cases from yesterday	New cases allocation and review Meeting with member, case manager and solicitor, expert surgeon and barrister regarding claim against member for alleged negligent surgical procedure, to help member produce a detailed statement

MPS



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Check out our current vacancies on our website to see if we are recruiting in your area

www.medicalprotection.org/uk/careers/current-vacancies

or contact us for further information:



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