



Dr Mary-Teresa Deignan

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Mary-Teresa Deignan is a leading junior in professional discipline.

She has a 360 degree view and experience of professional discipline with a particular focus on the healthcare sector acting on behalf of individuals and regulators, particularly the GDC, GMC and NMC and sitting as a legal assessor for the GPhC and as clerk to the Professional Conduct Committee of BACP. Her experience covers the acute sector, the community, care homes and prisons.

Mary-Teresa also represents healthcare professionals at inquests; she is currently representing a midwife in the inquest into the death of an infant at East Kent Hospitals Trust.

As Specialist Regulatory Advocate in Health and Safety and Environmental Law Mary-Teresa has been instructed by the CQC and NHS England.

In each practice area, Mary-Teresa's ability to identify and focus on key points in both her written and oral advocacy, to provide advice even if unwelcome, combined with her client care skills make her an advocate of choice when there are complex or cutting-edge legal issues or factual disputes.

Expertise

Professional Discipline

Mary-Teresa is instructed in some of the highest profile, complex and sensitive cases and those with related cases in the family courts or where there has been an inquest.

Notable Professional Discipline cases

GMC v B [current]

Representing Dr B in legal argument within regulatory proceedings on the admissibility of documentary and video evidence which had been created by Dr B's wife for the purposes of family court proceedings but who



has refused to engage in the regulatory proceedings.

GDC in GDC v M [current]

Instructed by the GDC. M is a dentist whose treatment of a single patient spiralled seemingly out of control to include a range of alleged misconduct including dishonesty and sexual misconduct.

GDC v Rigby [2021]

Instructed by the GDC. A number of facts were found proved arising from dental treatment provided to a patient with a number of morbidities whilst the dentist also provided the patient with 'holistic therapy'.

GDC v Doane [2021]

Regulatory proceedings took place after an inquest into the death of a patient after 10 teeth were extracted during one one appointment.

GMC v Kumar [2020]

Representing an orthopaedic surgeon charged with dishonestly failing to disclose, in response to an express question on an application form, that he was being investigated by the GMC for sexually motivated conduct towards a patient, an investigation which was subsequently the subject of findings and for which he was suspended for 12 months. Mary-Teresa was instructed to represent Dr Kumar a combined hearing of the review of the suspension order and the substantive hearing of the dishonesty charges; the dishonesty charges were admitted. The MPTS found misconduct but that the doctor showed significant insight into his dishonest conduct and found impairment solely on the ground of public interest and imposed a suspension order for two months with no review.

NMC v Lockett [2019-2021]

Representing Helen Lockett. Ms Lockett was Director of Nursing and Executive nurse at Liverpool Community NHS Trust during a period of national cut backs. The trust was selected as a 'pilot' for the introduction of Foundation Trusts and faced national and local difficulties in recruiting nurses and amalgamating services creating huge pressures on the provision of services. In a hearing over more than 90 days a number of allegations were found provided and Ms Lockett was suspended for 12 months, a result attracting significant political comment. On review of her suspension order, Ms Lockett was permitted to return to practice.

NMC v X [2017-2021]

Representing Ms X both at her initial hearing and at the remitted hearing following a successful appeal by

the PSA. Complex legal argument on the admissibility within regulatory proceedings of evidence adduced within and findings made of non accidental injuries in family proceedings. No current impairment found.

NMC v Short & 5 Others [2018]

Representing Emma Short who was the Service Manager for an Inpatient Unit for people with learning disabilities where in 2013 CS had an epileptic fit in the bath and died. After an inquest in 2015 Ms Short faced a number of charges, including contributing to or causing death. Systemic failings within Southern Health were exposed and after 45 days no charges were found proved.

GDC v Lovat [2018]

Is the taking of impressions for the manufacture of mouthguards the practice of dentistry?

NMC v Christine Ann Hayes; NMC v Susan Reynolds and Heather Hayward; NMC v Rachel Pritchard, Daphne Richards, Susan Greening, Tembakasi Moyana, Rachel Tanta and Beverley Mock [2014-2015]

These three separate high profile proceedings followed on from police investigation 'Operation Jasmine' into abuse and neglect in care homes in Gwent; a number of deaths resulted, many as a result of pressure sores. Mary-Teresa was instructed by the NMC in all three cases. As Director of Nursing for Caerphilly Local Health Board, Ms Hayes was ultimately responsible for the provision of funded nursing care, and she was struck off after the panel found she had failed to appreciate the impact of breaches of contract and other factors on the provision of nursing care. Susan Reynolds and Heather Hayward were the Manager and Assistant Manager of the Grosvenor nursing home and were also struck off. The other six registrants worked at the Brithdir home in different capacities, and, with one exception, were either cautioned, suspended or struck off.

NMC v Professor Sir George Castledine [2014]

Mary-Teresa was instructed by the NMC in these widely-reported proceedings. While working at the Institute of Ageing and Health in the West Midlands the Registrant was asked by members of her family to provide bereavement counselling to a recently widowed woman in her eighties. The Registrant was found to have acted in both a sexually motivated way and financially motivated way and was struck off.

Health & Safety

Mary-Teresa is valued for providing early and ongoing advice on the merits of resisting decisions made by the CQC and NHS England.

Notable Health & Safety cases

Abdollahi v CQC [2021]

Breaches of regulations 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 20, 21 and 22 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014, a number during the current pandemic. Cancellation of registration upheld.

Berry v NHSE [2021]

The restoration of a GP to the NHS Performers List pursuant to the NHS (Performers Lists) (England) Regulations 2013 raising the question whether registration can be subject to conditions.

AZJ Healthcare v CQC [2020]

Numerous breaches of regulations 12 and 17 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 in a community dental practice. Cancellation of registration upheld.

Universal Care v CQC [2020]

Universal Care provided personal care and support for people in their homes. There had been six adverse CQC reports over 6 years highlighting repeated concerns about standards of care. Cancellation of registration upheld.

Appointments

- Specialist Regulatory Advocate in Health & Safety and Environmental Law, Panel B
- Legal Advisor to the General Pharmaceutical Council
- Clerk to the Professional Conduct Committee, British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy

Awards

- Lady Margaret Templeman award, Middle Temple (1991)
- Benefactors Law prize, Middle Temple (1990)
- Butterworths Law prize, The Queen's University of Belfast (1987)

Education

- Bar Vocational Course, Inns of Court School of Law (1991)
- Certificate of Academic Legal Studies, Queens University of Belfast (1989)
- D, Queens University of Belfast (1984)
- B.Sc., Aston University in Birmingham (1980)

Memberships

- Association of Regulatory & Disciplinary Lawyers
- Health & Safety Lawyers Association

Recommendations

- "She is a forensic advocate. Tenacious, works incredibly hard and will put all the preparation in to get the best possible result." "She is very responsive and invested in getting the result the client wants." **Chambers & Partners 2022, Professional Discipline**
- "A forensic and tenacious advocate. She is meticulous, thorough and puts her all into every case. She is indefatigable in her pursuit of obtaining the best outcome for her clients." **Legal 500 2022, Professional Disciplinary & Regulatory Law**
- Ranked Tier 1 in Professional Disciplinary & Regulatory Law. **Legal 500 2021**
- "Methodical and unwavering with great attention to detail." **Legal 500 2020, Professional Disciplinary & Regulatory Law**
- "Methodical and unwavering with great attention to detail." **Legal 500 2019, Professional Disciplinary & Regulatory Law**
- "Courteous, fair and very tough – always well prepared prosecuting or defending." **Legal 500 2018, Professional Disciplinary & Regulatory Law**
- "Her arguments are succinct and pithy." **Legal 500 2017, Professional Disciplinary & Regulatory Law**