



SUPPORTING WOMEN WITH INJURIES FROM CHILDBIRTH

Webinar: 'OASI and Disability: Employment, Rights and Assessment'

Sarah Embleton

Sarah has been involved in MASIC since the start, having been a member of the very first focus group of affected mothers, which was set up by Professor Michael Keighley prior to MASIC being established in 2017.

Sarah suffered an undiagnosed 3C tear following the birth of her son in 2011. By the time it was diagnosed, the treatment options were limited. Sarah manages her condition with a combined approach of a sacral nerve stimulator, diet, exercise and Imodium.



The injury and its impacts greatly affected all aspects of Sarah's life, including her physical and mental health and well-being, her relationships and her work, and led to her leaving her career as a lawyer. It continues to affect her day to day life - from things like needing to know where the nearest loo is, to not being able to leave the house on some days, to watching what she eats and drinks.

Sarah is now a self-employed workplace mediator and investigator and a proud MASIC Ambassador & Trustee

Joanna Prance

Jo is a Fitness Consultant with over 15 years' experience teaching fitness and working in healthcare. She is a former NHS specialist cardiac rehabilitation instructor and now runs a private practice as a Personal Trainer and Yoga Instructor.

She has a specialist interest in Women's Health and has comprehensive knowledge and expertise in pelvic floor dysfunction acquired personally and professionally.

Jo experienced a traumatic childbirth in 1998, the severity of her tears and injury was missed. Subsequently, she endured over two decades of treatments, interventions, and multiple surgeries, including a colostomy.

Shortly before her stoma surgery in 2019, she found The MASIC Foundation and became an Advocate in 2020.

Jo is dedicated to raising awareness about the life-changing impact of severe childbirth injuries, to improve the outcomes and support available for affected individuals and their families. She established and organises the MASIC OASI Birth Injury support group in Guildford, Surrey.

She leads an active lifestyle and has taken on personal challenges to fundraise for MASIC.





Jasmine Patel

Jasmine Patel is a senior solicitor, with over 10 years of experience, working in Leigh Day's Employment and Discrimination team. She advises clients from a broad range of sectors on their employment issues including advising on disability discrimination, pregnancy and maternity discrimination, race and sex discrimination, unfair dismissal and whistleblowing. She is experienced in all stages of litigation from commencement to settlement and she regularly settles cases for substantial compensation.

Leila Moran

Leila Moran is a solicitor in Leigh Day's Employment & Discrimination team. She advises individuals who have experienced issues at work including discrimination, harassment, whistleblowing detriment and unfair dismissal. Leila has experience assisting individuals at every stage of their employment journey. This includes helping to navigate internal workplace dispute processes (such as grievances and disciplinaries), negotiating favourable settlements and litigating claims in the Employment Tribunal.

Before working in the Employment & Discrimination team, Leila spent 4 years working as a paralegal and then trainee in Leigh Day's Clinical Negligence department. During this time, her work included assisting injured mothers in their clinical negligence claims.



Leinnie

Leinnie is a mum to one who was injured during her son's birth nearly 7 years ago. At the time of her injury, she was working at North West Ambulance Service, but was unable to return following maternity leave. Her life was thrown upside down from the injury & her wife also had to leave her job to become Leonnie's carer. She is now self-employed, running a personalised clothing business alongside her wife, which makes life with her injuries a lot easier than being employed.

Leinnie had repair surgery earlier this year, which has unfortunately worsened her symptoms, so is currently undergoing tests for further surgery.

Sanja Strkljevic

Sanja is a Partner at Leigh Day. She has been representing Claimants in clinical negligence litigation since her qualification as a solicitor in 2004.

Sanja deals with a wide range of cases involving medical care provided to patients at NHS and private hospitals, by private doctors and GPs, resulting in serious injury or death.

Sanja has a particular interest in obstetrics and gynaecology and issues affecting women's health. She has significant experience acting for women who have been injured in childbirth and who have suffered perineal tears. She also acts for children who have sustained brain injuries at or after birth, including those who have been subsequently diagnosed with cerebral palsy. Sanja also represents parents who have suffered the loss of a baby because of stillbirth or neonatal death.

Sanja's other areas of expertise include claims relating to amputation and acting for bereaved families in investigations of death of a loved one, including at Coroner's Inquests.

Sanja is the Co-ordinator of APIL Child Injury Special Interest Group. She is recognised in Legal 500 as "Next Generation Partner." She has provided comment in the media on issues relating to women's health and clinical negligence litigation.



Gabriela

Gabriela is a MASIC Ambassador and Council member. She is a Personal Stylist & Founder of Glow In Style www.glowinstyle.com which helps expecting, nursing Mums and beyond. Generously, 5% of purchases go to the MASIC Foundation.

Gabi knew that something was wrong after her first child was born by forceps delivery. Initially she was diagnosed with a second-degree tear (affecting the muscle of the perineum and the skin, usually only requiring suturing). Following discharge from hospital she experienced episodes of faecal incontinence and increased bowel urgency which deteriorated.

Initially she was reassured that all she needed to do was to work on her pelvic floor muscles. Subsequent investigations however identified that she had sustained a much worse third-degree tear as opposed to a less serious second-degree tear. By this

point the damage was irreversible and she had lost the window of opportunity for an effective surgical repair. She went on to have two further children by caesarean section.

Gabi tells of her experience in deciding to make a claim for medical negligence.



Professor Swati Jha

Professor Swati Jha is a Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist and a subspecialist in Urogynaecology working at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals. She is research active and has over 150 publications, multiple successful research grants and has written 3 books two of which are on Medicolegal issues in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. She is on the editorial board of the TOG journal (RCOG CPD journal) and Best Practice in O and G and is a spokesperson to the RCOG on Pelvic Floor Health.



Anna Clements

Anna Clements is The MASIC Foundation's Events/Education and Support Services Manager.

She is dedicated to supporting women and their families with birth injuries. Anna received 4th-degree tears after the birth of her third child in 2008. The injury was picked up immediately after the birth of her daughter and she was taken to theatre for the repair. A Sacral Nerve Stimulator (SNS) was implanted after many invasive tests found that the muscles were not responding to any other treatments.

Recently she has started to co-apply for research grants to increase knowledge within the primary care settings about the devastating impact that these injuries have on a woman's life, both physically and psychologically. She is passionate about finding ways for women to cope with the taboo disability and helping to bring awareness to a mainstream audience.

Anna has recently undertaken training on advising clients on how to apply for Personal Independence Payments (PIP).

Professor Bob Freeman – Consultant Urogynaecologist, Plymouth University Hospital & Education Chairman for the MASIC Foundation

As a consultant in Plymouth, he set up, and now jointly runs a clinical and research Urogynaecology unit. Several trainees have obtained research degrees (MD's and a PhD) from Plymouth University. The unit is an RCOG approved centre for subspecialty training and is BSUG accredited.

With others, he produced: the RCOG/RCM 'OASI Care Bundle', the UR-CHOICE risk assessment tool and Episcissors-60.

Previously a scientific editor for the International Urogynecology Journal and the BJOG.

Helped form the British Society of Urogynaecology as founding Secretary (2001-2006), and Chairman (2006-2009).

He was President of the International Urogynecological Association (IUGA) (2014-2016).

He is now Education Chairman for the MASIC Foundation.

