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## Giving expert advice

November 1998

Some doctors have sought advice from the GMC about being asked to enter into contracts as expert witnesses which require them to remain silent about the details of the case if it is settled out of court. [Good Medical Practice](#) makes clear that doctors must make the care of patients their first concern. These are not duties that can be signed away in any contract or agreement. If doctors involved in legal cases learn of information which indicates that, unless further action is taken, patients will continue to be at risk, they are obliged to act on it. Signing a contract which may require silence will, in those exceptional cases where patients may continue to be at risk, put a doctor in the difficult position of having to break that contract in order to satisfy their professional, ethical obligations.

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