

Medico-legal support

What is it and why does it matter?

Medicine is a sensitive and complicated field to work in. You will be working under pressure and often having to make difficult decisions about the best course of action for patients in your care. So, even if you are following all the principles of *Good Medical Practice* (our core guidance on what patients and the profession believe makes a good doctor), it is likely that someone will complain about you at some point in your career.

NHS indemnity schemes only provide support for clinical negligence claims. They won't provide you with legal advice and support in disciplinary matters or if you are referred to us to investigate your fitness to practise medicine.

Medico-legal support is the broader expert advice on all legal matters to do with medicine. You may find it helpful to have this kind of support in place if a complaint is made about you. This is because, even if a complaint is unfounded, it may need to be investigated further which can be very stressful.

Who provides medico-legal support?

There are a number of organisations that can help you with medico-legal problems. Some are medical defence organisations, others are insurers.

All provide indemnity for damages and costs resulting from judicial decisions or settlements out of court and in medico-legal cases undertaken on their behalf, notably accusations of professional negligence. In addition, some also offer advice on legal, ethical and other problems arising from your practice, including the GMC investigating allegations

that you have failed to follow the principles of *Good Medical Practice*. Each organisation offers a different combination of benefits so you will need to decide which, if any, is right for you.

We have included on the back of this factsheet a list of all the providers that we are aware of, but others may also be available. You can get further information about the combination of benefits each offers directly from these organisations.

Medical and Dental Defence Union of Scotland

Mackintosh House
120 Blythswood Street
Glasgow G2 4EA

Tel: 0845 270 2034
Web: www.mddus.com

Medical Defence Union Limited

230 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8PJ

Tel: 0800 716 376
Web: www.the-mdu.com

Medical Protection Society

33 Cavendish Square
London W1G 0PS

Tel: 0845 605 4000
Web: www.mps.org.uk

Premium Medical Protection

25 Watling Street
London EC4M 9BR

Tel: 0845 308 2350
Web: www.premiummedicalprotection.com

Towergate MIA

Kings Court
London Road
Stevenage
Hertfordshire SG1 2GA

Tel: 01438 739 839
Web: www.towergatemia.co.uk