

## **Healthy woman dies after series of errors during routine surgery**

Dominic Fairclough, Managing Partner in the Clinical Negligence and Personal Injury team acted as the advocate for the family of Joanna Henderson at the inquest at Westminster Coroner's Court on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2012. Joanna, a fit and healthy 41 year old tragically died following a routine operation to remove her gallbladder at Chelsea and Westminster hospital on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2011.

During the surgery key vessels supplying the liver were severed with the result that Joanna subsequently deteriorated post operatively. Despite being transferred to a renowned Liver Unit at Kings College hospital where Joanna underwent further surgery her condition deteriorated and she died on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2011.

The Coroner, Dr Shirley Radcliffe recorded a narrative verdict in which she confirmed that "post operatively there was a lack of clear communication between the surgeons and the intensivists regarding the risks of liver ischaemia and its monitoring. Joanna was discharged from Intensive Care in the early afternoon of 18<sup>th</sup> August 2011 and a blood sample which would have given an indication of potential liver ischaemia was not acted upon and rather than be readmitted to Intensive Care and undergo an urgent CT scan she remained on the surgical ward."

The inquest was reported in the Times on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012 and the family are now considering whether to pursue a civil claim against the Trust.

For more information please contact:

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