A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A MEDICO-LEGAL ADVISER

The role of a medico-legal adviser is a challenging one that combines experience of medicine with the application of legal principles. A medico-legal adviser must have the confidence and knowledge to assist and support doctors in the multiple arenas where a practitioner’s professionalism is at risk of criticism.

1. **Assisting and advising doctors facing a wide range of medico-legal difficulties including:**
   - Investigations by registration bodies such as the General Medical Council
   - Coroners’ inquests and fatal accident inquiries
   - Disciplinary processes
   - Criminal investigations
   - Complaints

2. **Participate in the handling of clinical negligence claims and other legal challenges:**
   - Quickly assimilate large volumes of complex clinical information
   - Assess vulnerabilities in the defence of a matter
   - Liaise closely with solicitors and independent experts
   - Contribute to conferences with barristers and the rest of the defence team
   - May also be present at subsequent trial or hearing to support and advise the doctor

3. **Providing advice to doctors on medico-legal and ethical issues:**
   - On the phone, in writing or in person
   - Advising on clinical risk management
   - Writing articles or other materials related to medical law and ethics
   - Educational and training activities

4. **Advocacy:**
   - Written and oral
   - Supporting and representing members in a variety of forums including local hearings involving issues such as clinical errors or performance concerns

**Professional Characteristics:**

- Come from a wide range of clinical backgrounds
- Likely to have had at least five years of post-registration experience in addition to holding a relevant qualification in medical law
- Encouraged to sit the Membership of the Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine Parts 1 and 2 exams once sufficiently experienced
- Possess stamina, self-confidence and an eye for detail; be analytical with good communication and time management skills