



Working together
to succeed

Primary Healthcare

We try very hard to understand fully what is going on within the Primary Care Sector, and to provide legal services and products which precisely meet the requirements of GPs in a challenging environment.

How we can help you?

Veale Wasbrough Vizards has developed a national reputation for providing specialist advice to GPs and now acts for over 350 practices throughout the country. We have followed closely the development of contracts, GMS, PMS and APMS and more recently practice-based commissioning and provision of enhanced services. As the NHS changes from a provider to a commissioner of services we have been fully involved in the evolution of suitable business models and the contracting framework.

We are known as a firm which sets out to concern itself with the developments which affect the Primary Healthcare Sector and which understands the challenges and changes which the ordinary GP has to confront.

Partnership agreements

Central to the services we provide to GPs is the preparation of partnership agreements to suit the individual needs of each practice. We have introduced new agreements into well over 200 different practices.

Because of the depth of our experience in this field, there is rarely an occasion where the requirements of a particular practice cannot be met. Our recommended basic agreement is continually updated to reflect changing circumstances.

Many new intending partners seek advice from us on the existing agreement of the practice which they are looking to join.

Please contact Oliver Pool if you would like more information.

Surgery ownership and development

The most important individual transaction which many GP practices undertake is the acquisition of new surgery premises, or the refurbishment or expansion of their existing site. We have dealt with in excess of 80 such developments in recent years.

These have included developments carried out by GP practices themselves and schemes where development has been undertaken by a 'third party' developer, coupled with lease-backs to partners.

We have constructed suitable structures for the development and ownership of premises by more than one practice. We are particularly experienced in leasehold arrangements between GP practices and related occupiers such as pharmacies, dentists and other ancillary users.

Of real importance are the arrangements which each partnership makes in regard to the transfer of property interests and related bank finance on the retirement of existing partners, or the introduction of new partners.

Please contact Ben Willis if you would like more information.

Regulatory work

From April 2012 the Care Quality Commission will extend the scope of its Regulatory remit to all GPs (indeed some will need to be registered before this date). For the first time GPs will be regulated by an independent body. The entire health and social care sector will be governed by a single integrated regulator under one set of essential standards of quality and safety. This sector is also subject to the new vetting and barring scheme.



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What others say...

"The firm can also boast niche property expertise, where Ben Willis is considered top of the field for healthcare property development schemes."

Chambers guide to the legal profession

"Oliver Pool is a pleasure to work with."

Legal 500

"Your advice has been speedy and most helpful and it has been a pleasure working with you."

Doctor from a local practice

"Derek Bellew demonstrates his great knowledge in primary healthcare matters and receives great credit for his straightforward and uncomplicated approach."

Chambers guide to the legal profession



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Our team of Regulatory lawyers are experienced in dealing with the CQC in the social care sector and will monitor changes as they are announced for GPs. We will report to practices, can assist in practices' preparations for and applications for registration and in post-registration dealings with the CQC.

Commercial arrangements

Since 2004, the global sum has failed to keep up with inflation, and practices are increasingly looking to non-core services to augment their income.

Practices are becoming more like businesses, and need legal answers to commercial questions.

- Should we set up a separate company to hold our new pharmacy?
- Should we consider collaborating with our neighbours over particular services?
- Can our new ventures be inside the NHS Pension scheme? Other healthcare clients are seeking to develop new services and products to sell to PCTs across the country, or considering joint ventures with commercial/private providers. Such activity needs to be considered from a legal perspective at an early stage, and properly documented. We can help you with all of these issues

Please contact Oliver Pool if you would like more information.

Employment

Employees form an integral part of the success of a GP practice, not only affecting the quality of service being provided to patients but also efficiency, profitability and overall atmosphere in the workplace.

Managing employees, and the work they do, is therefore of paramount importance to all primary care providers. We can advise on both day-to-day and longer term strategic human resource issues for all levels of staff.

The introduction of the GMS contract has given practices more scope to organise their human resources in the most efficient and profitable way, and we regularly advise GP practices in identifying and implementing opportunities arising from this, such as making changes to the terms and conditions of their employees or restructuring their workforce.

Many practices are also seeking advice from us on the implications of GPs holding salaried rather than self-employed status.

If you would like to receive regular updates via our weekly employment law ezine, please go to www.vwv.co.uk/site/briefings/ and fill in the request.

Services for the individual

Aside from the specialist services that we offer to GPs, and the Primary Care Sector generally, we also have extensive resources in providing legal services to the individual in residential conveyancing, personal tax planning and wills.

Please contact Oliver Pool if you would like more information.

About the Primary Healthcare team

Ben Willis – Partner

Ben is the head of the Healthcare Sector at Veale Wasbrough Vizards and a member of the Real Estate Group, specialising in commercial property. His main areas of expertise are in property management and property development in the Healthcare Sector. He has built up considerable experience in the field of medical surgery development having been involved in the acquisition and development of over 80 new surgeries both freehold and leasehold.

He and his team also deal with numerous general property management matters for GPs, such as partner retirements, remortgages, acquisitions, disposals and leases.

Oliver Pool - Associate

Oliver is an associate in the Healthcare team, who deals with all aspects of partnership work. He also takes a particular interest in commercial arrangements. He advises on a range of issues from PMS/GMS contracting, to arrangements between private providers and NHS bodies.

Derek Bellew – Consultant Solicitor

Derek specialises in giving advice on partnership agreements, and the structuring of arrangements for the holding of surgery premises. He has specialised in advising GPs for over 20 years. He has been Chairman of the firm and previously, Managing Partner. This background of experience assists in giving the right pragmatic advice to GP Partners.

In Chambers 2003 to 2009 editions, he was one of only three solicitors in the whole of the UK to be awarded the coveted status of Leading Individual in the field of Medical Partnership. Derek is a Fellow of the Institute of Arbitrators.

Your Primary Healthcare contacts

Partnership and Commercial

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