

CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD

Pro Bono and Employability

Pro Bono ac Cyflogadwyedd

THE NHS CONTINUING HEALTHCARE PRO BONO SCHEME

HANNAH MARCHANT

DIRECTOR OF EMPLOYABILITY AND CO HEAD OF CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION & PRO BONO
SCHOOL OF LAW AND POLITICS, CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

TALKING POINTS

1. Brief history of the NHSCHC Pro Bono Scheme
2. Overview of the current scheme
3. Has the change been successful?

WHAT IS NHSCHC?

*“NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC) means a package of care that is arranged and funded solely by the National Health Service (NHS) where the individual has been assessed and found to have a **‘primary health need’** as set out in this National Framework”.*

Department of Health and Social Care National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare and NHS-funded Nursing Care July 2022
(Revised)

PRO BONO 2007 - 2019

Partnership between Cardiff Law School and
Hugh James solicitors

Pro Bono scheme assisted the families of
nursing home residents to recover care
home fees that arguably should have been
paid by the NHS

Helped to recover for our clients more than
£300,000 in wrongly-paid nursing home fees

Introduction of more stringent time limits in
NHSCHC cases in Wales caused problems
for the Pro Bono scheme

In 2019, the Pro Bono scheme stopped
taking on new clients



NHSCHC PRO BONO FROM 2019

- Students now work on fictitious client files - reviewing medical records, drafting letters to 'clients' and other organisations, and developing their advocacy skills through participating in a mock Independent Review Panel
- There are 6 x 2-hour sessions which take place over a 6-week period
- 4 sessions take place online and 2 take place in person
- During the 2024/25 academic year, 80 students participated in the scheme



ONLINE EXERCISES - EXAMPLES



risk assessing initial enquiries and deciding whether a CFA would be offered



drafting letters to GPs, care homes, LHBs and clients



reviewing medical records and producing chronologies



preparing memos to supervisors in relation to the merits of the potential claim



preparing written submissions for use in negotiations

HAS THE CHANGE BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

Initial concern was that a scheme which did not involve “live” clients may be less attractive to students

2024/25 – 80 students took part, and we received more applications than we had available places

Feedback received from students has been extremely positive

Some say their involvement in the scheme has helped them to secure a PPY, a paralegal role following graduation and, in some cases, a training contract

**HAS THE
CHANGE BEEN
SUCCESSFUL?**

Seemingly 'yes'. However....

Is there an argument that this is students ticking a pro bono box for their CVs at the expense of having deeper, meaningful experience of real client work?

If this model is more efficient, are we putting our real client schemes at risk?

The scheme taught me a lot about client care and how a case is managed from start to finish, which has been incredibly useful in my current role. These insights were crucial as I continued my journey with Hugh James, securing a place on the Summer Placement Scheme, which ultimately led to an offer for a training contract starting in September 2022.

Rebecca Morgan



Thanks to the scheme I successfully acquired a role as paralegal with Hugh James. Working within the team was very insightful and taught me valuable skills for the legal profession. I am now a Trainee Solicitor back home in Swansea.

I wouldn't be the trainee solicitor I am today without the scheme it really helped me to progress and offered me so many opportunities.

Jessica Langan



We worked on mock cases, reviewed medical records, and applied the National Framework for Continuing Healthcare to real-world scenarios. The experience sharpened my analytical and decision-making skills, while reinforcing the importance of equitable access to care. A highlight of the scheme was participating in a mock Independent Review Panel and attending the Hugh James Cardiff office to deliver a presentation. I have since become a trainee solicitor at Hugh James and my first seat was in the Nursing Care department.

Jessica Adams

