

Sam Harmel

Year of call 2013

✉	sloxtan@kingschambers.com
☎	0345 034 3444



Prior to being called to the Bar, Sam qualified as a Solicitor and then Solicitor-Advocate at a leading national law firm (Partner and Head of Advocacy 2006 – 2015) and a Partner Member of an international law firm (2015 – 2018). He was called to the Bar in 2013 and practised as in-house Counsel before joining Kings Chambers in 2018.

Sam has over 20 years of experience of inquests and for the last two years has practised exclusively in this field. Sam also deals with any related Civil or Human Rights Act claim.

Sam regularly represents organisations (including NHS Trusts, care homes and G.P. practices) as well as individual G.P.'s, Consultants and support workers. Sam also represents bereaved families.

Sam receives instructions from leading firms in this field including Clyde & Co, CMS, Farleys, Hempsons, Hill Dickinson, Irwin Mitchell, Ison Harrison, JMW, RPC, Slater Gordon and Watson Woodhouse and directly through the MDU, MDDUS and NMC.

Sam has presented Properly Interested Persons in a wide range of cases such as Article 2 inquests (including a 6-week inquest before a jury, culminating in a conclusion of unlawful killing/suicide); an inquest into a death from anaphylaxis following the use of hair dye; infant deaths, road traffic deaths (one of which involves whether a defective police car engine contributed to the death of a Police Officer); deaths following police contact; deaths relating to defective products; suicide within the community and within mental health units and hospitals.

Sam understands the importance of becoming involved at the earliest stages of an inquest so as to determine the framing of the inquiry to address the concerns of his client. He will then continue to support his client through any related civil claim which may then arise.

Expertise

Inquests

Sam has regularly represented bereaved families and other Properly Interested Persons at inquests for 18 years. Appearing across the country in a broad spectrum of cases, including: Article 2 inquests (including a 6 week inquest before a jury, culminating in a conclusion of unlawful killing/suicide); an inquest into a death from anaphylaxis following the use of hair dye; infant deaths, road traffic deaths (one of which involves whether a defective police car engine contributed to the death of a Police Officer); deaths relating to defective products; suicides; and deaths within the context of care homes and hospitals.

Sam understands the importance of becoming involved at the earliest stages of an inquest so as to determine the framing of the inquiry to address the concerns of his client. He will then continue to support his client through any civil claim which may arise following an inquest.

Sam's extensive experience of assisting bereaved families mean that he is acutely aware of and sensitive to the needs of his clients, especially in cases involving the deaths of children or the suicide of a loved one.

Notable Inquests cases

Acted for a mother in a neonatal death with concerns relating to community midwifery care

Acted for a Social Worker following the death (due to alcoholism associated with self-neglect) of an elderly service user with capacity

Acted in an Article 2 case for a Council following the death of A due to septic shock. Issues surrounding staff shortages, failure to test for UTI and failure to transfer to hospital

Acted for a Trust in an Article 2 case (with a Jury) following the death of B in a Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit. Issues surrounding risk assessment, observation levels and the appropriateness of response

Acted for the Family of D, a paranoid schizophrenic, who was threatening imminent self-harm which was escalated to the police. Issues surrounding appropriateness of response and local authority involvement were considered at the hearing

Acted for a Nurse employed by a care home who was on duty when a resident fell and sustained a traumatic intracerebral haemorrhage and fractured left hip, leading to her death. Concerns were raised surrounding the timeliness of transfer to hospital

Acted for the Family in an Article 2 case of a detained patient who died following the excessive use of propranolol which he managed to smuggle onto a mental health ward

Acted for two G.P.'s who, in the eight months preceding D's death, had had a number of appointments with him and diagnosed him with heart failure. During D's life it was not known that as well as heart failure he also had coronary artery atherosclerosis. His symptoms were managed as if they were symptoms of heart failure. The Coroner concluded that it was not possible to say on the evidence whether, had both conditions been known about, the outcome would have been different

Acted pro-bono for the Family of an individual who died following a single stab wound. Concerns were raised as to whether it was self-inflicted, accidental or caused by a third party.

Acted for a Trust in an Article 2 case (with a Jury) following the death of C, a detained patient who had, for many years, suffered with chronic health conditions. On transfer to a less secure unit, C suddenly and unexpectedly deteriorated and sadly died of complications from COPD. Concerns raised surrounding fitness to be transferred and observation levels

Acted for a Trust in an Article 2 case (with a Jury) following the death of B in a Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit. Issues surrounding risk assessment, observation levels and the appropriateness of response

Acted for a Family in which the deceased died when he was crushed by a large reversing wagon. Sam is being led in the subsequent civil claim by Kings Counsel

Memberships

- Lincoln's Inn

Qualifications

- Legal Practice Course: Manchester Metropolitan University (2002 – 2004)
- Common Professional Examination, College of Law (2000 – 2001)
- BA in English Literature & Philosophy(2:1): University of Manchester (1997 – 2000)