

Matthew Barnes

Call: 2000



Matthew Barnes has a civil and public law practice focused on all aspects of medical law, including clinical negligence, inquests, regulatory, and public law. He is a highly recommended junior by both Legal 500 and Chambers & Partners and was awarded Clinical Negligence Junior of the Year at the Chambers UK Bar Awards 2023.

In clinical negligence, his practice includes work for both claimants and defendants, covering a range from low value claims up to the highest value catastrophic brain injuries.

In inquests, he acts for both families and medical staff, and has experience of difficult and high profile cases. By way of example, in the last year, he has been instructed in approximately 15 inquests including acting for the family in a recent inquest into the death of Mr Andrew Pimlott, who died in circumstances where a police officer fired a taser at him whilst he was covered in petrol.

He is regularly instructed to act for Defendants in regulatory proceedings, including the GDC, the GMC, the NMC, the British Acupuncture Council, internal NHS Trust disciplinary hearings, and the Performers Lists for GPs and dentists. Generally, he acts for defendants, although he has prosecuted in cases involving removal from the Performers List. He has experience of cases involving criminal charges, and has been instructed to defend doctors in the magistrates' court and crown court.

He has extensive experience of public law, as is demonstrated by the reported cases set out below, and in particular has been involved in challenges to treatment decisions and appeals from the GDC and GMC.

"Matthew is extraordinarily intelligent and cuts through to the heart of the issues in any case. He is a forceful and eloquent advocate and a formidable opponent."

Legal 500 2025

"He is really tenacious, highly experienced and a silk in the making."

"He has excellent attention to detail and his advice cuts through everything with practical steps to take to progress matters."

Chambers & Partners 2024

"Calm, skillful, erudite, and laser-focused when cross-examining witnesses."

Legal 500 2024

"Matthew is excellent; in conference, in his written work and at trial."

Chambers & Partners 2024

Clinical Negligence

In clinical negligence, his practice includes work for both claimants and defendants, covering a range from low value claims up to the highest value catastrophic brain injuries.

"Matthew has an amazing ability to get to the heart of the case. He is really tenacious, highly experienced and a silk in the making." (Chambers & Partners 2025)

"Matthew is a very experienced and safe pair of hands. He is very good with clients and with details." (Chambers & Partners 2025)

"Matthew is extraordinarily intelligent and cuts through to the heart of the issues in any case. He is a forceful and eloquent advocate and a formidable opponent." (Legal 500 2025)

"Matthew cuts through complex issues to reach the key point and is robust and persuasive in negotiations." (Chambers & Partners 2025)

"Matthew is a very impressive advocate who should be feared by the other side." (Chambers & Partners 2025)

"He has excellent attention to detail and his advice cuts through everything with practical steps to take to progress matters." (Chambers & Partners 2024)

"Matthew is excellent; in conference, in his written work and at trial." (Chambers & Partners 2024)

"Smooth as you like – Matthew is a silk in waiting." (Chambers & Partners 2024)

"Matthew is willing to fight every corner. He is a formidable negotiator and he is a very effective cross-examiner." (Chambers & Partners 2023)

"A phenomenal advocate who is really sharp, quick-thinking and very empathetic to clients." (Chambers & Partners 2022)

"He's an excellent barrister – very forensic and great at tactics." (Chambers & Partners 2022)

"Astute, quick-thinking and tenacious." "He is very impressive in court and in cross-examinations." "He is excellent, particularly in terms of his advice on tactics and in negotiations at settlement meetings." (Chambers & Partners 2021)

"An excellent advocate who gets to the nub of the case very quickly." (Legal 500 2021)

"He is skilled at keeping discussions on track on the issues that matter." (Legal 500 2019)

"Tenacious and robust on his feet." "An exceptionally bright mind blended with great pragmatism and tactical thinking." (Chambers & Partners 2018)

"An excellent practitioner and a very, very good advocate." "He has an exceptionally bright mind blended with great pragmatism and tactical thinking." (Chambers & Partners 2017)

"A really pugnacious advocate" and "an excellent junior who managed some difficult issues with tricky experts extremely well in conference." (Chambers & Partners 2016)

Selected Cases

- **KXM v Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University LHB (2020).**
- **SM v KB (2020).**
- **ES (MS) v Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (1) East & North Hertfordshire NHS Trust (2) Hertfordshire Constabulary (3) (2020).**
- **RH and Ors v Doncaster and Bassettlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (2020).**
- **RD (GD) v Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust (2020).**
- **Awofodu v University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust (2019).**
- **Dr M v Barking, Havering & Redbridge University NHS Trust (2019).**
- **Carter v Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (2019).**
- **Watts v North Bristol NHS Foundation Trust (2019).**
- **Sales-Lucas v Sheard (2019).**
- **Holmes v West London Mental Health Trust (2018).**
- **Watts v The Secretary of State for Health [2016] EWHC 2835 (QB).**
- **William Long v Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust [2016] EWHC 0251 (QB).**
- **Julie Connolly v Croydon Health Services NHS Trust [2015] EWHC 1339 (QB).**
- **R (St Mary Magdalene Academy) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2015] EWHC 725 (Admin).**
- **R (JB Jamaica) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2015] 1WLR 1060.**
- **Marion Miller v Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust [2014] EWHC 3772 (QB).**
- **Ahmed Oukhellou v Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Foundation Trust [2014] EWHC 2303 (QB).**
- **Simon Samuda v Secretary of State for Work & Pensions [2014] 3 All ER 201.**
- **R (Gibson) v Secretary of State for Justice [2014] 1 WLR 2658.**
- **R (JB Jamaica) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2014] 1 WLR 836.**
- **Asmat Ali Shah v North West London Hospital NHS Trust [2013] EWHC 4088 (QB).**
- **Michael Gordon Matthews v Buckingham Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust [2013] EWHC 753 (QB).**

Inquests

In inquests, he acts for both families and medical staff, and has experience of difficult and high profile cases. By way of example, he has been instructed in complex inquests, including acting for the family in a recent inquest into the death of Mr Andrew Pimlott, who died in circumstances where a police officer fired a taser at him whilst he was covered in petrol.

He is recommended in the Legal 500 as *'he has a natural talent for advocacy and getting to the nub of complex issues with ease.'* Whilst Chambers & Partners 2021 say *"he is experienced in healthcare regulation."* *"He offers very solution-based advice and takes a common-sense approach."*

Professional Discipline & Regulation

He is regularly instructed to act for Defendants in regulatory proceedings, including the GDC, the GMC, the NMC, the British Acupuncture Council, internal NHS Trust disciplinary hearings, and the Performers Lists for GPs and dentists. Generally, he acts for defendants, although he has prosecuted in cases involving removal from the Performers List. He has experience of cases involving criminal charges, and has been instructed to defend doctors in the magistrates' court and crown court.

"Matthew is absolutely fearless in taking cases all the way to trial. I've always ranked him highly." (Chambers & Partners 2025)

"He is able to adapt his advice depending on the client's needs and priorities. He is commercially astute, thorough and detailed." (Chambers & Partners 2025)

"A fantastic junior." (Legal 500 2025)

"He produces sensible pragmatic advice, underlined with a real knowledge of the work. Matthew makes the most difficult cases easy." (Chambers & Partners 2024)

"Matthew has incredible tenacity paired with excellent judgement and realism. His mastery of the detail and effortless advocacy allow him to collapse cases of the most dense evidential and technical complexity, involving the most awkward and seemingly unwinnable of issues." (Chambers & Partners 2024)

"Matthew is top notch – thorough, clever, and an excellent strategist." (Chambers & Partners 2024)

"Matthew is an excellent advocate, whose attention to detail is second to none." (Chambers & Partners 2023)

"His ability to see around corners and his deftness in responding to all manner of strategic twists and turns is both reassuring and impressive in equal measure." (Chambers & Partners 2023)

"Very good at looking at the bigger picture. He gives sound, practical advice." (Chambers & Partners 2022)

"He has expert knowledge of the law and is an extremely persuasive advocate." (Chambers & Partners 2022)

"He's excellent; an incredible advocate who's a pleasure to work with." (Chambers & Partners 2022)

"He offers very solution-based advice and takes a common-sense approach." (Chambers & Partners 2021)

"A very confident advocate with a lovely style that manages to get people on his side and that demonstrates his really detailed knowledge." "He was extremely pleasant and relaxed in his manner, which was very reassuring for the client." (Chambers & Partners 2018)

"Excellent on the papers, quick on his feet and a source of tactical advice throughout." (Legal 500 2018)

"He is a very relaxed yet direct advocate with a refreshing style. He's very good at identifying the approach that should be taken in a case and is an excellent strategist." (Chambers & Partners 2017)

Selected Cases

- **R (on the application of RB) v First-tier Tribunal [2010] MHLR 192**
- **R (on the application of O'Connor) v HM Coroner for the District of Avon [2009] EWHC 854 Admin**
- **Magdi Bassilious v GMC [2008] EWHC 2857 Admin**
- **R (on the application of Ross) v West Sussex PCT [2008] EWHC B15 (Admin)**
- **R(on the application of B) v South Region Mental Health Review Tribunal [2008] EWHC 2356 (Admin)**
- **R (Rogers) v Swindon PCT [2006] 1 WLR 2649**

Appointments

- Junior counsel to the Crown B Panel (2009-2014)
- Junior counsel to the Crown C Panel (2005-2009)

Awards

- Clinical Negligence Junior of the Year – Chambers UK Bar Awards 2023

Education

- MA, Bristol University (1997)