Darrel Crilley



Called: 1996

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Practice Overview

Personal Injury (Band 1)
Darrel Crilley is a specialist in catastrophic injury claims, especially those relating to the brain or spine. He regularly acts in industrial disease claims, amputations and cases involving accidents at work, including upper limb disorder and hand-arm vibration claims. He acts for both claimants and defendants.

Clinical Negligence (Band 1)
Darrel Crilley is well regarded by counsel and solicitors for his work on a range of clinical negligence matters, acting exclusively on behalf of claimants. He has acted in complex spinal cord injury claims and is well versed in cases involving the misdiagnosis of cancer.

Strengths:
"Darrel is very sensible and down to earth." [Chambers & Partners, 2027]
"Darrel is sensible, balanced, and forensic in his approach so that every issue is clearly and thoroughly explored anbd a robust case is presented." [Chambers & Partners, 2027]
"Darrel is a safe pair of hands when it comes to litigation, ensuring the clients' objectives are front and centre whilst ensuring no risks are taken in relation to quantum value and offers made." [Chambers & Partners, 2027]
“Darrel Crilley's place as a leading junior for complex brain injury work in Manchester is not in doubt. He challenges the evidence, adopts a sensible and progressive approach and adds clarity.”
“Darrel Crilley is a great barrister. His attention to detail is fantastic and he is not afraid to have a go. He is a guiding hand and a great advocate. He is a true team player.”
“Darrel is always extremely well prepared, and in court he is poised and his advocacy is both measured and persuasive.”
“Darrel is an impressive individual. He is a very efficient and shrewd opponent.”
“He is outstanding. He is a delightful opponent and he cuts to the case. Darrel knows exactly what he's doing. He is a really excellent barrister.”
“Darrel is fantastic with clients and he instils confidence.”

Legal 500
Personal Injury (2)
"Darrel is an outstanding barrister known for persuasive and tenacious advocacy and excellent advisory work, both written and in conference. He is routinely instructed on £1m+ cases and always delivers a stellar service. He is also very effective at JSMs and mediations." [Legal 500, 2027]
"Darrel is extremely adept on his feet."

PRACTICE AREAS

Personal Injury
Industrial Diseases
Serious Injury
Clinical Negligence

ASSOCIATIONS

Personal Injuries Bar Association

Personal Injury

Darrel is a true specialist in personal injury with two and a half decades of uninterrupted experience in this field. For the last 15 years his practice has not been diluted by other forms of work.

Within this particular sphere he has a truly balanced practice acting for Claimant's and Defendants in equal measure. He is noted for his willingness to immerse himself in unusual and technically difficult cases as a result of which he is regularly instructed to advise on professional negligence and awkward insurance coverage points.

He has acted in cases involving most kinds of injury over the last quarter century ranging from complex fractures, through chronic pain to more esoteric kinds of damage such as the acceleration of dementia. He has acquired regular experience of managing the outcome on both sides in pain cases. This includes both 'straightforward' cases of complex regional pain syndrome as well as more diffuse chronic pain cases wherein moderate or minor injury becomes psychiatrically perpetuated. He has particular experience in complex lower limb trauma and amputation.

Industrial Disease

Between 4 and 14 years call the core of Darrel's practice was a specialisation in Employer's Liability and Industrial disease litigation. He regularly delivered seminars and updates in both areas of work. During his first decade in practice, he was privileged to receive numerous and consistent instructions in Upper Limb Disorder and HAVS claims. He still retains interest in this area of practice.

Serious Injury

Over the last 15 years he has consolidated a practice which deals with injuries of the highest levels of severity expected to be handled by senior junior counsel. This experience has comprised:

(i) Amputation.
He has particular experience of lower limb amputation cases and has advised in several above and below knee cases in the last three years. He is thoroughly conversant with the appropriate experts to procure in such cases. He has advised in loss of upper limb cases and is familiar with the difficult prosthetics arguments they inevitably entail.

(ii) Polytrauma.
Darrel has acted for and against Claimant's who have sustained multiple serious injuries. He is now routinely instructed in such matters. He is able to advise on which experts to source and in which order of priority.

(iii) Traumatic Brain Injury
Increasing seniority has entailed far greater knowledge and experience of traumatic brain injuries than early years practice could ever permit. Competence in dealing with both moderate / severe brain injury and more subtle, mild-moderate cases where the presence of organic cognitive deficits is more debatable can be assumed.

Over the last 15 years weekly experience has been gained of dealing with the requisite experts in Neurology, Neuropsychology and neuropsychiatry. Darrel has a particular interest in the issue of mental capacity and its management within head injury litigation.

(iv) Spinal Injury
Darrel also undertakes work in a range of spinal injury cases involving Cauda Equine, arachnoiditis and complete spinal cord damage. He has been junior in tetraplegic cases and is versed in the complexities of the arguments over suitable care regimes.

Recent representative cases from 2020-2022:

McNeill v Chicken Villas Public liability claim arising from a wall collapsing onto Claimant's lower leg when aged 17. Below Knee amputation. Liability eventually apportioned 77.5/22.5 in C's favour. Claim compromised at JSM in late 2020 in the gross sum of £3.6 million. Crux issue concerned recovery of an Empower microprocessor foot with 6 year replacement costs of £90,000.

Aspinall v Posh Burnley . Severe traumatic brain injury to young male arising from public liability accident. C made a surprising recovery through determination and good rehabilitation. Claim focused primarily upon thwarted career progression in aeronautical engineering. Expected to live independently for the most part. Compromised at JSM in the gross sum of £1.1 million.

Nelson v Ullman. Moderate-severe TBI to a male pedestrian in his 50s following RTA when acting as a delivery driver. Liability in issue. Significant contributory fault inescapable. C was adjudged to have capacity but to be likely to need some significant ongoing support. Unlikely to work again. Compromised at JSM in late 2021 in the sum of £600,000 net of liability dispute and prior to the liability trial in early 2022.

Broughton v Esure. Damages case involving complex causation issues arising from the impact of liability admitted RTA upon fixation of C's spine earlier in her life. C was in her 50s. C's case was that she would have worked and lived independently despite her fusion/instrumentation had the RTA not forced revision surgery with more extensive fixation of the spine. She was forced to retire early from her university appointment, would now need adapted housing and had substantial additional care requirements. Matter did not settle at a JSM. D subsequently increased its offer. Compromised at £1.1 million.

Harris v Harris Claim by teenage female, 22 at settlement. Claim alleged likelihood of long-term inability to work on account of developing chronic pain variously diagnosed as fibromyalgia, somatoform disorder and simple central sensitisation. D's experts opined that C had an inherent likelihood of somatoform illness by reason of medically unexplained symptoms in formative years. D also asserted that a further programme of rehabilitation, notwithstanding passage of several years, still had a good prospect of reversing the abnormal illness beliefs/behaviour which underlay C's disability. At point of JSM C was unfit for work and it was uncertain whether or when she would return. Equally, she was heavily dependent upon both physical and emotional support which needed to be phased out under the initiative to correct her abnormal illness beliefs. The size of any ultimate award would be dependent upon outcome from the prolonged treatment. C elected to engage in a JSM before such treatment had run its course. Settled for £450,000 at JSM.

Sibley v Gill Moderate-severe TBI. Compromised at £2.6 million net of CRU and interim payments. Crux issues concerned whether case suitable for PPO's and the extent to which C needed extensive support package in larger, modified accommodation despite having comparatively little physical disability arising from the injury.

Clinical Negligence

Clinical negligence comprises a distinct part of his practice. His experience spans a wide array of subject matter

from routine diagnostic and treatment errors to the misdiagnosis of complex forms of cancer. He brings to this area of practice the cumulative insights of over 25 years. He has enjoyed being junior counsel in birth injury claims arising from clinical mismanagement of birth. His experience embraces acting in part 20 claims where the interrelationship between primary tortious damage and supervening clinical negligence is at the heart of matters.

Recent representative cases from 2020-2022:

Strafford v Haq Case concerned a fatal DVT resulting from inadequate examination of a lower limb lump. Breach of duty conceded over 6 years after events after inquest, criminal proceedings arising out of alteration of GP records and eventual GMC action against the relevant GP. Complex quantum case since the deceased was the sole, specialised carer for her young adult daughter who has serious neurological condition. Issues concerned recoverability of a full commercial care package and case manager to replace the services of the deceased. Quantum and multiplier for Deputyship costs in a FAA claim also be a live issue. Compromised in the sum of £1,050,000 following failed JSM.

Smith v various GP's. Claim arose from fatality resulting from delayed diagnosis of meningitis by either of two GPs who managed the Deceased before the infection caused profound neurological disability. Difficult breach and causation issues. Liability not conceded. Crux issue whether serious systemic illness distinct from a specific diagnosis of meningitis should have resulted in earlier emergency referral. Case compromised at JSM mid 2020.

Webb v Warrington and Halton NHS Foundation Trust Fatal Accidents Act claim arising out of deficient management of abdominal complaints. Liability eventually admitted. Case thereafter concerned two principal quantum issues. First, proof of the career pathway and promotions which the Deceased would have followed but for his death in his early 20s. Second, the ambit of the claim to depend upon his services for remainder of life. Claim compromised for £760,000 at JSM in February 2020.

Hardy v Doyle (1) Owen (2) Fatal Accident arising from alleged poor management of the deceased's chest infection complaints by two nurse practitioners at a GP practice over a 4-5 day period. Breach of duty contested. Key issue concerned the extent to which signs of underlying lower respiratory tract infection should have been identified and acted upon. Presentation of the Deceased was atypical of pneumonia on some of the days. Breach and causation required expert chest physician evidence along with nursing expertise. Claim compromised in mid 2020 at JSM without admission of liability in the sum of £520,000.

Directory Comments

Chambers and Partners 2025 (PI) - Band 1
Darrel Crilley is a specialist in catastrophic injury claims, especially those relating to the brain or spine. He regularly acts in industrial disease claims, amputations and cases involving accidents at work, including upper limb disorder and hand-arm vibration claims. He acts for both claimants and defendants.

"Darrel offers a calm and measured approach to complex areas of catastrophic injury. He is reliable and excellent in conferences and JSM. Darrel is well respected by those instructing and his peers."

"Darrel is very strong in dealing with cases where causation is in dispute and has a forensic eye for evidential detail. He is also very good at articulating this analysis."

"Darrel is always on top of his brief, extremely thorough and across the detail of any case. He brings excellent judgement and experience and is a reassuring presence on any case."

Chambers and Partners 2025 (Clin Neg) - Band 1
Darrel Crilley is well regarded by counsel and solicitors for his work on a range of clinical negligence matters, acting exclusively on behalf of claimants. He has acted in complex spinal cord injury claims and is well versed in

cases involving the misdiagnosis of cancer.

"Darrel is fantastic with clients. He is approachable, reliable and always provides excellent advice."

Chambers and Partners 2024 (PI) - Band 1
Darrel Crilley is a specialist in catastrophic injury claims, especially those relating to the brain or spine. He regularly acts in industrial disease claims, amputations and cases involving accidents at work, including upper limb disorder and hand-arm vibration claims. He acts for both claimants and defendants.

"Darrel is very skilled and capable of handling complex medical issues."

"Darrel's preparation is meticulous. He is hugely popular with clients for his commercial awareness and the strategic input he brings to his cases."

"He is extremely well-prepared and very strategically strong. He sees the bigger picture and has very good court presence."

Chambers and Partners 2024 (Clin Neg) - Band 2
Darrel Crilley is well regarded by counsel and solicitors for his work in a range of clinical negligence matters, acting exclusively on behalf of claimants. He has acted in complex birth injury claims and is well versed in cases involving the misdiagnosis of cancer.

"Darrel is an excellent all-round advocate. He is extremely knowledgeable, with an excellent tactical brain."

"His client care and ability to manage client expectations is great. He works well on difficult cases."

"He is always very well prepared and his technical knowledge is excellent."

Darrel Crilley is well regarded by counsel and solicitors for his work in a range of clinical negligence matters, acting exclusively on behalf of claimants. He has acted in complex birth injury claims and is well versed in cases involving the misdiagnosis of cancer.

"Darrel has a great manner with clients. He leaves no stone unturned in his analysis of cases."

"Darrel is very knowledgeable. He is always well prepared for conferences and turns work around quickly."
Chambers & Partners 2023 (Clin Neg) - Band 2

Strengths: "Incredibly bright and has a superb analytical brain. He thinks of things that solicitors may not have thought of." "Very authoritative, incisive in his questioning and not afraid to explore or consider unusual points when required to construct a case. He thinks outside of the box."
Recent work: Instructed in a fatal claim arising from the delayed diagnosis of meningitis by either of two GPs who managed the deceased before the infection.
Chambers & Partners 2022 (Clin Neg) - Band 2

Darrel Crilley is a specialist in catastrophic injury claims, especially those relating to the brain or spine. He regularly acts in industrial disease claims, amputations and cases involving accidents at work, including upper limb disorder and hand-arm vibration claims. He acts for both claimants and defendants.

"Darrel is commercially astute."

"His attention to detail is second to none."

"Darrel is a superb advocate."

Chambers & Partners 2023 (PI) - Band 1

Strengths: "He has a thorough, forensic approach." "Highly experienced, detailed, analytical and brilliant with clients." "Darrel is meticulous in his preparation and advice, often seeing a different angle to a case."
Recent work: Instructed in a public liability claim arising from a wall collapsing onto the claimant's lower leg when aged 17.
Chambers & Partners 2022 (PI) - Band 1

Well-regarded by counsel and solicitors for his work in a range of clinical negligence matters, including delayed diagnosis. He has acted in complex birth injury claims, among other cases.

Strengths: "He is very good at putting experts through their paces and is a very careful barrister who is always aware of the legal ramifications."
Recent work: Achieved a settlement of £850,000 for a patient in a difficult cauda equina case where initially no causation or liability were admitted by Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust.
Chambers & Partners 2020 (Clin Neg)

A specialist in catastrophic injury claims, especially those relating to the brain or spine. He regularly acts in industrial disease claims, amputations and cases involving accidents at work, including upper limb disorder and hand-arm vibration claims. He acts for both claimants and defendants.
Strengths: "He has a meticulous eye for detail." "An excellent advocate."
Recent work: Instructed in a case concerning a claimant who suffered a below-knee amputation following an RTA.
Chambers & Partners 2020 (PI)

"He is very thorough and understanding with clients." "He is well prepared, calm and assured."

Chambers & Partners 2019 (PI)

Well-regarded by counsel and solicitors for his work in a range of clinical negligence matters, including delayed diagnosis. He has acted in complex birth injury claims, among other issues. "Detailed examination of expert evidence." "Very thorough." "He is realistic and a good judge of cases."
Chambers and Partners 2019 (Clin Neg)

A specialist in catastrophic injury claims, especially those relating to the brain or spine. He is regularly in industrial disease claims and cases involving accidents at work, including upper limb disorder and hand-arm vibration claims. He acts for both claimants and defendants.
Strengths: "He has a very forensic mind and is a very savvy negotiator." "Intellectual, but compassionate with clients. He has an encyclopaedic and wide-ranging knowledge of personal injury."
Chambers and Partners 2018 (PI)