


The ventilator challenge

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Please note: the information contained in this legal update is correct as of the original date of publication.

The UK's response to the pandemic has seen an unprecedented level of cross sector collaboration to provide the NHS and care sector with what they need to deliver front line care and support. One of the stand out projects was the drive to increase the availability of ventilators at the point it was feared the NHS may be overwhelmed with Covid-19 patients. Senior Associate, [Nick Smee](#), tells us about how he supported a client participating in this challenge.

"Having learnt that one of our client's, GKN Aerospace, was taking part in the "Ventilator Challenge UK" project, we contacted them to see if we could help. Ventilator Challenge UK is the ground-breaking consortium of technology and engineering businesses working together to increase the manufacture of medical ventilators to the NHS in the fight against COVID-19. Our offer of assistance resulted in us supporting GKN on the project on a pro bono basis, including assistance with the suite of new contracts required to facilitate the project and advising on liability and health regulation risks. Given the urgent nature of the project, turnaround times were very tight and our support involved talking through various legal risks and contract drafting issues with the client by phone. The number of parties involved and complexity of the contractual structure also posed challenges.

The project was fairly unique in that it involved advising a client that is not part of the health sector on some of the health regulatory risks involved in building and supplying medical devices. This is where our firm's combination of expertise across both health and private engineering sectors came to the fore. We assembled a cross-sector team from our commercial and health departments (which included myself, [Helen Simm](#), [Rachel Lyne](#), [Selina Hinchliffe](#) and [Kulpreet Viridi](#)).

For someone used to advising private sector businesses, it felt great to be providing legal advice on a project aimed at helping people for the common good."

If you would like to discuss how we can help you with your health tech projects please contact [Clare Auty](#).

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