

# Balancing elite sport with a career in corporate law

03 May 2023  Vicky Tomlinson

This week we talk to Vicky Tomlinson, a newly promoted Partner in our Corporate Health team, about her work advising on transactions in the independent health and care sector and her career as an international touch rugby player.

Being involved in projects with a visible real-world impact is very important for Vicky. “I enjoy working within health because it provides a sense of purpose. There is a need for the services our clients are providing and being able to support them for the greater good is fantastic,” Vicky explains.

The healthcare system is facing significant challenges in the wake of the pandemic, compounded by wider pressures on the health sector. Vicky specialises in the independent health and care sector and is seeing increasing numbers of transactions in this area. “The healthcare market is increasingly popular with investors – we’re seeing a lot of interest in specialist care. I really enjoy the work, so it’s fantastic that this is my focus area,” Vicky tells us.

Coming out of the pandemic, funding pressures are affecting public health provision, which means the independent sector is becoming busier and more significant in the market. Recruitment continues to be a challenge for the sector, while technology is presenting health businesses with a lot of new opportunities. “Covid kickstarted a lot of investment in medical technology, including things that you might see at your GPs’ surgery, like virtual appointments and wards, and this will continue to grow in the near future,” she predicts.

Equally, with care home occupancy numbers returning to pre-pandemic levels and driving investment, Vicky believes we’ll continue to see an increase in corporate activity. She is also seeing growing numbers of start-ups entering the industry. “We work with a number of buy and build platforms in both the later living and specialist care sectors who are seeing long term investment opportunities.”

## Vicky Tomlinson

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Before specialising, Vicky was a generalist corporate lawyer, carrying out a range of transactions across various sectors. However, she has since felt the benefit of a sector specialism. “Browne Jacobson is known for its expertise in health and care and we have incredible credentials in the sector – when pitching to clients we can name several similar transactions that we’ve worked on,” she explains. “I’m very proud of helping to continue building the firm’s health and care brand in the independent sector.”

Vicky now advises on buying, selling and investing in health and care companies and also deals with some of the governance and regulatory aspects. “There is a broad spectrum of work within health and care and we provide a full service legal offering across all health and care sub-sectors, from later living, specialist care and clinics, digital, diagnostics and pathology and private acute hospitals,” Vicky says.

In addition to her work, Vicky and her team are also involved in health-related charities such as Championing Social Care, an organisation that runs events to support care workers. “Two of our partners are ambassadors for the organisation and we go to their events and help raise money,” Vicky explains. “It’s great to have the opportunity to really participate in the sector and support the people working in it.”

Life as a corporate lawyer is not commonly known for its flexibility. However, over the last few years Vicky has been competing as an international touch rugby player outside of work, winning major trophies for England. "I started playing socially in a local league about 10 years ago, and last year I represented England at the European Touch Rugby Championship where we won the gold medal."

Although preparation for the European Championships whilst balancing work was hard and involved training early mornings and at weekends, Vicky reports that this became easier thanks to more flexible working patterns introduced by the firm since the pandemic. "As long as you are organised and communicate well with your team, balancing a career in law and playing sport at a high level is possible, and I would encourage more people to do it," Vicky tells us. "The firm was great at supporting me and giving me the flexibility I needed to train and compete. Browne Jacobson really encourages you to bring your whole self to work and if you have an idea or a project, they will support you as much as they can."

Vicky was selected to defend this title as part of the squad for this summer's European Championships to be held in France but has had to put training on hold as she is expecting her second child in September. Instead, she is hoping to target a place in the final squad for next year's World Cup, which will be hosted by England.

## Key contact

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