

Spotlight on: Clare Shepherd, Senior Associate

30 May 2025  Clare Shepherd

[Clare Shepherd](#) is a Senior Associate within the Browne Jacobson health advisory and inquest team, who co-hosted our forum in March.

We talk to Clare about why she likes mental health and capacity law, interesting cases she's worked on (including one involving the Royal Family), and her 'fake' Northern Irish accent.

So, Clare, how did you get into mental health and mental capacity law?

As a trainee solicitor, I completed a seat in the financial Court of Protection team, which I really enjoyed. When an opportunity came up to move to a local authority to work on the welfare side of things, I was keen to take it! My uncle had a learning disability, so I was aware of all the challenges that came with that for both him and his family supporting him. That made it feel like an even more worthwhile move.

What do you like about working in mental health and mental capacity law?

The stories! I find mental health and capacity law fascinating for its legal and technical aspects, but the best part by far is the people and situations at the heart of the cases I manage. My day-to-day experiences are never dull!

What is your greatest professional achievement so far?

A few years ago, I worked on a serious medical treatment case involving a patient with cancer. She needed radiotherapy but lacked the capacity to make decisions about her treatment and was objecting to it.

During that case, I worked closely with the specialist cancer nurse, who was able to calm the lady down sufficiently for her to undergo the treatment. The case was reported, and the judge was very complimentary about the efforts of everyone involved, but singled out the cancer nurse for praise which was lovely to see.

The treatment also went really well, allowing us to provide a positive update to the judge, which I don't think happens too often. It was really interesting and rewarding to be part of that whole process.

What's something most people don't know about you?

Despite my pretty strong Northern Irish accent, I was actually born in Yorkshire.

What's the most unusual thing that has happened to you in your career?

Receiving a request for legal advice because a patient had absconded from a placement and had tried to break into the home of a senior member of the Royal Family... that definitely wasn't something I was expecting!

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