

February 2011

Hi,

February News Update.

The Department of Health provides £70m to help injured and ill return home

The Department of Health is providing £70 million from November to support around 35,000 people back into their homes after spending time in hospital after illness or injury. The 're-ablement' packages will give patients help and support in their homes for six weeks providing assistance such as daily visits and support. The Government hopes this will ensure that patients are looked after on their return home and reduce their chances of returning to hospital.

This is an issue which has long been ignored. Far too often the injured and ill have left a caring environment at Hospital to find themselves isolated and alone at home with no help. For those lucky enough to have Family and Friends to look after them there was some comfort but this could prove to be very limited.

The extra funding will be allocated to Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and will ensure services are in place by April 2011, when the NHS will pick up new responsibilities for patients' first 30 days at home after hospital discharge.

Hopefully this will prove to be the first step in addressing such an important issue.

DRUG WATCH

The diabetes drug Avandia (rosiglitazone), manufactured by GlaxoSmithKline, has been at the centre of controversy since research suggested patients using the drug are at a higher risk of heart attack and stroke. European regulator the European Medicines Agency (EMA) has now recommended that Avandia be withdrawn from sale in Europe, instructing doctors to prescribe alternative drugs to patients taking Avandia. In the US, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released a statement in conjunction with EMA stating that it had reached the same conclusion, and that while Avandia will remain on the market in the US, its usage will be significantly restricted to patients who cannot control their diabetes on other medications.

Avandia was once GSK's second-highest earning drug, but by the first half of 2010 Avandia sales had slipped to £321m, GSK said that it would work with both sets of regulators.

CASE CORNER

From the legal media we note an interesting case the facts of which are as follows:-

Lucy was born on 17 February 1985. Tragically she sustained brain damage at birth and as a result is seriously disabled. Her parents have devoted themselves to Lucy's care and wellbeing ever since. It was only when she was 19 and as a result of a chance comment that it occurred to her parents that it might be possible to secure compensation for Lucy's injuries.

The terms of settlement were approved in the High Court Queen's Bench Division based on a lump sum of £2.5 million and periodical payment of £240k p.a.

There are a couple of points arising worth mentioning in respect of this case.

The law and courts operate that a person must issue their claim within 3 years of the date of the accident otherwise the Claimant would lose their right to compensation. There are certain exceptions to the rule which are complex and time limits may even be shorter.

In Lucy's case she was fortunate. The important lesson is do not delay in bringing a claim otherwise you may regret it!

Even if you believe you are out of time on a claim take the advice of a solicitor.

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