



GROWN UP CONGENITAL HEART PATIENTS ASSOCIATION



Employment Legal Advice

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If you were born with a heart condition then it's possible that at some time in your life you may encounter problems when you first apply for a job or during your time in employment.

Good employers are supportive and understanding. However, unfortunately there are employers who are less helpful and you could find yourself or your loved one facing employment issues related to your condition.

Your legal rights cover many areas when you apply for a job and when you are employed and are likely to include

- **Wording on application forms, interview arrangements and proficiency tests**
- **Job offers and terms of employment**
- **Promotion, transfer or training opportunities and decisions on pay**
- **Work related benefits, including access to recreational facilities**
- **Redundancy and dismissal rights**
- **Discipline, grievances, bullying and harassment**
- **The organisation's sick pay policy and time off to visit your GUCH specialist cardiologist (there is a list of specialist centres on the GUCH website www.guch.org.uk)**

You may not know where to turn for Employment Law Advice or you may be concerned about the costs involved.

Here are a few basic points:

- **larger employers are often (although not in all cases) more able to cater for the needs of those who are affected by health issues;**
- **we would recommend answering any questions from your employer or prospective employer truthfully, although relevant questions may not be asked.**

If you find yourself heading toward a dispute or are already in one with regard to employment it can be difficult to know where to go for advice.

- **If you are a member of a Trade Union or trade association then they should be able to help. Contact them as soon as possible.**

- **Check to see if you have any legal cover through your household insurance. Some companies cover this service free as part of their insurance package, if so this can be a very cost effective way of obtaining long term support.**
- **If you aren't a trade union member and can't obtain free legal advice through an insurance policy or similar then GUCH PA has an agreement with a firm of solicitors who may be able to help. They have dedicated employment lawyers with specialist experience in disability discrimination law to provide telephone helpline advice.**

Employment and Disability Discrimination Legal Advice Telephone Service

Legal advice can be expensive if you have no other options, and therefore we are able to offer GUCHs an initial consultation free of charge courtesy of GUCHPA, subject to your details being on our database. If your details are not on our database this can easily be rectified by a telephone call to the GUCH Office on 01473 252007.

We are able to provide a referral to an experienced and qualified solicitor who will provide advice over the telephone free of charge to you for up to half an hour.

This is how it works:

- **Telephone the GUCH Office on 01473 252007 and tell them that you are experiencing problems in your job application or whilst in employment and you believe that this is related to your heart condition. The GUCH office can confirm it is something which the service might be able to help you with. Please note that the service is only available if you believe that your problems relate to your heart condition. If you've just been sacked for putting your bosses tie in the shredder we can't help!**
- **The GUCH Office will then check to make sure they have your full details or if they have not, go through the questions so that they can be entered on our GUCH database;**

- You will then be given a free-phone helpline number for our solicitors and a reference number to quote them. This will confirm to them that the charges for the initial consultation will be sent to GUCHPA;
- You telephone (or email if you prefer) the solicitors and receive advice on the situation in which you find yourself.

Our solicitors produce a quarterly monitoring report for us. This helps us to improve our service and to know what problems patients are encountering. Later we may be able to campaign on issues which we know are causing many GUCHs problems. Details of your case will be included on this, but specific information such as your name, address and your employers details will not held by us.

After your initial free consultation, you may wish to become a client of our solicitors who will offer a 'No Win No Fee' solution to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of access to justice. Of course that is entirely your decision, and if you wish to take further legal action or advice you are free to use which ever legal representative that you choose.

Finally please remember that GUCH has many active forums on its message board at www.guch.org.uk. The forums don't offer legal or medical advice, but it's sometimes helpful just to share experiences with other patients who may have been though a same thing. Similarly our free phone helpline 0800 854759 can offer a listening ear (though again our helpine doesn't give legal or medical advice).



Helpline: 0800 854759

www.guch.org.uk

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