

# Expert Witness

Lisa Goudy is a case manager who also works as a care and occupational therapy expert witness for Jane James & Associates. Here, she shares more about what her role involves



**Lisa Goudy**

### **CAN YOU PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOUR CAREER JOURNEY?**

When I was about 16 years old, I wasn't sure what I wanted to do in terms of a career, I knew I wanted to do something medical and work to help others, but I wasn't sure what that 'looked like'.

I was sitting in the career's library at school, flicking through the pages of a brochure and read about physiotherapy and thought "that looks interesting" and then right on the opposite page was information about occupational therapy. I had never heard of it, but quickly decided that it ticked all the right boxes for me. I quickly embarked on work experience at Poole General Hospital, gained my 'A' levels and never looked back.

I qualified as an occupational therapist in 1995, I studied at St Loye's College in Exeter and was the second cohort of students to undertake a degree program in occupational therapy, it had been a diploma for a long time.

In 1995, I started my career at Salisbury District Hospital, embarking on a rotational post. I spent a number of months in different clinical areas. I gained experience working on the Duke of Cornwall regional spinal injuries unit, neurorehabilitation, elderly care, general surgery and orthopaedics and acute mental health.

To further my career, I moved to London and worked in senior therapy positions including in a brain injury rehabilitation unit, stroke rehabilitation unit and in intermediate care settings, all were very much rehabilitation focused.

Around 2003, I was head hunted into a London-based case management company and have spent the rest of my career to date working as a case manager.

I was introduced to JJ&A by another of their experts. He happened to be working with one of my case management clients who had a brain injury, as their treating occupational therapist, which he did alongside his expert work. Suffice to say, I sat an interview and the rest is history.

### **CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR ROLE AT JJ&A AND WHAT IT INVOLVES?**

I started working with JJ&A in January 2020, as a care and occupational therapy expert witness I provide Part 35 compliant reports to guide the court in the matter of quantum for care, occupational therapy, aids and equipment. By doing this I assist the court in quantifying how much the care, occupational therapy, aids and equipment component of the overall claim will be over the claimant's predicted lifetime.

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My role involves accepting instructions, reading evidence (sometimes lots!), visiting and undertaking a detailed home assessment of the claimant, writing a comprehensive report of my assessment findings, my opinions and my recommendations. I provide reasonable costs for those recommendations I've made and my recommendations are underpinned with the other expert evidence I have been provided with.

The expert witness role also involves attending conferences with my instructing solicitors and the barrister of the case, during which my report is >

reviewed, and I am questioned about it, for example I might be asked to consider other scenarios or solutions on which I am asked to give my opinion.

I am expected to undertake a joint discussion with my opposite number and discuss how we can narrow the gaps between our opinions should we disagree or where our costs perhaps differ.


Finally, and at some point, I'm likely going to have to attend court as an expert witness, where I would be cross examined on my report. I have not had to do this yet, but I feel it is just a matter of time when you work as an expert!

**IN WHAT WAYS WOULD YOU SAY THE ROLE OF A CASE MANAGER ALIGNS WITH THAT OF AN EXPERT WITNESS?**

I would say that fundamentally both expert and case management roles have the same aim, which is to put the injured party back to how they would have been but for the injury, both roles work with the same outcome in mind.

I would also say that roles align when it comes to undertaking a robust assessment of the injured party. Both the expert and the case manager need to be able to provide a comprehensive assessment of the individual and report their findings accurately and in a non-biased way.

Also, within those reports both the expert and the case manager need to be able to make justifiable recommendations in relation to the injured parties needs and will need to draw on similar skills to do so. The main difference in this regard, is that the expert will make recommendations and provide

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costs for the remainder of the injured parties predicted lifespan and the case manager will typically make recommendations with associated costs typically in six to 12 month periods of an injured parties life, but the skill set required is much the same.

Both the expert and the case manager need to be effective communicators and be competently able to justify their recommendations and be able to respond to challenges about their recommendations from others involved in the case. This is equally important in both roles.

There are likely to be many more ways in which the roles align, suffice to say that having case management experience really does lend itself well to working as a competent expert witness.

**WHAT DREW YOU TO WORKING WITH JJ&A?**

I was introduced to JJ&A by one of their other experts. At that time, it was explained to me that JJ&A were a professional group of people who were highly supportive of the experts that worked with them, and this is what I wanted. Being new to a work role, I wanted to work with people who knew what they were talking about, produced a highly professional product but were supportive of their experts to get to that point, and JJ&A ticked all of these boxes.

**CAN YOU SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH JJ&A...**

I have thoroughly enjoyed working as part of the team at JJ&A. The management team are extremely supportive, very 'human' and approachable should you need to ask for help. I genuinely feel that they would not leave any of their experts 'high and dry' in a situation which they were unsure of; they provide robust in-house training sessions and support their experts to do what they need to do and do it well.

It feels like one big family at JJ&A, even though we are spread out geographically, the team remains cohesive and wanting to be part of something good.

I have had plenty of expert work, both defendant and claimant instructions, and the team at JJ&A understand that I have a sometimes, pressured workload generated from my case management caseload and they take this into account when timescales are set for the submission of my expert reports. I really appreciate this, as striking a balance between the two is a skill set that needs to be learned and only comes with experience.



**WHAT MESSAGE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR ANY CASE MANAGERS CONSIDERING JOINING THE JJ&A TEAM?**

**Get in touch!** Don't let those nerves hold you back, you won't feel nervous by the time you've spoken to someone in the team!

Expert work is not for everyone and that is a reasonable comment to make, but you never know until you try, and JJ&A will give you all that you need to make an informed decision regarding whether expert witness work is for you.

You can find out more about Jane James & Associates (JJ&A) at [JaneJamesAndAssociates.co.uk](http://JaneJamesAndAssociates.co.uk).

