

Tribunal Circular

16 July 2024

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To: MPTS Associates

CC: MPTS Staff
GMC Legal

MPTS Support Service

This month, we are pleased to announce the launch of our new MPTS Support Service. Unlike our previous 'Doctor Contact' service it will provide assistance at both the pre-hearing and during hearing stage for both virtual and in person hearings.

The aim of the new pre-hearing support is to help registrants feel as confident as possible to prepare and present their case at their MPT hearing. This will involve our team providing helpful and practical information, for example about the hearing process and the venue.

When hearings convene, we are able to:

- provide information or highlight relevant guidance including providing a 'lay' explanation of the hearing process

- signpost to organisations who may be able to provide more specialist advice or assistance to meet the needs of the registrant.

Who provides the service?

The MPTS Support Service will be provided by MPTS staff.

What will the service *not* provide?

The MPTS Support Service is unable to provide the following:

- ▶ Legal advice – we are unable to provide legal advice to registrants about their case. However, we can signpost to other services that may support or advise.
- ▶ Counselling or any other form of health-related support – we will be compassionate in our discussions with registrants and will listen and try to alleviate anxiety about what will happen at a hearing, but we are not trained to offer counselling or similar support. Where such needs are identified, we can signpost to services that may support with this.
- ▶ Witness support- where a witness has been called by a party, we expect that any support needs the witness may have will be provided by their legal representative. Where a witness is called by a self-represented registrant, we can provide limited support during the hearing.
- ▶ Ongoing support once a hearing has concluded, but where a need is identified, we will endeavour to signpost a registrant towards other support that may be available.

Process

- ▶ If a registrant requires assistance, they can contact us directly in the following ways:
- ▶ By emailing mptssupport@mpts-uk.org
- ▶ By phoning 0161 240 7178 and leaving a voicemail. We will return the call.
- ▶ Through any interaction with the MPTS or GMC where the registrant asks for hearing support.

If we identify during a hearing that there may be support needs, we will liaise with the registrant during a pause in proceedings.

The support we provide is confidential, but in some circumstances, we may need to share information to other individuals; for example, if there are safeguarding concerns or new information which may impact the ongoing proceedings is disclosed.

Kind regards

Tribunal Development Section

0161 240 7292

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