

Leila Benyounes

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AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Clinical Negligence, Inquests & Inquiries, Personal Injury

Leila is a specialist in Inquests and Inquiries, Clinical Negligence and Serious Injury.

Ranked as a leading junior in Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners for Clinical Negligence and Inquests and Public Inquiries, she represents both Claimants and Defendants which include private clients, public authorities and government departments.

Leila has a special interest in coronial law and is appointed as Assistant Coroner in two coronial areas. She has been appointed to the Attorney General's Treasury Counsel Panel A since 2010.

Leila regularly acts for interested persons in high profile, media sensitive Article 2 jury inquests.

Leila is currently instructed on behalf of the Surviving Victims in the Nottingham Attacks Public Inquiry.

"Leila is excellent counsel. She has fantastic advocacy skills" [Chambers and Partners, 2026]

"Leila has an excellent grasp of the facts and medical terminology in cases, deals with expert witnesses effectively, and is diligent and tenacious" [Legal 500, 2026]

"Leila instils huge confidence and is caring and empathetic, which is exactly what you need in difficult cases working for bereaved families" [Chambers and Partners, 2025]

"Leila Benyounes is extremely assured and very well respected in inquests. As an assistant coroner, she also brings that specialist insight and knowledge to the case" [Chambers and Partners, 2025]

"Leila is a real asset to her Chambers. She is fantastic with the client and families, dealing with inquests in a very sensitive and understanding way" [Chambers and Partners, 2025]

"Leila has an excellent, tactical and pragmatic approach to litigation. She is wonderful with clients and puts them at ease". [Legal 500, 2025]

"Her expertise in inquests and inquiries feeds into her strong clinical negligence practice. Her work covers obstetrics and birth injury cases, delayed treatment and diagnosis and surgical negligence". [Chambers and Partners, 2024]

"Leila is excellent with clients and her advice is thorough. Her advocacy is excellent. She offers very high levels of service and ensures her advice is given in a timely manner". [Chambers and Partners, 2023]

"Leila is well versed in coronial law, and her experience is such that she easily engenders the confidence of the tribunal, be that the presiding coroner of the jury. She is always on top of her brief, and has a strong but measured and

pragmatic approach to her advocacy". [Legal 500, 2023]

"Leila Benyounes leads the inquest group in chambers. As a member of the Attorney General's A Panel, she is frequently sought after to handle Article 2 jury inquests, particularly those arising from hospital deaths or involving sensitive mental health issues". [Chambers and Partners, 2023]

"Leila is an excellent tactician. She has great technical knowledge and brilliant client care skills". [Legal 500, 2023]

"She is extremely well organised, extremely thorough and will explore every area of a case. She is responsive, attentive, and a fantastic communicator". [Chambers and Partners, 2022]

"She does not back down in the face of adversity. She is extremely approachable and makes those that she is working with, whether it be those instructing, the expert or the client, feel at ease". [Legal 500, 2021]

Leila sits on the Personal Injury Bar Association (PIBA) Executive and EDI Committees. She has served as Vice President of the North Eastern Circuit Women's Forum and as President of the Leeds and District Medico-Legal Society.

Leila is appointed as a Recorder in Crime on the North Eastern Circuit and as a Barrister Member of the Bar Tribunal and Adjudication Service (BTAS).

Leila is a keen runner and regularly participates in races to raise money for charity. She regularly takes part in the Great North Run, fundraising for Diabetes UK and Bowel Cancer UK. She has taken part in the London Marathon raising money for a Yorkshire charity which helps to support children with severe disabilities, PhysCap. Other races include Leeds Half Marathon held in support of the MND Association, the Rob Burrow Centre for Motor Neurone Disease Appeal, and the London Landmarks Half Marathon to raise funds for the Child Brain Injury Trust.

Leila is also a tenant at Parklane Plowden Chambers where she is Head of the Inquests and Inquiries Team.

Clinical Negligence

Leila is ranked as a leading barrister in Legal 500 for Clinical Negligence.

Representing Claimants and Defendants, Leila is regularly instructed to:

- Advise on prospects
- Advise on quantum
- Conduct conferences with medical experts and clinicians
- Draft pleadings
- Attend JSMs and mediations
- Attend trials

Case Examples

- Advised in conference with medical experts and clinicians in a claim arising out of local anaesthetic toxicity following elective circumcision surgery resulting in cardiac arrest and an induced coma.
- Attended PTR in a serious injury claim following a fatal RTA. D1 brought contribution proceedings against the NHS Trust for clinical negligence in relation to C's injuries sustained in the RTA. Advised on liability, drafted agenda for experts' joint meeting and attended remote settlement meeting.
- Drafted proceedings and the Schedule of Loss in a claim arising out of negligent breast augmentation surgery in which liability was denied until proceedings were issued and served.
- Advised on quantum and drafted the Schedule of Loss in a dependency claim arising out of a failure to make an urgent referral for treatment.

- Advised on prospects and quantum after representing a family at an inquest in a claim arising out of the development of deep vein thrombosis following routine knee replacement surgery (60-year-old man). Narrative conclusion at the inquest which found that there was a failure to provide anti-coagulant therapy which was causative.
- Drafted proceedings in a claim involving negligent dental treatment when a dental instrument broke and a piece was left within the Claimant's root canal which caused a chronic infection and required surgical extraction of the tooth.
- Advised on liability and quantum and drafted the Schedule of Loss in respect of claims arising out of a baby's death shortly after birth due to hypoxia in labour caused by meconium aspiration syndrome. Claims on behalf of the estate and the mother and father as primary and secondary victims. Represented the family at inquest where the coroner concluded that there were failures in foetal monitoring and had national guidance been followed, an earlier delivery would have taken place. The Trust made an early breach of duty admission and settlement of all 3 claims was eventually achieved.
- Advised in conference with medical expert, drafted Particulars of Claim and Schedule of Loss in a claim arising out of a negligent surgical treatment where a colostomy was formed incorrectly requiring emergency surgery, additional procedures and causing the development of a hernia and fistula. Case settled following service of proceedings.

Inquests & Inquiries

Leila Benyounes leads the Inquest Group in Chambers and specialises in inquests and clinical negligence. As a member of the Attorney General's A Panel, she is frequently sought after to handle Article 2 jury inquests, particularly those arising from hospital deaths or involving sensitive mental health issues.

Strengths: "She is extremely well organised, extremely thorough and will explore every area of a case." "She is responsive, attentive and a fantastic communicator." Chambers & Partners 2022

Leila frequently conducts inquests arising out of medical treatment, road traffic accidents, accidents at work and industrial disease. She represents families, individuals and public bodies and frequently acts for interested persons in high profile, media sensitive Article 2 jury inquests. Leila regularly appears on behalf of the HM Prison and Probation Service in complex lengthy inquests arising out of deaths in custody attracting significant publicity and media attention.

Leila gave her Presidential Lecture to the Leeds and District Medico-Legal Society from her extensive experience appearing in inquests entitled 'A Practical Guide to Inquests'. She also regularly gives training on the subject of inquests and coronial law and Article 2.

Recent Inquest Examples

- Represented the family of a 15-year-old girl that was killed during a joy riding journey in a vehicle driven by her 17 year old boyfriend. A conclusion of unlawful killing was secured.
- Represented the family of a baby that died shortly after birth due to hypoxia in labour caused by meconium aspiration syndrome. The coroner found that there was a failure to provide foetal monitoring in accordance with national guidance and there should have been an earlier delivery, had the CTG been interpreted correctly.
- Represented the family of a 60-year-old man who had sustained a head injury following an unwitnessed fall and a subsequent head injury after a second fall at hospital. A narrative conclusion was secured with findings that the hospital had failed to provide appropriate care.
- Represented the MOJ in an Article 2 jury inquest arising out of a death in custody in which the deceased died from a rare medical condition which had been treated whilst in prison. Conclusion that the prison and health authority had provided appropriate care to treat the condition.
- Represented the MOJ in an Article 2 death jury inquest arising out of a death in custody in which the deceased suddenly collapsed after being searched upon returning to the prison. Found that the death was due to natural causes and the prison officers had carried out skilful attempts to resuscitate.
- Represented a care home in an Article 2 jury inquest where the deceased, who was subject to a Deprivation of

Liberty Safeguarding Order (DoLS), died from choking on food. Narrative conclusion was given and no Regulation 28 report to prevent future deaths.

- Represented a Probation Officer in an Article 2 inquest arising out of a murder in the community after the Defendant had been released from custody on licence following a conviction for murder in respect of his ex-partner. Narrative conclusion was given.
- Represented the MOJ in an Article 2 jury inquest arising out of a self-inflicted death while the deceased had been the subject of an ACCT due to identified risks of self-harm and suicide. Narrative conclusion was given with no criticism of the prison discipline staff in the management of the deceased under the ACCT process.
- Represented the family of a 49-year-old man who died as a result of an undetected aortic dissection due to the failure to correctly interpret two aortograms. A full admission of liability was made the day before the inquest accepting that the deceased's death would have been avoided. The inquest proceeded and the Coroner made a Regulation 28 report to prevent Future Deaths directed to the relevant NHS Trust.

Personal Injury

Leila is instructed by Claimants and Defendants at all stages of litigation. She has significant experience in dealing with fatal accident claims, often representing Interested Persons at inquest prior to the claim. Leila is regularly instructed in serious and catastrophic injury cases where there are complex rehabilitation needs and expert evidence from multiple disciplines. Leila conducts expert conferences, costs and case management conferences and settlement meetings and mediations.

Case Examples

- Representing the Claimant in a MIB untraced driver claim where the Claimant sustained a brain injury.
- Led in a High Court case which involved a subrogated claim for a contribution following a settlement of £1.7 million in which the Claimant was rendered paraplegic in a road traffic accident.
- Led in an appeal to the Court of Appeal following a finding that the Claimant did not suffer pre-existing Undifferentiated Somatoform Disorder but suffered a Chronic Pain Disorder attributable to injuries sustained to his back in a road traffic accident.
- Successfully obtained permission to resile from a pre-action admission of liability in a high value serious injury personal injury claim where no new evidence had been obtained.
- Advising on quantum on behalf of the estate of a young father who committed suicide as a voluntary patient.
- Achieved settlement for a Claimant with serious injuries sustained in a road traffic accident who was not able to pursue her intended career as a teacher and complete teaching training following university.
- Advising a Defendant company after representing the company in an inquest arising out of an accident at work in which the deceased sustained a fall from height.

Directories

Chambers and Partners (2026) – Clinical Negligence (Band 2) – “It is excellent to have Leila supporting a case. She has a forensic mind and provides excellent advice.” “Leila was instructed on a complex clinical negligence matter. She is extremely thorough, helpful and has placed the client at ease at all times.” “I’ve instructed Leila on a very sensitive case. She has guided the client through some difficult issues; she’s firm but sensitive to client’s emotions and rigorous in her analysis.” “She has a gentle manner with the client and is able to get to the heart of the issues with experts. I have been impressed with the way that she has dealt with such difficult cases.”

Chambers and Partners (2026) – Inquests & Public Inquiries (Band 2) – “Leila is excellent counsel. She has fantastic advocacy skills.” “I had a positive experience with Leila. She is very compassionate and understands the overall outcome the clients are trying to achieve.” “Leila Benyounes provides very thorough advice and is approachable.”

Legal 500 (2026) – Inquests and Inquiries (Tier 1)

Legal 500 (2026) – Clinical Negligence (Tier 2) – “Leila has an excellent grasp of the facts and medical terminology in cases, deals with expert witnesses effectively, and is diligent and tenacious.”

Chambers and Partners (2025) – Clinical Negligence (Band 2) – “Leila is an excellent counsel with a vast knowledge and a wealth of experience to advise and assist on all manner of personal injury work.” “Leila instils huge confidence and is caring and empathetic, which is exactly what you need in difficult cases working for bereaved clients.”

Chambers and Partners (2025) – Inquests & Public Inquiries (Band 2) – “Leila is a real asset to her chambers. She is fantastic with the client and families, dealing with inquests in a very sensitive and understanding way.” “Leila Benyounes is extremely assured and very well respected in inquests. As an assistant coroner, she also brings that specialist insight and knowledge to the case.” “Leila is a really knowledgeable and friendly barrister to work with. She's clear and concise on her feet, making the process all the more smooth.” “Leila is an extremely competent and experienced barrister who is compassionate with the grieving clients and families she represents.”

Legal 500 (2025) – Inquests and Inquiries (Tier 1) – “A thorough and dedicated junior.”

Legal 500 (2025) – Clinical Negligence (Tier 2) – “Leila has an excellent, tactical and pragmatic approach to litigation. She is wonderful with clients and puts them at ease.”

Chambers and Partners (2024) – Clinical Negligence (Band 2) – “Leila is a well-prepared, good advocate. She gets back to you, gives realistic deadlines, and is very capable.” “Leila is a sound operator.”

Chambers and Partners (2024) – Inquests & Public Inquiries – The Regions (Bar) – (Band 2) – “Leila Benyounes leads the inquest group in chambers and specialises in inquests and clinical negligence. As a member of the Attorney General's A Panel, she is frequently sought after to handle Article 2 jury inquests, particularly those arising from hospital deaths or involving sensitive mental health issues.”

Legal 500 (2024) – Inquests and Inquiries (Tier 1) – “Leila is always meticulously prepared and has a calming, measured presence in cases.”

Legal 500 (2024) – Clinical Negligence (Tier 2) – “Leila is an excellent advocate and her advice is always thorough and well reasoned. She is well liked by those instructing her, clients and experts, and puts all at ease.”

Chambers and Partners (2023) – Clinical Negligence (Band 2) – “Leila Benyounes' expertise in inquests and inquiries feeds into her strong clinical negligence practice. Her work covers obstetric and birth injury cases, delayed treatment and diagnosis and surgical negligence.”

Legal 500 (2023) – Inquests and Inquiries (Tier 1) – “Leila is well versed in coronial law, and her experience is such that she easily engenders the confidence of the tribunal, be that the presiding coroner of the jury. She is always on top of her brief and has a strong but measured and pragmatic approach to her advocacy.”

Legal 500 (2023) – Clinical Negligence (Tier 2) – “Leila is an excellent tactician. She has great technical knowledge and brilliant client care skills.”

Chambers and Partners (2022) – Inquests and Public Inquiries (Band 2) – “She is extremely well organised, extremely thorough and will explore every area of a case.” “She is responsive, attentive and a fantastic communicator.”

Legal 500 (2022 and 2021) – Inquest and Inquiries (Tier 1) – “She does not back down in the face of adversity. She is extremely approachable and makes those she is working with, whether it be those instructing, the expert or the client, feel at ease.”

Legal 500 (2022 and 2021) – Clinical Negligence (Tier 2) – “Her attention to detail is excellent and I am always

confident the advice she gives is thorough and accurate. Her advice is easy to understand and provides useful guidance on next steps."