

Press Release

We are pleased to announce that Mr Andrew Foden, a tenant of *Liverpool Civil Law*, successfully represented Mr Stephen Eddies in his claim against Stockport NHS Foundation Trust, which was featured in a substantive piece, on Channel 4 News on the 26th July 2021, in a report prepared by Victoria Macdonald: Health and Social Care Editor for Channel 4 News.

Mr Foden was instructed by Mr Mark McGhee, an experienced human rights Solicitor of Lexent Partners, Manchester, who properly observed about Mr Stephen Eddies:

“Stephen was abused. He was falsely imprisoned. He suffered damaging psychiatric harm.”

Mr Eddies, who was acknowledged to have been a highly vulnerable individual, was in the care of Stockport NHS Foundation Trust at Stepping Hill Hospital, Stockport in June 2018, and was detained without any lawful authority on the part of the NHS Trust, its servants or agents for in excess of 11 hours, in an unlit room, on one of the hottest days of the year. He was afforded no sanitary facilities; no food or drink. He was assaulted, harassed, intimidated, physically and verbally abused. He had his human rights breached.

In finally settling the claim brought by Mr Eddies, the Defendant NHS Trust acknowledged that Mr Eddies had been assaulted, unlawfully detained and had his Article 5 Human Rights preventing the unlawful deprivation of liberty breached by the Defendant Trust, as a result of which compensation was finally paid to Mr Eddies.

The Defendant Trust also agreed to pay Mr Eddies’s legal costs.

The Trust also provided an assurance that it will request that Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council involves Mr Eddies in the ongoing safeguarding investigation into the incidents which occurred on the 3rd and 4th June 2018 and which resulted in Mr Eddies being subjected to such abhorrent treatment by the Trust, and it’s servants or agents, all too clearly depicted in the Channel 4 News piece, and that it would keep Mr Eddies informed of the progress of that investigation and in respect of any further action to be taken by the Defendant Trust to improve its patient care, in light of that investigation.

Mr Foden commented:

“As Dr Margaret Flynn, who led, as the Chief Investigator, the previous patient abuse case at Winterbourne View observed, on seeing the abuse to which Mr Eddies was subjected:

“I see the incredible abuse of power and the needless and protracted use of seclusion.”

“It’s shocking that it’s happening not merely in our specialist hospitals and private hospitals but it’s also happening in acute hospitals where we least expect it.”

The claims pursued were complicated from a legal perspective and shocking from a human perspective: there were evidential issues with which I had to wrestle so as to enable a view to be taken on the strengths, weaknesses if any, and value, of Mr Eddies’s claim.

Mahatma Ghandi commented in a prescient fashion that:

“The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members.”

The outrageous behaviour distressingly shown in the Channel 4 News piece centring on the actions of the 3 Security Guards, and the abusive and unlawful treatment visited upon Mr Eddies, on the 3rd and 4th June 2018, shows how far some parts of society still have to travel in that journey.

Although, from experience, I am not overly optimistic about the speed at which some parts of society will take that journey, this case may cause certain organs of the state to reflect thoroughly and properly on their current location and expedite their direction of travel to ensure incidents similar to those effecting Mr Eddies do not occur again. I can only hope so. If not, such organisations will again find themselves on the wrong end of such litigation.”