

Freedom from Torture North West

Medical Foundation Medico-legal Report Writing Service Seeking Volunteer Doctors!

Freedom from Torture (FfT) is a national human rights charity offering care and rehabilitation to survivors of torture.

The North West centre in Manchester is seeking to recruit volunteer doctors to join its medical team who write medico-legal reports on people who have experienced torture who are living in the North West and Yorkshire and Humber.

A two-day induction training will be offered in Manchester on the 3rd and 4th of June 2015 as well as ongoing CPD and support. There will be a follow up half day in Manchester in the morning of the 18th June 2015.

The minimum volunteer hours are one 4 hour session per week

To apply please download the role description and application form on our website and send it to Gilberte Hanania, HR Administrator, at volunteerrecruitment@freedomfromtorture.org
Closing Date: 6 March 2015

For an application pack, email jobs@freedomfromtorture.org or telephone 020 7697 3700
If you are interested in finding out more about medico-legal report writing at FfT, please contact the Centre Manager on 0161 2365744 or for a discussion about the role, please email Lead Doctor; jmiller@freedomfromtorture.org

More information can be found about the work of Freedom from Torture at:
www.freedomfromtorture.org.

Why I work as a medico-legal report (MLR) writer for the Medical foundation for the care of victims of torture - by Dr Jim Newmark

What I do

I was a GP in mainstream practice for many years but I now consider myself a GP specialist. I have now worked for FfT about six years and completed about forty reports. Each is by instruction from the client's solicitor and each comprise a minimum of six hours face-to-face contact with the client, involving a detailed history and examination, and an average of perhaps thirty hours of writing up, often rather more. However, much of the work of reading and writing up can be done at home, or in a local coffee shop (with suitable confidentiality precautions), at your own pace and at your own convenience. There are necessary deadlines, but these are manageable.

Along with refresher training I am constantly honing and improving my specialist skills by reading and researching from a unique database, as well as working with a dedicated legal and medical team who go through my draft reports Legal Review (LR) and Medical Review (MR) with a fine tooth comb until the final work is produced to be presented in court.

What does the organisation do?

The Medical foundation for the care of victims of torture is the report writing branch of Freedom from Torture, and one of very few organisations that is accepted by the United Kingdom Borders Agency (UKBA) as having the required experience and expertise to "stop the clock" for asylum proceedings for those clients who have been

accepted, after rigorous assessment, as applicable to continue to a MLR. This right has been hard won, and is jealously protected, firstly, by the quality of the initial assessment and, secondly, the final report. The first means that there is a high degree of probability that the client is at high risk of torture and/or death on return to their home country, the second means that a vital piece of all that can possibly be done to avoid this has been accomplished.

The benefits of taking part

I am aware that working with survivors of torture may not suit all – but it does me. Nasty things happen but.....

- The work allows me to be actively involved in dealing with some of the consequences.
- I learn about what is happening in certain areas of the world and how people are affected.
- I learn to write prose that must describe complex issues in a way that can be read by a lay person and not lose its meaning.
- I learn more about the implications of the asylum system in the UK to real people and the interaction between the legal and the medical ways of doing things.
- I have enough time to do a proper job
- I work with a great team

I find it difficult to adequately emphasise how privileged I feel in this role. I am part of a dedicated team who are absolutely committed to preventing further evil from being done. In doing so, I have been taught by brave, and not so brave, men (not, to date, women, my gender has let me avoid that) how fortunate I am. Every report is different and my learning will never end.

How can I get involved?

Most volunteer report writers are GPs, but there are a lot of other specialities represented. There is no need to worry about lack of experience of either the subject or the medico-legal arena. Both of these areas come with training and experience. There is an initial two day training course which gives a grounding of the basics, and you will not be left alone to struggle!

There are five centres in the UK – London, Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, and Newcastle. The address of the main centre, London, is 111 Isledon Road, Islington, London, N7 7JW Tel: 020 7697 7777. Fax: 020 7697 7799.
<http://www.freedomfromtorture.org/>.

I am, of course, happy to be contacted for informal advice

Jim Newmark

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