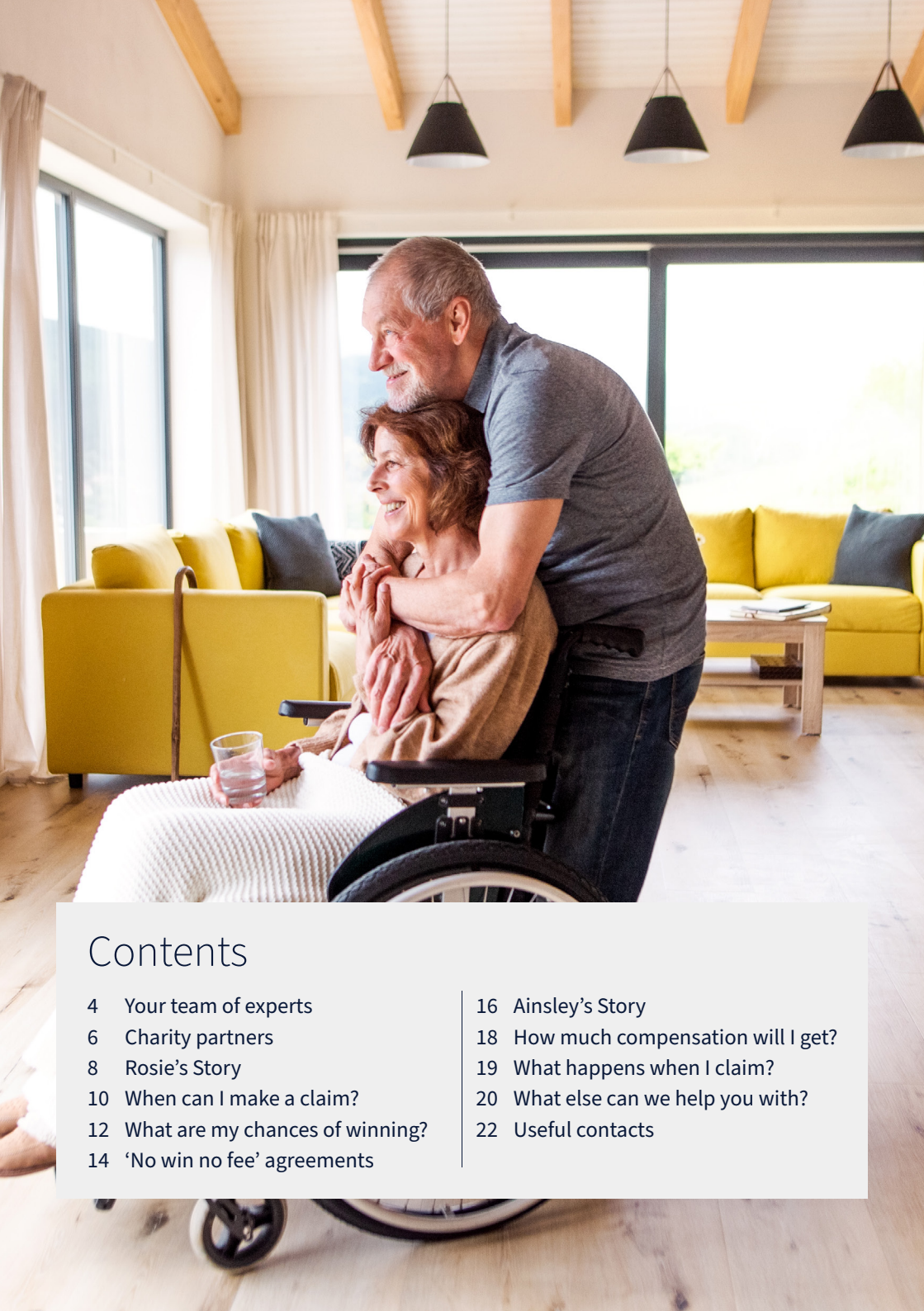




Supporting you through
a spinal cord injury

IM, irwinmitchell



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If you or a loved one has suffered a spinal cord injury the emotional and physical impact can be life-changing for you and your family. We're here to get you access to the best medical care, rehabilitation and support.

We'll investigate your case to find out if anyone was at fault and work to get you the justice you deserve. We'll also assess the impact of your injury to understand what support you'll need now and in the future. Early compensation payments may be available if you're out of work, have to make adjustments to your home or move to accessible accommodation.

We have close relationships with organisations and charities that provide spinal cord care and rehabilitation, who can help you come to terms with your injury and help you live an independent and fulfilling life.



Nothing has ever been too much trouble throughout the whole process. As a family, we cannot thank Irwin Mitchell enough.

Karen
5* Trustpilot review



This information relates to the law and procedures in England and Wales. Please contact us if you need advice about the law and procedure in other legal jurisdictions.

0800 023 2233

Your team of experts

By building a relationship based on openness, trust and honesty, we're better placed to provide the expert advice you need.

Our reputation for helping spinal cord injury clients and their families is second to none and every year we help many people who've been injured in this way get access to the best rehabilitation, medical care and support.

Our service

Our highly specialised team will put you at the focus of everything we do and approach your case with care and consideration to ensure the best possible outcome for you.

We'll visit you at a place of your choice and we'll begin our investigations surrounding the circumstances of your injury.

Our initial aim is to reassure you through securing interim payments, as we know that getting early access to specialist rehabilitation gives you the best chance of living an independent life. We'll offer advice on your state benefits, employment rights and other financial issues.



Charity partners

We work closely with national charities and support groups to improve the standards of care and support available to people with spinal cord injuries.



Brain & Spine Foundation (BSF)

We're delighted to be the sole legal provider for the Brain & Spine Foundation, who we started to work with in 2022. As the only UK wide charity providing information and support for every one of the 600+ neurological conditions, we're providing a dedicated legal helpline to support all of their members covering every aspect of law. We're also working with them on promoting a neuro inclusive workplace project to promote neurodiversity nationally.

Back Up

We're proud to be a member of Back Up's legal panel providing advice to their service users. We've sponsored Back Up's Wheelchair Skills Extra courses in the majority of spinal units across the UK. Our staff are volunteers at the training courses which equip clients with a spinal injury to feel more confident in the use of their wheelchair.

Spinal Injuries Association (SIA)

We're a proud member of Spinal Injuries Association's approved solicitor list and we're also a Platinum Corporate Supporter. We sponsor their East Midlands Peer Support Officer who offers advice, support and mentorship to those who've recently experienced a spinal cord injury.



Rosie's Story

It was three days before Christmas in 2009 and Rosie was home from university.

Her then-boyfriend was driving Rosie through Derbyshire when the car went onto the wrong side of the road, collided with an embankment and flipped.

It took fire-fighters more than half an hour to cut her free. She then spent 12 days in intensive care over Christmas, the beginning of a nine-month hospital stay as she recovered from catastrophic injuries.

Rosie soon understood that she'd have to learn how to live differently. One of the biggest challenges was learning how to speak again.

After speaking to some members of staff on the Spinal Injuries Unit, Rosie's father contacted Irwin Mitchell while she was still in hospital. He'd heard about other seriously injured clients receiving great advice from our solicitors, and was keen to find out what we could do to support Rosie's recovery.



Rosie remembers the understanding and empathy we showed her in the early days following her injury. At the time, she and her family were still in shock and struggling to comprehend what would happen next.

It took nearly four years to settle Rosie's case, but in 2013, we negotiated a lifelong compensation package covering 24-hour care and vital rehabilitation. It came as an enormous relief to know that she'd never have to worry about the cost of her treatment again.

Associate solicitor Stacy Clements has worked closely with Rosie from the beginning of her claim. Rosie emphasises the dedication and support Stacy has shown her over the past ten years.

After securing her settlement, Rosie found her referral to our Asset Management services very useful. Over the past ten years, serious injury specialists from the Financial Planning team have worked with her to make sure she's able to continue her rehabilitation.

Our team have ensured Rosie feels comfortable, confident and in control of her choices at each stage.



The support that Irwin Mitchell has given me has definitely had the human touch because it's always felt very natural when working together.

Rosie
Our client

When can I make a claim?

Spinal cord injury claims usually need to be made within three years of the incident.

Variations

Time limits don't start for children until their 18th birthday. In cases involving very severe injuries or incidents outside of England and Wales, a court can decide that the normal time limits may be adjusted. Where the injuries are caused by criminal assault, the time limit for making a claim is usually two years from the date of injury or assault.

The sooner you contact us the better, as we can then investigate your claim and start proceedings against the defendant or their insurer.

Do I have a case?

If you're not sure if you have a claim, you or a family member just need to pick up the phone and talk it over with us. We'll assess your case free of charge, tell you what we think and then you can decide if you want to go ahead.

Can you take over from my current solicitor?

If you're concerned about the way your case is being handled you're perfectly entitled to consider a second opinion from another law firm.

If your current solicitor doesn't have the experience to deal with a spinal cord injury case it could lead to significant delays, a failure to obtain important interim payments and the possibility that your case will be undervalued or unsuccessful.

This can mean that you miss out on the opportunity of targeted rehabilitation as well as failing to receive all of the care, therapy and equipment that you need.

If you decide to move your case to us the process is very simple - we'll speak to your current solicitor on your behalf.



What are my chances of winning?

Many people come to us who don't think they had a claim, and we go on to secure them rehabilitation and financial security for the future.

We're realistic in our assessments, so when you contact us we'll give you honest, straightforward advice on your chances of winning based on the information you give us. Though it's not possible to give a definitive answer on any case, the more information we have the more accurate our assessment will be.

Legislation

The government introduced some changes to how legal costs and funding for personal injury cases will work from April 2013. These changes mean you can no longer recover all of your legal costs from your opponent, but it's likely that you'll still recover your basic legal costs.

Options for funding your claim:

Conditional fee agreement – commonly known as a 'No Win No Fee' agreement*

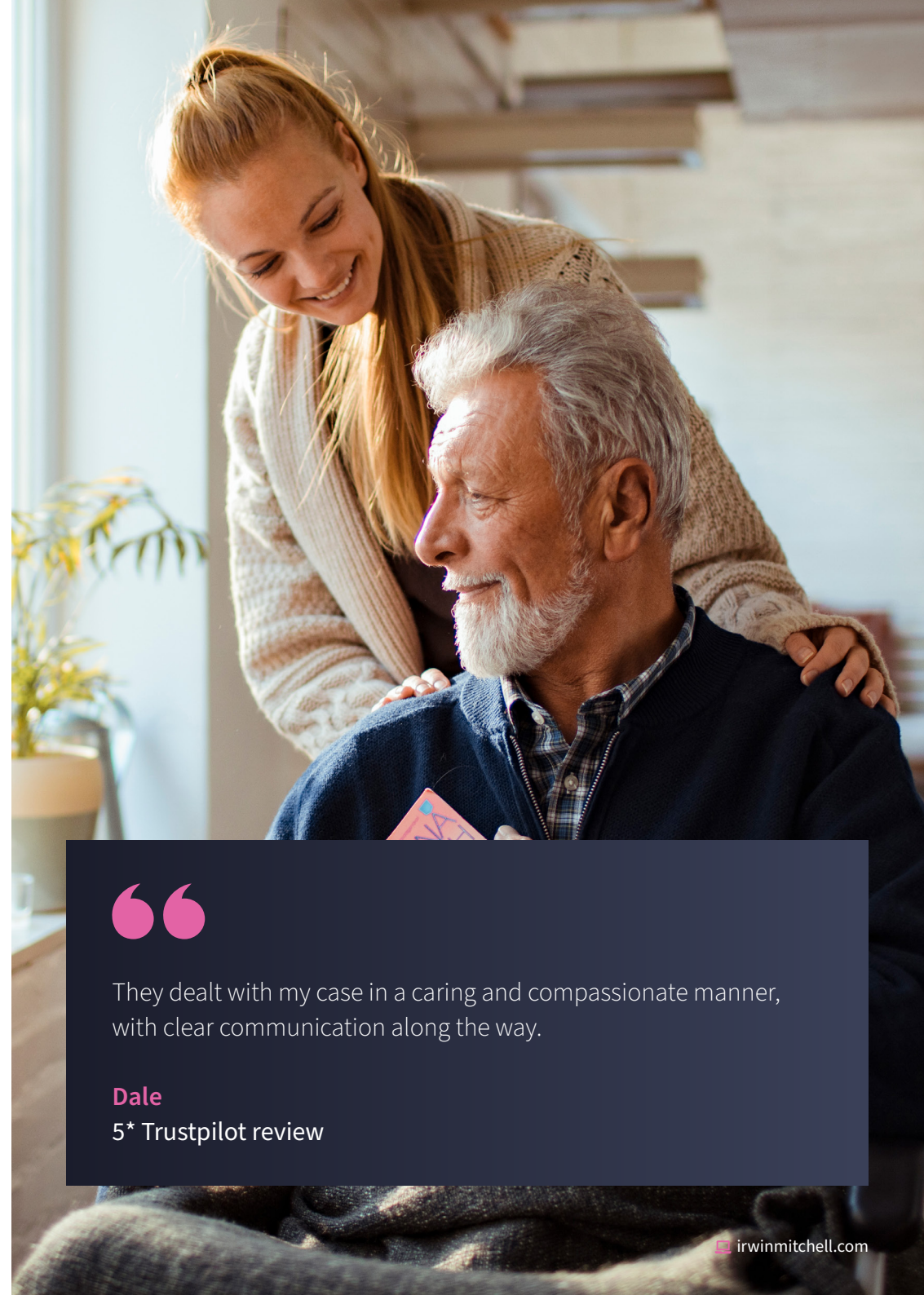
Legal expenses insurance – as part of your household or car insurance, you may have legal expenses cover to help with any legal costs

Trade union – if you're a member of a trade union, they may provide assistance for some legal issues.

If you don't have access to legal expenses insurance or trade union assistance, your best option may be to consider a 'No Win No Fee' agreement. Even if you do have access to other funding options, a 'No Win No Fee' agreement may still be the best option for you.

When we discuss your claim in more detail we'll tell you if the 'No Win No Fee' option is available or if we need to look at the other funding options above.

* Subject to entering into a 'No Win No Fee' agreement and complying with your responsibilities under its terms.



They dealt with my case in a caring and compassionate manner, with clear communication along the way.

Dale

5* Trustpilot review

‘No win no fee’ agreements

If we recommend that a ‘No Win No Fee’ agreement* is your best option, you can be assured that there’s no financial risk to you if you’re unsuccessful.

If you win:

Your opponent will pay the majority of our basic legal costs and disbursements (e.g. court fees, medical reports)

Any costs not payable by your opponent will include:

- The premium for your insurance policy to protect you fully against any risk of legal costs
- Some of your basic legal costs which cannot be recovered from your opponent
- A ‘success fee’ which compensates us for the risk that we wouldn’t recover any legal fees at all if it was unsuccessful

You won’t have to pay a penny out of your own pocket until your claim has successfully come to an end and then any of the costs not paid by your opponent will be deducted from any compensation awarded to you

If any disbursements can’t be recovered from your opponent these will be covered by your insurance policy

To help you with your legal costs, the government has provided a 10% increase in the amount awarded to you for your pain, suffering and loss of amenity.

If you lose:

We can promise you there’s no financial risk to you if your claim is unsuccessful*

There will be no charge to you

You’ll be fully covered by your insurance policy for any disbursements

You’ll be fully protected by your insurance policy from any of your opponent’s legal costs.

We’ll do everything we can to protect and support you to proceed with your claim and we’ll keep you updated at all times. Remember, there’s absolutely no financial risk to you or your family if you’re unsuccessful.

* To make a No Win No Fee claim, you need to enter into an agreement that’s linked to a suitable insurance policy. We’ll explain this in more detail before we start your claim.

Ainsley's Story

Ainsley had just finished dinner with his family when his friend came to pick him up. He was a passenger in a car driving down a country lane, which slipped off the road into a ditch in a farmer's field.

The car rolled and the roof collapsed, damaging Ainsley's spinal cord. He woke up in critical care the following day, numb and confused.

Discovering he'd never walk again was overwhelming. Ainsley remembers leaving the hospital as his lowest point – he felt angry and despondent as the reality of his injury began to set in.



While Ainsley was in critical care, a Spinal Injuries Association member visited and advised about taking legal action after his injury. With no experience of law, it was important to find someone who could clearly explain what he needed to know and how to proceed.

Ainsley and his family researched their options and decided to contact us. We visited Ainsley in hospital to discuss his situation and the potential next steps.

After listening to his story and Ainsley choosing to instruct us, our team's first task was to secure interim payments to fund his therapy and access support while we progressed the claim.

Hearing that we'd been successful was an enormous weight off Ainsley's shoulders knowing he had the financial support and specialist care needed to rebuild his life.

After securing his settlement, Ainsley began talking with our financial planning experts. Together they made sure Ainsley's compensation would be protected and could be used to support his needs moving forward.

Our teams also helped Ainsley finance and build his first adapted property with his wife. They're both very excited to make it their own, and tailor it exactly as they need.



Irwin Mitchell helped me look forward to brighter days ahead. And their financial planning team are making sure that whatever happens, I have the support I need.

Ainsley Sinckler

Our client

How much compensation will I get?

The amount of compensation you receive will depend on the severity of your injury, how it has affected your life, how much money you've lost or will lose as a consequence and whether you'll need extra support in the future.

Individually assessed

We'll advise you at the outset on how your opponent's insurers and the courts approach the assessment of compensation and how that will apply to your case. However, it's important to bear in mind that everyone is different and the consequences of the same injury will vary from person to person.

Keeping you informed

As we learn more about you and your circumstances, we'll be able to provide you with a more accurate idea of the financial value of your claim. You can be assured that we'll do everything we can to recover the maximum amount of compensation available to you. We'll also advise on the best payment terms to suit your immediate and ongoing needs.

As well as securing financial compensation, we'll help you and your family with the practical issues and day-to-day impact of your injury as well as helping you get access to the best medical care and rehabilitation.

What happens when I claim?

We'll investigate your case thoroughly by gathering witness statements and other relevant details about your injury and ongoing requirements.

Opponent's insurance

As soon as we have all the details of your case, a claim will be made against your opponent's insurance company and we'll await a response. This can go one of two ways – either they decide to meet your claim or they don't.

Don't worry if an insurance company turns down your claim at first as this often happens and it doesn't mean that your claim will fail.

Assessments

We'll assess your rehabilitation needs and some people may warrant other expert assessments such as care needs. You and your family will be fully consulted on the proposed course of action.

Court settlements

The vast majority of cases are settled before they go to court. If your case is one of the few to be decided by a judge, don't worry; it's perfectly normal and we'll be there to help you every step of the way.

What else can we help you with?

Whether it's business or personal we understand that everyone's situation is different.

If you need legal advice or support with financial planning, we're here to offer expert advice tailored to your circumstances, so you can focus on what really matters.

We're here to help you with:

- Buying or selling a house
- Court of Protection
- Divorce, children and family matters
- Planning disputes
- Financial planning and wealth management*
- Support with your business and employment issues
- Social, education and healthcare provisions
- Tax and trusts
- Welfare and healthcare matters
- Wills

* Financial planning and wealth management services are provided by IM Asset Management Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Its Financial Services Register Firm Reference Number is 402770.



Contact us:

☎ 0800 023 2233

💻 [irwinmitchell.com](https://www.irwinmitchell.com)

Useful contacts

We have close relationships with organisations and charities that can provide extra support when you need it most.

Activity Alliance

Working to make active lives possible with a vision that disabled people are active for life.

SportPark- Loughborough
University
3 Oakwood Drive
Loughborough
Leicestershire
LE11 3QF

☎ 0150 9227 750
📧 activityalliance.org.uk

Brain and Spine Foundation

The Brain and Spine Foundation exists to provide information, answer questions, reduce anxiety and to inform choices.

Fourth Floor
CAN Mezzanine
7-14 Great Dover Street
London
SE1 4YR

☎ 0808 8081 000
📧 helpline@brainandspine.org.uk
📧 brainandspine.org.uk

Disability Living Foundation

A national charity providing impartial advice, information and training on independent living.

380-384 Harrow Road
London
W9 2HU

☎ 0845 130 9177
📧 helpline@dlf.org.uk
📧 livingmadeeasy.org.uk

Regain – The Trust for Sports Tetraplegics

Provides equipment and facilities to improve mobility, communication, education and employment opportunities for people with tetraplegic injuries.

☎ 07572 841 861
📧 enquiries@regainsportscharity.com
📧 regainsportscharity.com

Back Up

Delivering a range of services to build confidence and independence back into people's lives, and offering a support network when it is needed most.

4 Knightley Walk
London
SW18 1GZ

☎ 0208 8751 805
📧 admin@backuptrust.org.uk
📧 backuptrust.org.uk

Carers UK

Giving expert advice, information and support to carers so no one has to care alone.

20 Great Dover Street
London
SE1 4LX

☎ 0207 3784 999
📧 carersuk.org

Motability

The Motability Scheme enables disabled people to get mobile by exchanging their mobility allowance to lease a new car, scooter or powered wheelchair.

City Gate House
22 Southward Bridge Road
London
SE1 9HB


☎ 0845 130 9177
📧 motability.co.uk

Spinal Injuries Association (SIA)

Supports anyone who has been touched by spinal cord injury. They work to enable people to live a fulfilled life after injury.

SIA House
2 Trueman Place
Oldbrook
Milton Keynes
MK6 2HH

☎ 0800 9800 501
📧 advice@spinal.co.uk
📧 spinal.co.uk

 0800 023 2233

 [irwinmitchell.com](https://www.irwinmitchell.com)



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