

PRIVATE HEARING**Professional Conduct Committee
Review Hearing****1 September 2026****Name:** CORMACK, Savanna**Registration number:** 280491**Case number:** CAS-200907-L1K0R7

General Dental Council: Matthew Kerruish-Jones, Counsel
Instructed by Jalpa Patel, IHLPS**Miss Cormack:** Not present
Not represented

Fitness to practise: Impaired by reason of misconduct, conviction and health**Outcome:** Suspension extended (with a review)**Duration:** 6 Months

Committee members: Zareen Elleby (Chair, DCP Member)
Robin Barber (Dentist Member)
Victoria Buller (Lay Member)**Legal Adviser:** Mike Bell**Committee Secretary:** Paul Carson

At this hearing the Committee made a determination that includes some private information. That information has been omitted from the separate public version of this determination, and that public document has been marked to show where private material has been removed. The private material appears in highlighted form in this private version of the determination.

1. This is a resumed hearing pursuant to section 36Q of the Dentists Act 1984 ('the Act') to review the suspension of Miss Cormack's registration. The hearing was held in private under Rule 53 of the General Dental Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2006 (the "Rules") to protect Miss Cormack's right to privacy in so far as matters relate to health.

2. Miss Cormack's case was first considered by a Professional Conduct Committee at a hearing from 25 to 27 March 2024. She was neither present nor represented at that hearing. That initial Committee in 2024 considered and found proved the following allegations:

- On 23 May 2022, Miss Cormack was convicted at Newton Aycliffe Magistrates' Court of driving a motor vehicle on 17 April 2022, after consuming alcohol exceeding the prescribed limit, contrary to section 5(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.
- Miss Cormack failed to immediately inform the GDC that on or around 17 April 2022, she was charged with the offence which led to her conviction as outlined above.
- Miss Cormack had an adverse health condition [PRIVATE].

3. The initial Committee determined that Miss Cormack's failure to immediately inform the GDC that she had been charged with a criminal offence amounted to misconduct. That Committee further determined that Miss Cormack's fitness to practise was impaired both on public protection and public interest grounds, by reason of her misconduct, her conviction, and her adverse health. In finding impairment on all three bases, the initial Committee stated the following in its determination:

"Conviction

Ms Cormack has not engaged in these proceedings and has not put forward any evidence to demonstrate remediation. The Committee has seen nothing that shows that she has insight into the seriousness of her conviction or the potential impact of her actions on safety to other road users or public confidence. Ms Cormack drove on public roads having consumed alcohol. She placed not only herself but other road users at risk of injury.

The Committee took account of the fact that Ms Cormack received her conviction in 2022 and there is no evidence that she has received a further conviction since. However, the Committee noted that this is a conviction that took place less than 2 years after a similar offence and just over 2 months after Ms Cormack had been formally warned by the [GDC's Case Examiners] in relation to her first conviction...

Misconduct

In relation to Ms Cormack's misconduct the Committee was of the view that it is capable of remedy. It considered that Ms Cormack would need to embark on meaningful engagement with the GDC, which would include an explanation for her sporadic engagement to date and show evidence of insight, remorse and steps taken to prevent recurrence. However, the Committee has received no information on her current circumstances and importantly no evidence of insight on Ms Cormack's part. Whilst the Committee has not drawn any adverse inference from Ms Cormack's absence from this hearing, the current factual position is that her lack of engagement is ongoing. There is nothing before the Committee demonstrating insight into the seriousness of the delay in informing the GDC of the charge.

It is therefore satisfied that there is a real risk of repetition of her misconduct in the future. Her misconduct involved a disregard of her obligations to her regulatory body...

Health

[PRIVATE]".

4. By way of a sanction, the initial Committee imposed a suspension order on Miss Cormack's registration for a period of 9 months, with a review of the order to take place shortly before the end of this period. In directing a review, that Committee stated that the reviewing Committee may be assisted by receiving the following:

- A detailed reflective statement demonstrating Ms Cormack's insight into and understanding of her conviction and misconduct and its impact on the dental profession and the public confidence.
- Evidence of engagement with the GDC.
- Up to date medical evidence relating to Ms Cormack adverse health condition.

First resumed hearing – November 2024

5. A resumed hearing of Miss Cormack's case was held on 21 November 2024. Miss Cormack was neither present nor represented at that resumed hearing.

6. The November 2024 Committee determined that Miss Cormack's fitness to practise remained impaired by reason of her misconduct, conviction and adverse health. It stated the following in its determination:

*"The Committee noted that there has been no change since the conclusion of the substantive hearing. The Committee bore in mind that the burden was on Miss Cormack to satisfy the Committee that her fitness to practise is not currently impaired. However, she has not engaged with these proceedings and has communicated to the GDC that she wishes to voluntarily remove her name from the register. Miss Cormack has provided no evidence of remediation for consideration by this Committee, including the evidence recommended at the substantive hearing. **[PRIVATE]** Furthermore, she has provided no evidence of insight into her health condition, her conviction or misconduct. The Committee, therefore, concluded that*

there remains a risk of repetition of the failings found proved and that a finding of impairment was necessary in the interests of public protection...

7. The November 2024 Committee directed that the suspension of Miss Cormack's registration should be extended by a period of 12 months. That Committee was of the view that "...*this period would allow Miss Cormack to provide any evidence of remediation or insight into her conviction, misconduct and adverse health*". It directed a further review to be conducted shortly before the end of the 12 month period, and reiterated the recommendations of the initial PCC that the future reviewing Committee may be assisted by the following:

- A detailed reflective statement demonstrating Ms Cormack's insight into and understanding of her conviction and misconduct and its impact on the dental profession and the public confidence.
- Evidence of engagement with the GDC.
- Up to date medical evidence relating to Ms Cormack adverse health condition.

The second resumed hearing – November 2025

8. A resumed hearing of Miss Cormack's case was held on 28 November 2025. Miss Cormack was neither present nor represented at that resumed hearing.

9. The November 2025 Committee stated the following in its determination:

"The Committee respectfully disagrees with the earlier review Committee that the burden is on Miss Cormack "to satisfy the Committee that her fitness to practise is not currently impaired". The authorities make clear that the review Committee should note the particular concerns articulated by the original Committee and seek to discern what steps, if any, the Miss Cormack has taken to allay them during the period of their suspension: see Khan v General Pharmaceutical Council [2016] UKSC 64 at [27]. The case of Abrahams v General Medical Council [2018] EWHC 183 (Admin) was a case concerning conditions in which the court said at [23] in practical terms there is a persuasive burden on the practitioner at a review to demonstrate that they have sufficiently addressed the past impairments. Ultimately, it is a matter for the Committee to be satisfied whether the Miss Cormack's fitness to practise remains impaired.

The Committee considered the grounds of impairment individually. In reaching its decisions, it had regard to the concerns highlighted by the previous Committees and considered whether those issues have been addressed.

Conviction

The Committee took into account that there is no evidence before it that Miss Cormack had received any further convictions since her last conviction in April 2022. It considered this lapse of time as part of its assessment on the risk of repetition.

However, the Committee also took into account the further information received by the GDC on 26 November 2025, which it considered raised an issue of concern. [PRIVATE].

In addition, the Committee took into account the absence of any evidence of remorse, insight or reflection on the part of Miss Cormack in relation to her conviction.

Therefore, notwithstanding that there is no evidence of any conviction since 2022, the Committee could not be reassured that the risk of repetition is low. Accordingly, it determined that a finding of current impairment is necessary for the protection of the public. In reaching its decision, the Committee noted the nature of Miss Cormack's conviction and the risk she posed to others through her conduct.

The Committee also determined that a finding of current impairment is in the wider public interest. In view of the further evidence received and given the absence of any evidence of Miss Cormack's insight into the seriousness of her conviction, the Committee concluded that public confidence in the dental profession would be undermined if a finding of impairment were not made in the circumstances. The Committee also had regard to the need to declare and uphold proper professional standards.

Misconduct

Miss Cormack's engagement with the GDC has been intermittent and sporadic. Whilst she has communicated with the GDC on certain matters concerning this case, she has not engaged sufficiently with this hearing. Consequently, there is no evidence before the Committee regarding Miss Cormack's insight into her failure to immediately report her criminal conviction to the GDC. In the light of this, the Committee considered that the concerns raised by the previous Committees in relation to the issue of Miss Cormack's misconduct have not been addressed.

Accordingly, the Committee determined that a finding of current impairment remains necessary for the protection of the public. Failing to notify the GDC about criminal proceedings and any subsequent convictions poses a risk to the GDC being able to assess the seriousness of the matter and whether a Miss Cormack is safe to continue practising.

The Committee further determined that a finding of current impairment is in the wider public interest. Given the absence of any evidence of Miss Cormack's insight into the serious nature of her misconduct, the Committee considered that public confidence in the dental profession would be undermined if a finding of impairment were not made in the circumstances. The Committee also had regard to the need to declare and uphold proper professional standards.

Health

[PRIVATE]

[PRIVATE].

In the light of all this information, the Committee was not satisfied that there is sufficient evidence that [PRIVATE]. It therefore concluded that the concerns of the previous Committee in relation to Miss Cormack's health remain.

Accordingly, the Committee determined that a finding of current impairment remains necessary for the protection of the public. [PRIVATE]

The Committee also determined that a finding of current impairment is in the wider public interest. It considered that public confidence in the dental profession would be undermined if a finding of impairment were not made in the circumstances where the adverse health matters in this case remain a current concern.

Having taken all the evidence into account, the Committee determined that Miss Cormack's fitness to practise remains impaired by reason of her conviction, misconduct and adverse health."

10. The November 2025 Committee directed that the suspension of Miss Cormack's registration be extended by a further period of 9 months with a review, stating that "a future reviewing Committee may find it helpful to receive the following:

- *Evidence of sufficient engagement by Miss Cormack with the GDC in respect of these proceedings.*
- *Up to date medical evidence relating to Ms Cormack's adverse health condition, [PRIVATE].*
- *Any information that Miss Cormack wishes to place before the Committee including evidence regarding her insight into all the matters in this case, including her misconduct and her conviction."*

The third resumed hearing – 1 September 2026

11. The role of the Committee today is to undertake the review directed by the November 2025 PCC. Miss Cormack was neither present nor represented at this review hearing, which was conducted remotely using Microsoft Teams.

12. Mr Kerruish-Jones, on behalf of the General Dental Council (GDC), submitted that notice of today's hearing had been properly served on Miss Cormack in accordance with the requirements of the Rules and submitted that the hearing should proceed in her absence. He referred to the steps taken by the GDC to establish Miss Cormack's current address and to the various methods by which the notice had been sent. He also referred to Miss Cormack's history of non-attendance and limited engagement with the GDC and submitted that an adjournment was unlikely to secure Miss Cormack's attendance.

13. There was no record before the Committee of any contact or communication from Miss Cormack regarding her attendance or otherwise at the hearing today.

14. The Committee accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser on the requirements of service and proceeding in absence.

15. The Committee was satisfied that notice of today's hearing had been properly served on Miss Cormack in accordance with Rules 35 and 65 of the Rules.

16. The Committee noted, however, that the notice did not inform Miss Cormack that it could direct an indefinite suspension and that the notice was therefore defective in that regard. To maintain the validity of the notice for the purposes of the Rules, the Committee determined that it would proceed on the basis only of the powers expressly notified to Miss Cormack, namely to terminate the current suspension, continue it for a period not exceeding 12 months, or replace it with an order of conditions. By confining its powers today to those specified in the notice, the Committee was satisfied that the notice would remain valid and that no prejudice would be caused to Miss Cormack, as the Committee would not be giving consideration at this review to the possibility of indefinitely suspending her registration.

17. The Committee was satisfied that reasonable steps had been taken to notify Miss Cormack of the hearing. Miss Cormack has a history of non-attendance with only sporadic engagement in these proceedings. The Committee considered there was little prospect that an adjournment would secure her attendance. The Committee further noted that the current order expires on 2 October 2026 and that a review must take place before then. Balancing Miss Cormack's interests against the public interest, the Committee determined that it was fair and appropriate to proceed notwithstanding her absence.

18. The Committee proceeded to hear Mr Kerruish-Jones's submissions on the substantive review. He submitted that Miss Cormack's fitness to practise remains impaired by reason of adverse health, conviction and misconduct.

19. In relation to health, [PRIVATE]

20. In relation to the conviction and misconduct, Mr Kerruish-Jones accepted that there had been a significant passage of time since Miss Cormack's conviction in 2022. However, he submitted that there remained a risk of repetition [PRIVATE] and the absence of evidence of insight, reflection or remediation. He also referred to Miss Cormack's limited engagement with the GDC.

21. Mr Kerruish-Jones submitted that Miss Cormack therefore remains impaired on public protection and wider public interest grounds by reason of each of adverse health, conviction and misconduct.

22. Mr Kerruish-Jones submitted that the suspension of Miss Cormack's registration should be extended by a period of six to 12 months.

Decision

23. The Committee accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser.

24. The Committee considered separately whether Miss Cormack's fitness to practise remains impaired by reason of adverse health, conviction and misconduct. It exercised its own judgement on Miss Cormack's current fitness to practise, having regard to the previous decisions and the information now before it.

Adverse health

25. The Committee determined that Miss Cormack's fitness to practise remains impaired by reason of adverse health.

26. [PRIVATE]

27. [PRIVATE]

28. Given Miss Cormack's lack of engagement [PRIVATE] the Committee determined that her fitness to practise remains impaired by reason of adverse health on the grounds of public protection. It also considered that public confidence in the profession would be undermined if Miss Cormack were permitted to return to unrestricted practice while these serious and unresolved health concerns remain. A finding of impairment is therefore also required in the wider public interest.

Conviction

29. The Committee took into account that Miss Cormack has received no further conviction since April 2022. [PRIVATE] there remains no evidence of sufficient insight, reflection or remediation in relation to the conviction.

30. In those circumstances, the Committee determined that Miss Cormack's fitness to practise remains impaired by reason of conviction on public protection grounds.

31. The Committee also determined that a finding of impairment remains necessary in the wider public interest, given the seriousness of the conviction and the absence of evidence demonstrating remediation.

Misconduct

32. The Committee next considered Miss Cormack's misconduct arising from her failure to have immediately informed the GDC of the criminal proceedings.

33. There remains no evidence of meaningful reflection, insight or remediation. Miss Cormack's engagement with the GDC has continued to be sporadic and limited. Notwithstanding the matters identified by previous Committees as likely to assist at future reviews, she continues not to engage in these proceedings and demonstrates no evidence of remediation.

34. The Committee therefore determined that Miss Cormack's fitness to practise remains impaired by reason of misconduct on public protection grounds as there remains a risk of repetition. In the absence of evidence of insight or remediation, a finding of impairment also remains necessary to maintain public confidence in the profession and uphold proper professional standards.

35. Accordingly, the Committee determined that Miss Cormack's fitness to practise remains impaired by reason of adverse health, conviction and misconduct.

36. In view of its findings of continuing impairment on all three grounds, the Committee determined that the continued restriction of Miss Cormack's registration remains necessary for the protection of the public and is otherwise required in the public interest.

37. The Committee considered whether the order could be replaced by conditions of practice and concluded that conditions would not be sufficient or workable. Serious concerns remain in relation to Miss Cormack's fitness to practise on all three grounds and she has provided insufficient evidence of meaningful engagement, insight or remediation. The Committee therefore determined that the continued suspension of her registration remains necessary for the protection of the public and in the wider public interest.

38. The Committee determined that a further period of six months' suspension is appropriate and proportionate with the hope that Miss Cormack will use this opportunity to now engage in these proceedings. The extended period of suspension shall be reviewed prior to its expiry.

39. A future reviewing Committee may be assisted by:

- evidence of Miss Cormack's engagement with the GDC in relation to these proceedings;
- [PRIVATE]; and
- any information Miss Cormack wishes to provide demonstrating insight and reflection in relation to the conviction and misconduct.

40. Accordingly, the current period of suspension shall be extended by a further period of 6 months beginning with the date on which it would otherwise expire. The extended period of suspension shall be reviewed prior to its expiry.

41. That concludes this determination.