

## HEARING PART-HELD IN PRIVATE

### Professional Conduct Committee Initial Hearing

11 to 13 May 2026

**Name:** KUNDOLA, Harpreet Kaur

**Registration number:** 109999

**Case number:** CAS-208754-D7D5P8

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**General Dental Council:** Sam Thomas, Counsel  
Instructed by Sarah Barker, IHLPS

**Registrant:** Present  
Represented by Stephen Brassington, Counsel  
Instructed by Alistair Hewitt, Weightmans LLP

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**Fitness to practise:** Misconduct not found  
Impaired by reason of conviction

**Outcome:** Erased with Immediate Suspension

**Immediate order:** Immediate suspension order

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**Committee members:** Harpreet Ark (Chair, Dentist Member)  
Helen Eatherton (Lay Member)  
Rachel McCoubrey (Dental Care Professional Member)

**Legal Adviser:** Karen Rea

**Committee Secretary:** Lola Bird

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

KUNDOLA, Harpreet Kaur, a Dental Nurse & Orthodontic Therapist, Diploma in Orthodontic Therapy Royal College of Surgeons Of England 2013, NVQ L3 Oral Health Care: Dental Nursing & Independent Assessment City & Guilds 2005, is summoned to appear before the Professional Conduct Committee on 11 May 2026 for an inquiry into the following charge:

### **The charge**

*“That being a registered dental care professional:*

- 1. On 15 April 2024, you were convicted at the Crown Court, sitting in Leeds, of conspiring to pervert the course of public justice, between 6 September and 9 September 2020, contrary to section 1(1) of the Criminal Law Act 1977.*
- 2. You failed to immediately notify the General Dental Council that you were charged on 9 December 2022 (as amended) of conspiring to pervert the course of justice between 31 July and 30 September 2020.*

*AND by reason of the matters alleged above, your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of your conviction and/or misconduct.”*

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Mrs Kundola,

1. This is a Professional Conduct Committee hearing in respect of a case brought against you by the General Dental Council (GDC). The charge at this hearing relates to your conviction in April 2024 of conspiring to pervert the course of public justice and, as was alleged, your failure to immediately notify the GDC when you were formally charged with that offence.

2. The hearing is being conducted remotely by Microsoft Teams video-link.

3. You are represented at these proceedings by Mr Stephen Brassington, Counsel. The Case Presenter for the GDC is Mr Sam Thomas, Counsel.

### **Admissions to the charge – 11 May 2026**

4. At the outset of the hearing, Mr Brassington told the Committee that you admitted both factual allegations within the charge, namely heads of charge 1 and 2.

### **Decision on admissions to the charge – 11 May 2026**

5. Having heard your admissions, the Committee accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser, who drew its attention to Rule 17(4) of the *GDC (Fitness to Practise) Rules Order of Council 2006* ('the Rules'), which states that:

*“A Practice Committee shall in the first instance deal with any ..., admissions ..., and make determinations in respect of them before the commencement of the factual inquiry.”*

6. The Committee took into account that it could not go behind the fact of your conviction at head of charge 1. It noted that in addition to your admission, it had before it the Certificate of Conviction confirming the details of your criminal offence and the sentence imposed.

7. In relation to your alleged failure to immediately notify the GDC that you had been charged with the criminal offence in question, the Committee considered your admission to that aspect of the charge (head of charge 2) to be clear and unequivocal. Therefore, it could see no reason not to accept your admission. The Committee took into account that you are legally represented at these proceedings.

8. In all the circumstances, the Committee determined that it was content to accept both your admissions to the charge. In accordance with Rule 17(5), the Chair of the Committee announced both alleged facts as proved on the basis of your admissions. These proven facts being that:

*On 15 April 2024, you were convicted at the Crown Court, sitting in Leeds, of conspiring to pervert the course of public justice, between 6 September and 9 September 2020, contrary to section 1(1) of the Criminal Law Act 1977.*

*You failed to immediately notify the General Dental Council that you were charged on 9 December 2022 (as amended) of conspiring to pervert the course of justice between 31 July and 30 September 2020.*

9. With both factual matters within the charge having been admitted and found proved, that concluded the factual inquiry at Stage One. The hearing moved to Stage Two.

### **Decision to hold part of the hearing in private – 11 May 2026**

10. At the commencement of the second stage of the hearing, having noted the potential for more in-depth discussions relating to your private and family life, the Committee sought advice from the Legal Adviser about holding part of the hearing in private.

11. The Legal Adviser advised that the default position is that hearings are held in public, however, the Committee had a discretion under Rule 53(2) of the Rules to hold all or part of

a hearing in private. Rule 53(2)(a) provides that, “*where the interests of the parties or the protection of the private and family life of the respondent or any other person so requires*”.

12. The Committee was satisfied that Rule 53(2)(a) would be engaged in the circumstances, and it determined that, when necessary to do so, the hearing should move into private session for the protection of your private and family life.

### **Stage Two of the hearing – 11 to 13 May 2026**

13. Mr Thomas opened Stage Two of the hearing by outlining the facts relating to your conviction. He stated that this is a case in which you, Harpreet Kundola (also referred to in the criminal court papers as Harpreet Gosal), were convicted on 15 April 2024 of conspiring to pervert the course of public justice. You had conspired with five other individuals to commit this offence.

14. In relation to the circumstances of the conspiracy and your role in it, Mr Thomas referred the Committee to the sentencing remarks of the Judge at Leeds Crown Court, in which it is stated that:

*“...The offences before the Court reveal a prolonged, persistent, determined and well-planned attempt to get [the victim] arrested, prosecuted and ultimately imprisoned for serious offences he has not committed. Motivation for these offences is revealed by count three. There were pending ancillary relief proceedings in the Family Court .... And so it was determined to try and take [the victim] out of the equation or settle those proceedings to the advantage of [another individual]...”.*

15. The Judge went on to state that, you were:

*“... in a slightly different position, having pleaded guilty only to count four, and in [your] case, the underlying offence, which was being fabricated, was less serious.”*

16. Mr Thomas further drew the Committee’s attention to a production witness statement dated 26 August 2025, provided by the GDC Caseworker who dealt with the Council’s fitness to practise investigation into the matter. Mr Thomas submitted that this witness statement provided further context and chronology.

17. The GDC Caseworker set out in their witness statement that the GDC’s Fitness to Practise team received a self-referral email from you on 13 December 2022, in which you notified the Council that you had been arrested on 28 September 2020 and had received a summons on a charge of making false reports to the police with intent to pervert the course of justice. A copy of the Notice of Criminal Charge was attached to your email. This showed that you had been summoned to appear at Leeds Magistrates’ Court on 9 December 2022.

18. The GDC Caseworker went on to state in their witness statement that on 24 April 2024, your representative wrote to the GDC to confirm that you attended Leeds Crown Court on 15 April 2024 and entered a guilty plea in relation to the charge of conspiring to pervert the course of justice.

19. On 13 August 2024, you emailed the GDC, advising that on 8 August 2024, you were sentenced to 9 months' imprisonment, suspended for 18 months, had been ordered to undertake 200 hours of community service and 12 rehabilitation days. On 3 September 2024, you provided the GDC with a copy of your Suspended Sentence Order.

20. Referring again to the Judge's sentencing remarks, Mr Thomas submitted that it appeared that three of the six defendants in your criminal case were judged to have led the conspiracy, whilst the remaining three, including you, had, effectively, been following that lead. All six defendants received prison sentences, with the three defendants, who were found to have led the conspiracy, receiving immediate custodial sentences, and the other three, including you, receiving suspended sentences.

21. Mr Thomas invited the Committee to take account of the Judge's remarks when sentencing you. The Judge stated:

*I turn to Harpreet Gosal. ..., who has no previous conviction and falls to be sentenced solely in relation to count four on the indictment. Which was a conspiracy with others to fabricate false claims that she was receiving threatening telephone calls from the victim in this case,...*

*She has got no previous convictions. She has pleaded guilty, she pleaded guilty on the day of trial. It is accepted on her behalf that these offences plainly pass the custody threshold. But there is substantial mitigation in her case. [PRIVATE]. You have a good work record. It is a job as a dental nurse that you may lose because of your convictions. You express remorse, but it was a long time coming. It seems to me that, for your offence, given the balance of the aggravating and mitigating features in your case. And taking into account the credit that I can give you for your plea, that the appropriate sentence is one of nine months' imprisonment...*

*You do have strong personal mitigation, and immediate custody would result in a significant, harmful impact upon others in your case. And I am just persuaded by the mitigation ... that that sentence can be suspended.*

*It would be suspended for a period of 18 months. During the period of suspension, you will carry out 200 hours of unpaid work, attending as and when directed by the organiser of that scheme and performing the work well, otherwise, you will be in breach. You will be brought back to court, the breaches will be reserved to me, and*

*if you are in breach, you will be tying my hands and a sentence will be inevitable. To try and assist you in the difficult circumstances that you find yourself in, there will be 12 rehabilitation activity requirement days. Again, in your case, as in all cases, a surcharge applies, and I make the appropriate order.*

22. Mr Thomas highlighted that, in addition, a Restraining Order was put in place in respect for all six defendants, including you, for a period of 10 years. The first prohibition under the Restraining Order is that all defendants are prohibited from contacting, directly or indirectly, a number of named individuals, including the victim. The second prohibition is that all defendants are prohibited from attending within 50 metres of a property in which those named people are known or suspected to reside, work or be present.

23. Mr Thomas submitted that the gravamen of the GDC's charge against you is in relation to your conviction for perverting the course of public justice. However, you have also admitted that you failed to immediately inform the GDC that you had been charged with that criminal offence on 9 December 2022, only informing the Council on 13 December 2022.

24. In answer to a question from the Legal Adviser in relation to the nature of your criminal offence, Mr Thomas submitted that an element of dishonesty was inherent in your conviction. He again referred to the Judge's sentencing remarks that you conspired with others to fabricate false claims that you were receiving threatening telephone calls from the victim. However, there was no suggestion by the GDC that there was any element of dishonesty in your failure to immediately notify the Council about your criminal charge.

### **The Committee's considerations at Stage Two**

25. The Committee considerations at this second stage of the hearing were whether your failure to immediately inform the GDC of your criminal charge (head of charge 2) amounted to misconduct, and if so, whether your fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of that misconduct and/or your conviction at head of charge 1. The Committee took into account that if it found impairment on one or more of the relevant statutory grounds in this case (misconduct and/or conviction), it would need to go on to consider what sanction, if any, to impose on your registration.

### **Summary of the evidence**

26. The Committee took account of all the evidence presented to it, both at Stage One of the hearing and at this second stage. As has been outlined, the evidence received at Stage One included the information received from you and from Leeds Crown Court in relation to your conviction and sentence, including your self-referral email to the GDC dated 13 December 2022, the Certificate of Conviction and the Judge's sentencing remarks. The

Committee also had before it at the first stage, a statement from you dated 27 February 2026, in which you set out your admissions to the GDC charge.

27. The evidence received by the Committee at this second stage was a bundle of documents submitted on your behalf, which comprised your written reflections on the matters in this case, a copy of your CV, a number of testimonials, a copy of your Personal Development Plan (PDP) and evidence of your Continuing Professional Development (CPD). In addition, the Committee heard oral evidence from you.

28. You told the Committee about the difficult family and personal circumstances leading up to your criminal offence [PRIVATE].

29. [PRIVATE]. You stated that you were not relying on these circumstances as an excuse but wanted to explain how you found yourself to be in the situation that you were.

30. You stated that you are not that kind of person and that your criminal behaviour was driven by guilt and what you referred to as “*peer pressure*”. During your evidence, you were taken extensively to your written reflections provided for this hearing, in which you express “*deep remorse, shame, and regret for my actions*”. You told the Committee that you felt “*disgusted*” when you look back at your actions and that you do not recognise yourself in them. You stated that this was not something that you would ever do again, that you have learnt from where you were to where you are now.

31. With reference to your written reflections, you also addressed in your oral evidence the impact of your actions on the victim, your patients, colleagues, the profession, and the impact on you. You stated in your oral evidence that you recognised that the impact on the victim and your patients were “*higher up*” than any impact on you.

### **Summary of parties’ submissions at Stage Two**

32. Mr Thomas provided the Committee with an outline of his submissions in writing and he made submissions orally. It was his submission that your fitness to practise is currently impaired, primarily on the basis that such a finding is necessary to uphold public confidence in the dental profession. Mr Thomas further submitted that the allegations admitted and found proved, particularly in respect of your conviction, are so serious, that the only appropriate outcome in this case is the sanction of erasure.

33. Expanding on the GDC’s position, Mr Thomas submitted that, while the gravamen allegation in this case is your conviction (head of charge 1), the Committee would also need to consider whether your failure to immediately declare your criminal charge to the GDC (head of charge 2), amounts to misconduct.

34. With reference to relevant case law, Mr Thomas submitted that 'Misconduct' is a word of general effect, involving some act or omission which falls short of what would be proper in the circumstances. He stated that the standard of propriety may often be found by reference to the rules and standards ordinarily required to be followed by a practitioner in the particular circumstances. Mr Thomas submitted that Standard 9.3 of the GDC's '*Standards for the Dental Team*' (September 2013) ('the GDC Standards') clearly requires registrants to immediately notify the GDC if they are subject to criminal proceedings. He stated that Standard 9.3 is supplemented by the GDC's '*Guidance on reporting criminal proceedings*'.

35. Mr Thomas acknowledged that not every breach of the GDC Standards amounts to misconduct. He submitted that the breach concerned must be serious. He accepted that your delay in informing the GDC was relatively short. The Notice of Criminal Charge you received from the police was dated 9 December 2022 and you self-referred the matter to the GDC on 13 December 2022. Mr Thomas submitted that you had clearly been aware for a significant period that there were the criminal proceedings against you. However, the GDC conceded that the duty to notify it only arose once you were charged with a criminal offence. Mr Thomas stated that, whilst you failed in your duty to immediately report your criminal charge to the Council, it was a matter for the Committee, in the circumstances of the relatively short delay, whether your breach of Standard 9.3 was so serious as to amount to misconduct.

36. Mr Thomas submitted that your conviction was a different matter. He submitted that your criminal offence was a serious one because it resulted in a custodial sentence, related to inherent dishonesty or a lack of integrity, and because it impacted on the court system. He submitted that your false complaints made to the police aimed to manipulate the criminal court system, as well as the family court system. He further submitted that your actions could have led to the imprisonment of the victim, an innocent individual, and [PRIVATE].

37. It was Mr Thomas' submission that the issues of remediation and the risk of repetition in relation to your conviction were considerations for the Committee. He stated, however, that in cases such as this one, which concern probity, relevant legal authorities make clear that the Committee must have regard to the wider public interest when considering current impairment. Mr Thomas submitted that in cases such as this, where there has been a conviction for a serious criminal offence, there is a requirement to make a finding of impairment, as any other finding would undermine public confidence in the dental profession.

38. Mr Thomas reiterated that the only appropriate sanction in this case is one of erasure. He submitted that your conviction was too serious for the imposition of any lesser sanction. He reminded the Committee that the primary purpose of a sanction is not to punish but that any sanction imposed must serve to mark the seriousness of the circumstances.

39. Regarding your criminal offence, Mr Thomas submitted that, whilst this was in the personal sphere, rather than in a clinical one, the primary mitigation of “*peer pressure*” is a factor that could easily drift into the clinical arena. He further submitted that you persisted with what he referred to as “*your concerning perspective*” for an extended period. He stated that the offending was in September 2020, but you did not reflect or accept your wrongdoing until four years later, and then only when prompted by your conviction in the Crown Court (having already attended the Magistrates Court in 2022).

40. Mr Thomas submitted that the GDC accepted that there have been steps towards remediation, but that these cannot overcome the serious departure from the relevant professional standard of honesty and integrity which, he submitted, renders you fundamentally incompatible with being a dental professional.

41. It was Mr Brassington’s submission that the appropriate sanction in this case would be one of suspension. He stated that there were a number of stages that the Committee would have to advance through before making any decision on sanction, and that the Committee’s conclusions at each stage would be for its judgement.

42. With regard to your admitted failure to immediately notify the GDC of your criminal charge, Mr Brassington submitted that, plainly, this was not misconduct. He highlighted that the GDC had accepted that the point at which your duty to inform arose was when you were charged with a criminal offence, which was around 8 December 2022. He highlighted that you notified the GDC of the matter on 13 December 2022, after having sought and received advice from your indemnity organisation as to what to do. He submitted that this was a gap of 4 to 5 days, when your mind would have been overburdened with other issues. Further, that when you did inform the GDC on 13 December 2022, your disclosure was full and frank. Mr Brassington submitted that fellow practitioners would not consider such a delay to be deplorable.

43. In relation to your conviction, Mr Brassington asked the Committee to take into account the beginning of the Judge’s sentencing remarks that “*Harpreet Gosal is in a slightly different position, having pleaded guilty only to count four, and in her case, the underlying offence, which was being fabricated, was less serious*”. Mr Brassington submitted that this should be the starting point for any analysis by the Committee of the seriousness of your conviction. He asked the Committee to focus on the actuality of what you pleaded guilty to. Mr Brassington stated that this was not an attempt to suggest that your conviction was anything other than serious, but the Committee should note that you were rendered less culpable than the other defendants in the criminal case. He further submitted that the 9-month sentence you received was at the lower end of the scale.

44. [PRIVATE].

45. With further reference to the sentencing remarks, Mr Brassington invited the Committee to take into account the comments made about your lesser role in the offending. He asked the Committee to note that the Judge, who knew more about the criminal case, concluded that you did not pose a risk to the public and that there was a realistic prospect of your rehabilitation. Mr Brassington acknowledged that your conviction was serious, but he submitted that your role was extremely limited and had occurred because of the pressure brought upon you.

46. Mr Brassington submitted that, in the event that the Committee did not find misconduct in this case, the only consideration would be whether your fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of your conviction. He stated that he did not seek to persuade the Committee that you are not currently impaired on public interest grounds; he readily conceded that your conviction engages the public interest.

47. In relation to whether the conduct complained of in this case is capable of being remedied, Mr Brassington again referred to the remarks made by the sentencing Judge regarding your potential for rehabilitation. Mr Brassington further submitted that the impact of your behaviour on you and your family could not be overstated. He stated that this submission was not intended to elicit sympathy, but that it was important to understand the impact when considering the risk of repetition.

48. Mr Brassington submitted that your remorse is real, and evident from both your written reflections and your oral evidence. He rejected the proposition that there was a delay in your insight. He asked the Committee to take into account that you pleaded guilty knowing the likely consequence of going to prison. He submitted that there could be no better evidence of insight. He stated that from that point onwards you embarked on a period of reflection and remediation, assisted by the Probation Service, as well as completing relevant CPD, including on Ethics.

49. Mr Brassington also highlighted what the Committee heard from you in your oral evidence regarding the changes you have effected in your life, the support you have from your family and from previous Practice Principals, and how you would act differently if placed in a similar position in future. Mr Brassington submitted that there is no evidence before the Committee that the particular set of circumstances in this case could drift into the professional sphere. He emphasised that you had worked as a dental professional for 21 years without any issues, which included working up until November 2024 without incident.

50. It was Mr Brassington's submission that you chose to act as you did, and you are not seeking to excuse this, but you were under intense and emotional pressure at the time, and that pressure has now gone. He submitted that there is no risk of repetition and there is no evidence to contradict this, given your previous good character.

51. Addressing the Committee on sanction, Mr Brassington also reminded the Committee that a sanction should not be punitive, but to maintain the GDC's statutory purpose. He further reminded the Committee of the principle of proportionality, and its duty to take no more action than is necessary. Mr Brassington submitted that the public interest is guarded by a reasonable and well-informed member of the public, who would understand all the circumstances of this case, including your minor and peripheral role in the conspiracy.

52. With reference to the GDC's 'Guidance for the practice committees' (January 2026) ('the Guidance'), Mr Brassington referred to a number of mitigating factors that he considered to be present in this case. It was his submission that there are limited aggravating features. He also drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 274 of the Guidance, which states that:

*"When considering the proportionality of the order to be imposed, the [Practice Committee (PC)] should have regard to any interim order and its effect on the registrant. In particular, if proceedings are delayed and a person is subject to suspension in the interim, that period of suspension may affect the proportionality of the length of the subsequent period of suspension. Whether it has that effect is for the PC to determine".*

53. Mr Brassington told the Committee that your registration has been subject to an interim order of suspension since November 2024, a period of some 18 months [PRIVATE].

54. Mr Brassington highlighted the Guidance that the sanction of erasure should only be imposed where there is no other means of protecting the public and public confidence in the dental profession. He stated that this was not the case here, when considering all the circumstances. He submitted that there is no evidence of any harmful deep-seated personality or professional attitudinal problems. He referred extensively to the contents of positive testimonials tendered on your behalf. It was Mr Brassington's submission that a reasonable and well-informed member of the public would note the absence of a risk of repetition, that you are an excellent practitioner, and would consider it to be in the public interest for someone with your skill to remain on the Register, albeit after a period of suspension.

### **Late amendment of head of charge 2 – 13 May 2026**

55. During its deliberations at Stage Two, the Committee noted that the date '9 November 2022', which was featured in head of charge 2, did not in fact correspond with the date shown on the relevant piece of evidence. The date referred to in the evidence is '9 December 2022'.

56. The Legal Adviser advised that, with the agreement of both parties, the charge could be amended under the regulatory equivalent of the 'slip rule', which allows for the correction of errors.

57. Having confirmed with both parties that the correct date should be '9 December 2022' and having noted their agreement to amendment under the slip rule, this determination document was updated so that all the relevant references, including in the charge, were to '9 December 2022' and not the previously incorrect date.

### **The Committee's decisions – 13 May 2026**

58. The Committee considered all the evidence before it. It took account of the submissions made by Mr Thomas on behalf of the GDC, both written and oral, as well as the submissions made orally by Mr Brassington on your behalf. The Committee accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser as to the approach it should take to its decision-making and the relevant legal principles and guidance.

59. The Committee bore in mind that there is no burden or standard of proof at this stage of the proceedings. Its decisions were for its independent judgement. The Committee had regard to the overarching statutory objective of the GDC which is: to protect, promote and maintain the health, safety and well-being of the public, to promote and maintain public confidence in the dental professions, and to promote and maintain proper professional standards and conduct for members of those professions. The Committee also had regard to the Guidance (January 2026).

### **Decision on misconduct**

60. The Committee first considered whether the fact admitted and found proved at head of charge 2, namely your failure to immediately notify the GDC of your criminal charge, amounts to misconduct.

61. The Committee took into account that a finding of misconduct in the regulatory context requires a serious falling short of the standards expected of a registered dental professional. It had regard to the GDC Standards and was satisfied that Standard 9.3 is engaged in this case, in particular Standard 9.3.1, which states that:

*"You must inform the GDC immediately if you are subject to any criminal proceedings anywhere in the world. See our guidance on reporting criminal proceedings for more information".*

62. The Committee was satisfied that you had a duty to immediately inform the GDC that you had been charged with a criminal offence, and that by not doing so on the day you were

charged, you breached Standard 9.3.1. However, the Committee took into account that your delay in informing the Council was relatively short, amounting to a period of 4 or 5 days, with you having been charged on or around 9 December 2022 and self-reporting to the GDC on 13 December 2022. The Committee also took into account your written evidence that during the period of delay you were taking steps to seek advice on what you should do. The Committee accepted that this all reflects that the delay was very short.

63. It was the view of the Committee, having considered all the circumstances of your breach, including the very short period of the delay, that your failure in not immediately informing the GDC of your criminal charge was not so serious as to amount to misconduct. The Committee was not satisfied that other dental professionals would regard this particular oversight as deplorable.

64. Accordingly, the Committee concluded that the fact admitted and found proved at head of charge 2 does not amount to misconduct.

65. Therefore, the Committee went on to consider the issue of current impairment based on the fact of your criminal conviction alone.

### **Decision on impairment by reason of your conviction**

66. In reaching its decision, the Committee had regard to the nature, seriousness and circumstances of your conviction. You were convicted, following a guilty plea, on 15 April 2024 of conspiring to pervert the course of public justice between 6 September and 9 September 2020. Your part in the conspiracy involved fabricating false claims that you were receiving threatening telephone calls from the victim in the case. The false phone calls were reported by [PRIVATE], another defendant in the case, and you confirmed to the police that the phone calls had occurred.

67. Furthermore, the Committee noted your denial of your wrongdoing persisted for some time after the offending period of 6 to 9 September 2020, including across a number of police interviews and your attendance at the Magistrates Court in November 2022. You did not admit your guilt until the first day of the criminal trial on 15 April 2024.

68. For your part in the conspiracy, you were sentenced to 9 months in prison, suspended for 18 months, required to undertake 200 hours of unpaid work and 12 Rehabilitation Activity Days. In addition, a Restraining Order was put in place in respect for all six defendants in the case, including you, for a period of 10 years.

69. The Committee was in no doubt that the behaviour that led to your conviction was serious, not least because of the impact on the victim. The Committee also took into account the real and potential impact of what you did on the respective court systems. The

Committee further took into account that dishonesty and/or a lack of integrity are elements that are inherent in an offence such as perverting the course of justice. It considered that attitudinal concerns, such as dishonesty, are more difficult to remedy than concerns of a clinical nature, although not impossible.

70. In assessing whether you have remedied the conduct that led to your conviction, the Committee had regard to the evidence placed before it in relation to the actions that you have since taken to address your behaviour. The Committee received written reflections from you, and it also heard your oral evidence. It noted your evidence about your good family and professional support networks, and what you would do differently if faced with a similar situation in future. The Committee also considered your PDP and the evidence of your CPD, which included learning on Ethics.

71. Whilst the Committee considered that there is some evidence before it of your remediation, it was not convinced that the steps you have taken to date have been sufficient to address what you said was the root cause of your offending. The Committee heard from you about the pressure you said you had faced in the context of a difficult and complex family situation. However, it was not satisfied that you adequately explained how the people you said had been exerting pressure on you had such a significant impact on your judgement and decision-making. [PRIVATE].

72. The Committee also took into account your evidence regarding your reluctance at the time to openly discuss what you did. [PRIVATE]. In the Committee's view, this raises a serious and ongoing concern about the potential for you to succumb to demands imposed on you by others. The Committee was not satisfied that you have fully reflected on how you first became influenced, and what steps to take to safeguard against possible future lapses of judgement. Whilst the Committee noted your CPD on Ethics, it considered, given the seriousness of the situation that you found yourself in, you would have considered what other learning or steps might be required, beyond professional CPD. The Committee also took into account that a significant proportion of the CPD evidence you have presented is on clinical courses and there are no clinical issues in this case.

73. Additionally, it was the view of the Committee, when considering your written reflections, that you appeared to downplay the seriousness of what you did and how it might be perceived by others. For instance, in relation to patients, you stated that *"If a patient were to become aware of my conviction they may feel shocked, disappointed, or even question my integrity"*. Also that, *"There is a possibility that my actions may have caused uncertainty or doubt in patients who had previously felt comfortable and reassured under my care."* The Committee considered that your use of the words *"may"*, and *"possibility"* in the context of what was clearly serious and unacceptable behaviour on your part, demonstrates that you have not fully grasped the gravity of your conviction. The Committee considered that, even after all the time that has elapsed, your insight into your criminal offending remains limited.

74. The Committee considered from your oral evidence, that whilst you were clear in acknowledging the impact of your conviction on previous colleagues, including the Practice Principals, it found that you were less detailed in addressing the wider impact of your offending, particularly on the victim in your criminal case.

75. It was the conclusion of the Committee, having taken into account the limitations of the evidence of your reflection, insight and remediation, that it could not be confident that the risk of repetition in this case is unlikely. The Committee was not satisfied that you have sufficiently remedied the attitudinal issues inherent in your conviction. In reaching its conclusion, the Committee took into account that the risk to the public in this case does not arise from a clinical perspective. However, it remained mindful of the impact of your criminal offending on the victim, who is a member of the public.

76. The Committee also considered that a finding of impairment is required in the wider public interest, to protect public confidence in the dental profession and to uphold proper professional standards and conduct. Honesty is the bedrock of the dental profession and Principle 9 of the GDC standards, requires all registrants to *“Make sure your personal behaviour maintains patients’ confidence in you and the dental profession”*.

77. In view of the nature and seriousness of your conviction, which indicates a serious lack of integrity, the Committee considered that a reasonable and well-informed member of the public would be deeply shocked if a finding of impairment were not made in the circumstances of this case. The Committee also had regard to the insufficiency of evidence in relation to your insight and remediation, and it concluded that public confidence in the dental profession and the maintenance of professional standards would be seriously undermined in the absence of a finding of impairment.

78. The Committee therefore determined that your fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of your conviction.

### **Decision on sanction**

79. Having found your fitness to practise to be impaired, the Committee considered what sanction, if any, to impose on your registration. It took into account that the purpose of any sanction is not to be punitive, although it may have that effect, but to protect the public and the wider public interest. The Committee had regard to the Guidance. It applied the principle of proportionality, balancing public protection and the wider public interest with your own interests.

80. The Committee noted that it was open to it to conclude this case without taking any action in relation to your registration. However, it decided that such an outcome would be

wholly inappropriate, given the gravity of your conviction and the identified risk of repetition. Taking no further action would not serve to protect the public nor uphold the public interest.

81. As part of its considerations on sanction, the Committee had regard to what it considered to be the mitigating and aggravating factors in this case. In mitigation, it noted your previous good character, in that you have no previous convictions and no fitness to practise history before the GDC. The Committee also noted the positive testimonials regarding your previous good character and your good conduct since your conviction in 2024. There is no evidence before the Committee of any repeat offending. The Committee further noted the evidence of your apology in your written reflections, including for the harm caused to the victim.

82. In terms of aggravating factors, the Committee took into account that actual harm was caused to a member of the public on account of your behaviour, namely the victim. It also considered the premeditated nature of the conduct that led to your conviction, given that it was a conspiracy to pervert the course of justice, which inherently involved some level of planning. The Committee further noted that your part in the conspiracy was sustained over a period of 2 days, from 7 to 8 September 2020.

83. It was the view of the Committee that another aggravating feature in this case is that your behaviour demonstrated a blatant and wilful disregard of the role of the GDC and the systems regulating the professions. This is because of your clear breach of the overriding Principle 9, which is fundamental to the profession. Further, as an aggravating factor, the Committee considered that, whilst there is no evidence before it that you took positive steps to cover up your wrongdoing, there is that inference, given your apparent unwillingness to plead guilty at the earliest opportunity.

84. Whilst the Committee did, as part of its considerations, have regard to the evidence of your remorse and insight, it did not regard either of these as mitigation or aggravating features. The Committee considered from your written reflections and from what it heard from you, that there is some evidence of remorse, but it has taken you a long time to show regret. In the Committee's view, your remorse has only been evident in the last two years since your conviction. Similarly, in relation to your insight, the Committee's view is that this has not fully developed. Whilst it considered that you have started to reflect on some aspects of your wrongdoing, your reflections and remediation remain limited, almost four years after your offence, and in the Committee's judgement, none of the steps you have since taken sufficiently address the root cause of your offending behaviour. The Committee also noted your limited reflection on the serious impact on the victim in the case.

85. The Committee further considered the issue you raised about feeling under pressure to act as you did. However, in its view, it did not receive a clear explanation from you in relation to this matter, despite its questions around how it was you believed you became so

influenced. In the circumstances, the Committee was not satisfied that it could regard your evidence about being under pressure as a mitigating or aggravating factor.

86. Taking all these matters into account, the Committee considered the available sanction in ascending order. It first considered whether to issue you with a reprimand. However, given its view that the matters in this case are at the higher end of seriousness, the Committee concluded that a reprimand would not be appropriate, proportionate or adequate to protect the public and the wider public interest.

87. The Committee next considered whether to impose a conditions of practice order on your registration. It took into account that conditions are typically designed to address discrete aspects of a registrant's clinical practice where shortcomings have been identified. There are no clinical issues in this case. It was the view of the Committee that it could not formulate any workable conditions that would address the conduct that led to your conviction, which is attitudinal in nature. Accordingly, the Committee decided that a conditions of practice order would not be an appropriate or proportionate sanction.

88. The Committee went on to consider whether to suspend your registration for a specified period, up to a maximum of 12 months. It took account of paragraph 277 of the Guidance, which states that:

*“Suspension may be appropriate when all, or some, of the following factors are present:*

*a. There is evidence of repetition of the behaviour.*

*b. The registrant has not shown insight into the issues which led to a finding of current impairment being made, and/or poses a significant risk of repeating the behaviour.*

*c. A lesser sanction would be insufficient to meet the public interest.*

*d. There is no evidence of harmful deep-seated personality or professional attitudinal problems (which might make erasure the appropriate order)”.*

89. The Committee noted that some of these factors relevant to a suspension are present in this case, in particular that you have shown limited insight into your criminal offence, that the Committee has judged there to be a risk of repetition, and that a lesser sanction would be insufficient to meet the public interest. However, in deciding whether a suspension order would be the appropriate and proportionate sanction, the Committee had regard to its ongoing concerns about the underlying behaviour that led to your conviction.

90. You were convicted of a serious criminal offence. Whilst the Committee took into account the submissions made on your behalf regarding the minor nature of your role in the conspiracy, in its view, the enormity of what you were part of is clear. You cooperated with

a conspiracy which involved you repeatedly lying and/or not admitting these matters to the police in your three police interviews. Furthermore, this was a conspiracy that could have resulted in an innocent individual being arrested and potentially sent to prison. You had a number of opportunities during the criminal proceedings, including during interviews with the police, to tell the truth about the conspiracy, but instead you chose to maintain your denial until the first day of the criminal trial. In the Committee's judgement, this left the victim and any other witness in considerable limbo until the very last point when the trial was about to commence.

91. Given the nature and seriousness of your conviction, and the limited nature of your insight and remediation, despite the fact that it is now almost four years since your offence, the Committee questioned whether a suspension order, even for the maximum period of 12 months would be sufficient to maintain public confidence in the dental profession and uphold proper professional standards and conduct.

92. In reaching its conclusion, the Committee took account of paragraph 282 of the Guidance which deals with erasure. It considered the following factors for erasure to be engaged in this case:

- The findings include serious departure(s) from the relevant professional standards.
- Serious deliberate harm occurred to the victim.
- In the Committee's judgement, as stated above, there is a risk of repetition.
- Your conviction involved serious deceit and a lack of integrity, and it was almost four years before you acknowledged this.

93. Having noted the presence of these factors from paragraph 282 of the Guidance, it was the view of the Committee that, in all the circumstances of this case, a suspension order would not be sufficient to satisfy the public interest. The Committee considered that this is a case where the behaviour exhibited is fundamentally incompatible with continued registration. The Committee considered that any sanction less than erasure would severely undermine public confidence in the dental profession. The Committee considered that the seriousness of what you did, the impact on the victim, the impact on the profession and public confidence in it, along with the continued limitations around your insight into that seriousness, outweighs your potential value to the profession.

94. Accordingly, the Committee determined that the only appropriate and proportionate sanction is that of erasure.

95. Unless you exercise your right of appeal, your name will be erased from the Register for Dental Care Professionals, 28 days from the date that notice of this Committee's direction is deemed to have been served upon you.

96. The Committee now invites submissions from Mr Thomas and from Mr Brassington, as to whether an immediate order of suspension should be imposed on your registration to cover the 28-day appeal period, pending the taking effect of its substantive direction for erasure.

### **Decision on an immediate order – 13 May 2026**

97. The Committee has made a substantive determination in this case regarding your fitness to practise, therefore the interim order currently in place on your registration in relation to these matters is hereby revoked.

98. In considering whether to impose an immediate order of suspension on your registration, the Committee took account of Mr Thomas' application that such an order should be imposed. He submitted that the Committee's direction for erasure will not take effect for 28 days or until an appeal has been heard. He stated that on the basis of the Committee's substantive determination an immediate order is necessary in this case, particularly taking into account the Committee's decision regarding the need to uphold the wider public interest. It was Mr Thomas' submission that members of the public would be shocked if you were allowed to practise unrestricted during the intervening period.

99. Mr Brassington confirmed that he had no submissions to make in respect of an immediate order.

100. The Committee accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser, who confirmed the statutory test for immediate orders and outlined the factors the Committee should take into account in reaching its decision.

101. In all the circumstances, having considered its substantive determination, the Committee was satisfied that the imposition of an immediate order of suspension on your registration is necessary for the protection of the public and is otherwise in the public interest.

102. In the Committee's judgement, there is a risk of repetition in this case, particularly given the limited evidence in relation to your insight and reflection into the seriousness of your conviction. The Committee noted that an immediate order might be considered necessary where a registrant's behaviour is considered to pose a risk. The Committee was satisfied, based on its substantive determination, that an immediate order is necessary in this case on public protection grounds.

103. The Committee was also satisfied, based on its substantive determination, that an immediate order is required in the wider public interest, in view of the gravity of its findings. In its substantive determination, the Committee concluded that your conduct, as highlighted in this case, is fundamentally incompatible with continued registration as a dental

professional. The Committee considered that it would be inconsistent not to impose an immediate order in the circumstances. It considered that a reasonable and well-informed member of the public would be profoundly shocked if an immediate order was not put in place. In the Committee's view, immediate action is required to maintain public confidence in the dental professions, the regulatory process and to uphold proper professional standards.

104. The effect of the foregoing substantive determination and this order is that your registration will be suspended forthwith to cover the appeal period. Unless you exercise your right of appeal, the substantive direction for erasure will take effect 28 days from the date of deemed service.

105. Should you exercise your right of appeal, this immediate order will remain in place until the resolution of the appeal.

106. That concludes this determination.