

**HEARING HEARD IN PUBLIC**  
**PITCHER, Angelique**  
**Registration No: 280709**  
**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT COMMITTEE**  
**MARCH 2022**

**Outcome: Erased with immediate suspension**

PITCHER, Angelique, a dental nurse, NCFE CACHE Level 3 Diploma in the Principles and Practice of Dental Nursing CACHE 2018, was summoned to appear before the Professional Conduct Committee on 3 March 2022 for an inquiry into the following charge:

**Charge**

“That, being registered as a dental care practitioner:

1. You were convicted in Bermuda on 27 July 2010 of two counts of importing a controlled drug, namely cannabis and cannabis resin, for which you received a custodial sentence of 3 years' imprisonment.
2. Within your signed application form for registration with the General Dental Council, which was received by the General Dental Council on 19 November 2018, in response to the question: “Have you been convicted of a criminal offence and/or cautioned and/or are you currently subject to any police investigations which might lead to a conviction or a caution in the UK or any other country?”, you ticked the box “No”.
3. Your conduct in relation to Charge 2 above was:
  - a) misleading; and/or,
  - b) lacking integrity; and/or,
  - c) dishonest in that you knew that you had conviction as specified in Charge 1.

AND that by reason of the facts alleged, your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of your conviction and misconduct.”

Ms Pitcher was not present and was not represented. On 3 March 2022 the Chairman made a statement regarding preliminary matters. On 4 March 2022 the Chairman announced the findings of fact to the Counsel for the GDC:

“This is the Professional Conduct Committee’s inquiry into the facts which form the basis of the allegation against Ms Pitcher that her fitness to practise is impaired by reason of her conviction and/or misconduct. Ms Pitcher did not attend the hearing and was not represented. Miss Jessica Ward of Counsel presented the General Dental Council’s (GDC) case. The hearing was held remotely on Microsoft Teams.

**Preliminary Matters**

At the outset of the hearing, the Committee firstly considered whether notice of the hearing had been served on Ms Pitcher in accordance with the GDC (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2006 (the Rules) and whether to proceed with the hearing in Ms Pitcher’s absence. The

Committee heard submissions from Miss Ward and accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser.

### **Decision on Service of the Notice of Hearing - 3 March 2022**

The Committee received from the GDC an indexed hearing bundle, of 40 pages, which contained a copy of the Notice of Hearing ('the notice'), dated 21 January 2022, thereby complying with the 28-day notice period. The notice was sent to Ms Pitcher's registered address by Special Delivery, and it was also sent by secure email.

The Committee was satisfied that the notice sent to Ms Pitcher contained proper notification of today's hearing. This included the hearing's time, date and that it will be taking place remotely on Microsoft Teams, and the other prescribed information including notification that the Committee had the power to proceed with the hearing in Ms Pitcher's absence.

On the basis of the information provided, the Committee was satisfied that the notice had been served on Ms Pitcher in accordance with Rules 13 and 65.

### **Decision on Proceeding in the Registrant's Absence – 3 March 2022**

The Committee next considered whether to exercise its discretion under Rule 54 of the Rules to proceed with the hearing in the absence of Ms Pitcher. The Committee approached the issue of proceeding in absence with the utmost care and caution. It took into account the factors to be considered in reaching its decision, as set out in the case of *R v Jones (Anthony) [2002] UKHL 5* and *GMC v Adeogba & Visvardis [2016] EWCA Civ 162*. It remained mindful of the need to be fair to both Ms Pitcher and the GDC, taking into account the public interest and Ms Pitcher's own interests.

The Committee noted Ms Pitcher's email to the GDC, dated 21 August 2020, in which she stated that she, "*will not be attending any hearing in regards to this matter as I made it very clear to the GDC via email that I will not be renewing my GDC registration*". The Committee further noted that no further emails had been received by the GDC from Ms Pitcher until 00:59 on 3 March 2022. In that email, Ms Pitcher stated that she was not currently living in the UK and that she will not be able to attend the hearing owing to the "*major time difference*". An email response was sent by the GDC before the start of the hearing as well as attempts made to contact Ms Pitcher by telephone. The Committee decided that it was appropriate that a further email be sent to Ms Pitcher and this was done by the Hearings Support Officer (HSO) at 12:56 on 3 March 2022 inviting her to attend the hearing by 2 pm (10 am local time for Ms Pitcher). The email also stated that if no response was received from Ms Pitcher then it was likely that the hearing would proceed in her absence. The Committee did not receive a response from Ms Pitcher by 2 pm.

Taking all of this into consideration, the Committee was satisfied that all possible steps had been taken to notify Ms Pitcher of the hearing. The Committee concluded, therefore, that it was clear that Ms Pitcher had waived her right to attend the hearing. Given that Ms Pitcher had voluntarily absented herself, the Committee determined that it should proceed in her absence having regard to the public interest in the expeditious disposal of cases. It concluded that no useful purpose would be served by an adjournment of this hearing as there was no realistic prospect of Ms Pitcher attending any future hearing.

In those circumstances, the Committee determined that it was fair and appropriate to proceed with the hearing in the absence of Ms Pitcher. The Committee reminded itself that Ms Pitcher's absence added nothing to the GDC's case and was not to be taken as an indication of guilt.

Whilst the Committee was retired in private determining the facts, a further email was received from Ms Pitcher in which she confirmed that she was, "*more than willing for the committee to proceed with out me and send me an email with the outcome...*".

### **Decision on Admissibility of Evidence – 3 March 2022**

Miss Ward then addressed the Committee on the admissibility of the evidence contained in the witness statement of Ms Sinead Ahern-Doherty, a senior paralegal in the GDC's In-house Legal Presentation Service (ILPS), dated 2 November 2021. She stated that the evidence of Ms Pitcher's conviction, as described in head of charge 1, was provided by the ACRO Criminal Records Office (ACRO) and exhibited as part of Ms Ahern-Doherty's witness statement. Therefore, it is considered as hearsay evidence. However, she submitted that it ought to be admissible for these proceedings. She further submitted that Ms Pitcher, in her email correspondence with the GDC, has accepted that she has received a conviction. Miss Ward submitted, therefore, that it would be in the interests of justice and there would be no unfairness to Ms Pitcher if this evidence was to be admitted.

The Committee took into account the submission made by Miss Ward and accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser. The Committee also noted its powers under Rules 57(1) and 57(2) regarding the admissibility of evidence. It was satisfied that the documentary evidence from ACRO was consistent with the other evidence in this case relating to Ms Pitcher's alleged conviction, including Ms Pitcher's emails to the GDC in which she stated she had, "*a criminal record back in 2009...*". The Committee considered that there would be no unfairness to Ms Pitcher and that it would be in the interests of justice for this evidence to be admitted. It noted that it would be able to determine in due course how much weight it should attach to the evidence when considering the heads of charge.

The Committee, therefore, granted Miss Ward's application.

### **Summary of Allegations**

It is alleged that on 27 July 2010 Ms Pitcher was convicted in Bermuda of two counts of importing a controlled drug, namely cannabis and cannabis resin, for which she received a custodial sentence of three years' imprisonment. It is further alleged that, in November 2018, she did not disclose this conviction on her application form when applying to the GDC for registration. It is alleged that Ms Pitcher's failure to disclose her conviction to the GDC was misleading, lacking integrity and dishonest.

### **Evidence Received**

By way of factual evidence from the GDC, the Committee was provided with a witness statement from Ms Sinead Ahern-Doherty, a senior paralegal in the GDC's In-house Legal Presentation Service (ILPS), dated 2 November 2021, with exhibited documents. It also received an indexed bundle of documents showing the GDC's attempts to obtain evidence of Ms Pitcher's conviction in Bermuda.

### **The Committee's Findings of Fact**

The Committee has considered all the documentary evidence presented to it. It took account of the submissions made by Miss Ward, on behalf of the GDC. The Committee heard and accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser. In accordance with that advice, it has considered each head of charge separately, bearing in mind that the burden of proof rests with the GDC and that the standard of proof is the civil standard, that is, whether the alleged matters are found proved on the balance of probabilities.

The Committee’s findings in relation to each head of charge are as follows:

<p>1.</p>	<p>You were convicted in Bermuda on 27 July 2010 of two counts of importing a controlled drug, namely cannabis and cannabis resin, for which you received a custodial sentence of 3 years' imprisonment.</p> <p><b>Found Proved</b></p> <p>The Committee considered the information provided to the GDC from the ACRO Criminal Records Office. It noted that ACRO was unable to provide a certificate of conviction. However, it noted that ACRO has provided the GDC with a document from Interpol, which states that Ms Pitcher was convicted on 27 July 2010 for two offences, namely “<i>importation of a controlled drug (cannabis)</i>” and “<i>importation of a controlled drug (cannabis resin)</i>”. It further noted that the document states that Ms Pitcher was sentenced to three years in prison.</p> <p>The Committee also considered Ms Pitcher’s email to the GDC, dated 21 August 2020, in which she states that, “<i>I did have a criminal record back in 2009...</i>”</p> <p>Furthermore, the Committee had sight of the original complaint made to the GDC about Ms Pitcher, which was dated 2 February 2019. It noted that the complaint states that Ms Pitcher, “<i>was arrested in Bermuda in 2009 for drug possession she was also sentence to prison (sic)...</i>”</p> <p>In considering all the evidence, the Committee was satisfied that Ms Pitcher was convicted in Bermuda on 27 July 2010 of two counts of importing a controlled drug, namely cannabis and cannabis resin, and received a custodial sentence of three years' imprisonment. It considered that, although it has not seen a certificate of conviction, the evidence from ACRO was credible and reliable, and also consistent with the information provided by Ms Pitcher and in the initial complaint received by the GDC.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Committee found this head of charge proved.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Within your signed application form for registration with the General Dental Council, which was received by the General Dental Council on 19 November 2018, in response to the question: “<i>Have you been convicted of a criminal offence and/or cautioned and/or are you currently subject to any police investigations which might lead to a conviction or a caution in the UK or any other country?</i>”, you ticked the box “<i>No</i>”.</p> <p><b>Found Proved</b></p> <p>The Committee had sight of the declaration form completed by Ms Pitcher. It noted that it was signed by Ms Pitcher and dated 15 November 2018. The Committee also noted that the form clearly shows that Ms Pitcher ticked the box “<i>No</i>” in answer to the question, “<i>Have you been convicted of a criminal offence and/or cautioned and/or are you currently subject to any police investigations which might lead to a conviction or a caution in the UK or any other country?</i>”.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Committee noted that in Ms Pitcher’s email to the GDC, dated 21 August 2020, she did not dispute that she had ticked “<i>no</i>” when she</p>

	<p>stated, "...on the application it asked for criminal charges, in which I checked no..."</p> <p>Accordingly, the Committee found this head of charge proved.</p>
3.	<p>Your conduct in relation to Charge 2 above was:</p>
	<p>a) misleading; and/or,</p> <p><b>Found Proved</b></p> <p>The Committee has found proved that Ms Pitcher did have a criminal conviction in 2010. The Committee was satisfied, therefore, that Ms Pitcher's conduct could mislead the GDC into believing that she did not have a criminal conviction when this was not true and, therefore, it was misleading.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Committee found this head of charge proved.</p>
	<p>b) lacking integrity; and/or,</p> <p><b>Found Proved</b></p> <p>The Committee noted the observations of Jackson, L J in <i>Wingate and Evans v Solicitors Regulation Authority [2018] EWCA Civ 366</i> where he stated that integrity was a broader concept than honesty and was a useful shorthand to express the higher standards which society expects from professional persons and which the profession expects from its own members.</p> <p>The Committee also noted that the GDC's document, "Standards for the Dental Team" states that dental professionals have a duty to be honest and act with integrity (Standard 1.3). The Committee also considered that the public would expect dental professionals to live up to their own professional and ethical standards. The Committee was satisfied that Ms Pitcher's conduct failed to adhere to the ethical standards of the profession and therefore lacked integrity.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Committee found this head of charge proved.</p>
	<p>c) dishonest in that you knew that you had conviction as specified in Charge 1.</p> <p><b>Found Proved</b></p> <p>When considering this head of charge, the Committee referred to the test set out in the case of <i>Ivey v Genting Casinos (UK) Ltd. t/a Crockfords [2017] UKSC 67</i>. It firstly considered Ms Pitcher's knowledge or belief as to the facts at the time she completed the application form for GDC registration. The Committee then considered whether her conduct would be viewed as dishonest by the objective standards of ordinary and decent people.</p> <p>The Committee noted Ms Pitcher's explanation for her actions as stated in her email to the GDC, dated 21 August 2020. She stated that, "<i>I have been made aware that on the application it asked for criminal charges, in which I checked no, due to my understanding that my past didn't need to be mentioned as I had no criminal record in the uk. I do understand now after</i></p>

	<p><i>talking to yourself...that it was referring to foreign countries as well.”</i></p> <p>The Committee has considered Ms Pitcher’s explanation. However, it noted that the declaration form was quite clear in that it referred to criminal convictions in other countries as well as the UK. The Committee also noted that in addition to the “yes” and “no” tick boxes, the form stated that applicants could use a separate sheet to provide any further details about any convictions. Furthermore, the Committee noted that it states as part of the declaration that any false statements may give rise to fitness to practise proceedings. The Committee also noted the severity of the offences committed by Ms Pitcher which resulted in a custodial sentence of three years. Taking all this into consideration, therefore, the Committee was satisfied that, it was more likely than not, that Ms Pitcher would have been aware that she would have needed to declare her conviction when completing the declaration form.</p> <p>The Committee then determined that Ms Pitcher’s conduct would be viewed as dishonest by the objective standards of ordinary and decent people.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Committee found this head of charge proved.</p>
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We move to Stage Two.”

On 4 March 2022 the Chairman announced the determination as follows:

“Having announced its decision on the facts, in accordance with Rule 20 of the Fitness to Practise Rules 2006, the Committee heard submissions from Miss Jessica Ward, on behalf of the General Dental Council (“the GDC”) in relation to the matters of misconduct, impairment and sanction. The Committee also received advice from the Legal Adviser, which it accepted.

The Committee reminded itself that its decisions on misconduct, impairment and sanction are matters for its own independent judgement. There is no burden or standard of proof at this stage of the proceedings. It had regard to its duty to protect the public, declare and uphold proper standards of conduct and competence and maintain public confidence in the profession. Where applicable, the Committee took into consideration the GDC’s “Standards for the Dental Team” (September 2013) and the Guidance for the Practice Committees, including Indicative Sanctions Guidance, (October 2016, revised December 2020) (“the Practice Committee Guidance”). The Committee also had regard to relevant case law.

**Summary of the Committee’s Findings**

The Committee has found proved that Ms Pitcher was convicted in Bermuda of two counts of importing a controlled drug, namely cannabis and cannabis resin, for which she received a custodial sentence of three years’ imprisonment. The Committee also found proved that, in November 2018, Ms Pitcher did not disclose this conviction on her application form when applying to the GDC for registration. The Committee found her conduct in failing to disclose her conviction to the GDC to be misleading, lacking integrity and dishonest.

**Submissions**

In accordance with Rule 20 (1) (a), Miss Ward informed the Committee about Ms Pitcher’s fitness to practise history. She stated that a new document was being made available to the

Committee in relation to another fitness to practise matter involving Ms Pitcher. This document was the determination of a PCC review hearing which took place on 2 March 2022. The determination showed that a substantive PCC hearing took place in October 2020 and it was found proved that Ms Pitcher had failed to co-operate with the GDC's investigation into her fitness to practise. That Committee determined that Ms Pitcher's registration should be suspended for a period of four months. This was reviewed at a hearing in March 2021 and the suspension was extended for a period of 12 months. This suspension was extended for a further period of 12 months at the review hearing on 2 March 2022.

With regard to the matters in this case, Miss Ward submitted that Ms Pitcher's conduct was sufficiently serious to amount to misconduct.

In relation to the matter of impairment, Miss Ward referred the Committee to the case of *Cohen v GMC [2008] EWCH 581 (Admin)*. She submitted that dishonesty was difficult to remediate, but it was not impossible. She submitted that Ms Pitcher has provided no evidence of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) or any reflection or other evidence of remediation. Furthermore, she submitted that Ms Pitcher has not provided a response to the allegations or corresponded with the GDC with regard to this matter since August 2020 until her recent emails which were sent yesterday. Miss Ward also referred to Ms Pitcher's misconduct in the other GDC matter in which it was found that she had not complied with the GDC's investigation. As Ms Pitcher has shown no insight into her misconduct, Ms Ward submitted that her misconduct is likely be repeated. Therefore, Miss Ward submitted that Ms Pitcher's fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of her conviction and misconduct. Furthermore, she submitted that a finding of impairment was required in the public interest.

Lastly, Miss Ward addressed the Committee on the matter of sanction. She submitted that, owing to the seriousness of Ms Pitcher's conviction and misconduct, the most appropriate and proportionate sanction was one of erasure.

### **Misconduct**

The Committee first considered whether the facts found proved against Ms Pitcher amounted to misconduct. In doing so it had regard to the GDC publication *Standards for the Dental Team (2013)*. It looked at the following sections in particular:

- 1.3 *You must be honest and act with integrity.*
- 9.3 *Inform the GDC if you are subject to criminal proceedings or a regulatory finding is made against you anywhere in the world.*

The Committee considered that Ms Pitcher's actions, particularly in relation to dishonesty, were a serious departure from, and a clear breach of these standards. The Committee was also of the view that acting honestly and with integrity was fundamental to being a dental professional.

The Committee concluded, therefore, that Ms Pitcher's actions in this case were serious and had fallen far short of the standards of conduct that are proper in these circumstances and this amounted to misconduct.

### **Impairment**

The Committee then considered in turn whether Ms Pitcher's fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of her conviction and her misconduct.

The Committee was mindful of its role to protect the public interest, which includes the need to maintain proper standards of conduct among dental professionals, and to protect patients from risk of harm.

When considering Ms Pitcher's conviction, the Committee had regard to the GDC document titled, "*Guidance for decision makers on the impact of criminal convictions and cautions*". In particular, the Committee noted the following paragraphs under the heading of 'General Principles':

*"9. When deciding on the impact the conviction or caution has on an applicant's fitness to practise, the GDC should consider the nature and seriousness of the offence and the applicant's character and conduct since the offence.*

*11. The applicant's character and conduct since the offence are important issues in the context of their application and their ongoing fitness to practise. ..."*

The Committee noted that Ms Pitcher's conviction dates from 2010. The Committee was also mindful that it has been provided with no information regarding the circumstances which led to the conviction and that it took place before she was a registered dental professional with the GDC. However, the Committee considered that the sentence that was imposed on Ms Pitcher of three years' imprisonment was indicative of the seriousness of the conviction. Furthermore, the Committee noted that Ms Pitcher has provided no evidence of any remediation undertaken or insight into her conviction. In particular, the Committee has seen no evidence that Ms Pitcher has reflected on the seriousness of her conviction or the impact it has on her role as a dental professional and the public confidence in the profession. Rather, the Committee was of the view that, in her emails to the GDC in August 2020, Ms Pitcher sought to minimise the seriousness of her conviction and was more focused on finding out how the matters came to the attention of the GDC.

The Committee concluded, therefore, that Ms Pitcher's fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of her conviction.

The Committee next went on to consider Ms Pitcher's misconduct. In doing so it had regard to the case of *Cohen v GMC [2008] EWCH 581 (Admin)*. The Committee also considered the following paragraph in the Practice Committee Guidance:

*"A failure to inform the GDC of a conviction or caution, or declare one at the point of application for registration is considered very serious. This is because a registrant's character and conduct since the offence are important issues in the context of assessing their ongoing fitness to practise. Disclosure of such information, therefore, provides a useful factual basis on which to assess whether the offence(s) were indicative of attitudes or personal characteristics which are fundamentally incompatible with professional registration due to the risk they present to the public or the wider public interest."*

The Committee firstly noted that dishonesty, as it is an attitudinal failing, is difficult to remediate but not impossible. The Committee next considered whether it has been remediated. The Committee noted that it has seen no evidence of Ms Pitcher's insight into her misconduct. The Committee has seen no evidence of any CPD courses undertaken, for example in relation to ethics, and no written reflections from Ms Pitcher. The Committee also noted that in her email to the GDC dated 21 August 2020 she seemed to suggest that she had not done anything wrong when she stated that, "*I have never committed any offence in the UK. I did everything correct. I never worked without my registration...*" With regard to

whether Ms Pitcher would repeat her misconduct, the Committee was of the view that owing to the complete absence of any insight, it was likely that Ms Pitcher may repeat her dishonest behaviour. Although, the Committee was of the view that as a result of its finding at this hearing she may not repeat the specific conduct as outlined in this case, there was a high risk of repetition of her dishonest behaviour in a more general sense.

The Committee was also of the view that this case clearly engaged the wider public interest which includes maintaining public confidence in the dental profession; upholding the reputation of the dental profession; and declaring and upholding appropriate standards of conduct among dental professionals. It concluded that a reasonable and informed member of the public would lose confidence in the profession and the dental regulator if a finding of impairment was not made in the circumstances of this case.

The Committee therefore determined that Ms Pitcher's fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of her misconduct.

### **Sanction**

The Committee next considered what sanction, if any, to impose on Ms Pitcher's registration. It recognised that the purpose of a sanction is not to be punitive although it may have that effect. The Committee applied the principle of proportionality balancing Ms Pitcher's interest with the public interest. It also took into account the *Practice Committee Guidance*.

The Committee considered the mitigating and aggravating factors in this case.

It concluded that there were no mitigating factors in this case.

The aggravating factors in this case include:

- Dishonesty;
- Deliberate misconduct;
- Blatant or wilful disregard of the role of the GDC and the systems regulating the profession;
- Previous disciplinary findings;
- Lack of insight.

The Committee decided that it would be inappropriate to conclude this case with no further action. It would not satisfy the public interest given the serious nature of the conviction and misconduct.

The Committee then considered the available sanctions in ascending order starting with the least serious.

The Committee concluded that misconduct of this nature cannot be adequately addressed by way of a reprimand. It cannot be said to be at the lower end of the spectrum of seriousness. The public interest would not be sufficiently protected by the imposition of such a sanction. The Committee therefore determined that a reprimand would be inappropriate and inadequate.

The Committee then considered whether a conditions of practice order would be appropriate. However, it noted that it would be difficult to formulate conditions to address the issue of Ms Pitcher's dishonesty. The Committee was of the view that conditions were

neither sufficient nor appropriate to address the seriousness of the misconduct and safeguard the wider public interest.

The Committee next considered whether to suspend Ms Pitcher's registration for a specified period. It questioned whether a suspension would be sufficient in all the circumstances of the misconduct that it has found and with regard to Ms Pitcher's conviction. In reaching its decision, the Committee considered that Ms Pitcher has shown no insight into these serious matters. The Committee also noted that Ms Pitcher has not shown any remorse for her actions or engaged meaningfully with the GDC's investigation. The Committee, therefore, concluded that a sanction of suspension would not be sufficient to mark the seriousness of the misconduct and Ms Pitcher's conviction. Furthermore, the Committee concluded that the suspension of Ms Pitcher's registration would not be sufficient to maintain the public's confidence in the dental profession.

In considering whether the sanction of erasure was appropriate, the Committee had regard to paragraph 7.34 of the Guidance, which states:

*“Erasure will be appropriate when the behaviour is fundamentally incompatible with being a dental professional: any of the following factors, or a combination of them, may point to such a conclusion:*

- *serious departure(s) from the relevant professional standards;*
- *serious dishonesty, particularly where persistent or covered up;*
- *a persistent lack of insight into the seriousness of actions or their consequences.”*

It was the view of the Committee that all of the above applied in the circumstances of this case. It noted that Ms Pitcher has shown a persistent lack of insight into her behaviour and her conduct and conviction was a serious departure from the standards expected of dental professionals. Given these reasons, the Committee concluded that Ms Pitcher's behaviour was fundamentally incompatible with being a dental professional.

In all the circumstances, the Committee has determined to erase Ms Pitcher's name from the Dental Care Professionals Register.

The Committee now invites submissions as to whether an immediate order should be imposed on Ms Pitcher's registration, pending the taking effect of its determination for erasure.

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### **Immediate Order**

The Committee has considered whether to make an order for the immediate suspension of Ms Pitcher's registration in accordance with Section 36U of the Dentists Act 1984 (as amended).

Miss Jessica Ward, on behalf of the GDC, submitted that such an immediate order is necessary.

The Committee has considered the submission made. It has accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser.

The Committee is satisfied that an immediate order of suspension is necessary in the public interest. The Committee concluded that given the nature of its findings and its reasons for the substantive order of erasure in Ms Pitcher's case, it is necessary to direct that an

immediate order of suspension be imposed on this ground. The Committee considered that, given its findings, if an immediate order was not made in the circumstances, there would be a risk that public confidence in the profession would be undermined.

The effect of this direction is that Ms Pitcher's registration will be suspended immediately. Unless Ms Pitcher exercises her right of appeal, the substantive order of erasure will come into effect 28 days from the date on which notice of this decision is deemed to have been served on her. Should Ms Pitcher exercise her right of appeal, this immediate order for suspension will remain in place until the resolution of any appeal.

That concludes this hearing."