

29th March

NEWS RELEASE

Margate convicted chiropodist is struck off the Register

A chiropodist who was convicted of harassment has been struck off by the Health Professions Council (HPC), a health regulator. As he is no longer registered with the HPC, David Leeson will no longer be able to practise using the legally protected title 'chiropodist'.

It was alleged that David Leeson, a chiropodist registered in Margate, was not fit to practise because he had been convicted of harassment. He was convicted at Thanet Magistrates Court on 22nd May 2003, was made the subject of a Community Punishment Order for 80 hours, ordered to pay compensation and costs, and a restraining order was imposed on him.

A panel of the Conduct and Competence committee of the Health Professions Council met on 25th March. The panel heard that Mr Leeson had at one point made over 100 phonecalls to the complainant in one night. The panel also heard evidence from Mr Leeson who represented himself at the hearing; Mr Leeson played recorded answerphone messages from the period, cited support from patients, and said that the nature of the relationship he was in at the time meant that such contact was not excessive.

In giving the finding, Sandy Yule, chair of the panel, said,
"We are here to ensure the public's confidence in the maintenance of the Register of the Health Professions Council and the professional standing of those so registered.

"The duties of the registrant are clearly set out by the Health Professions Council. This includes maintaining high standards of personal conduct.

"The Committee has carefully considered the lengthy evidence presented on behalf of Mr Leeson. However, the Committee consider that this conviction demonstrates a lack of judgement and behavioural norms expected of a professional person and registrant.

Mr Leeson, you appeared not to have appreciated the gravity of the events and persisted in your conduct.

"Mr Leeson, the Committee has agreed to order the Registrar to strike your name from the register. The Committee must be assured that the reputation of the register and the confidence of the public is maintained so far as the personal conduct of the registrant is concerned.

We considered all the options and are driven to the conclusion that striking off is the only way to protect the public where there is a lack of insight or denial as to the gravity of this offence."

The Health Professions Council is a UK-wide health regulator set up to protect the public. It sets standards for twelve health professions. The HPC only registers people who meet its standards for their professional skills, behaviour and health.

ENDS

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Notes to Editors

1. Full details of this case including the notice of allegation, panel's findings, and particulars of lack of competence, will be posted on the HPC website here: <http://www.hpc-uk.org/legal/ftp/HPC-03-CH-053.htm>
2. Information about the HPC's fitness to practice proceedings can be found on the HPC website here: <http://www.hpc-uk.org/legal/>

HPC-03-CH-053