

21st June 2004
NEWS RELEASE

St. Ives occupational therapist suspended from practice for one year

An occupational therapist from St. Ives has had her registration suspended for one year by the Health Professions Council (HPC).

A panel of the Conduct and Competence committee of the HPC met on the 17th June to hear the case of Gaynor McAlister. The panel heard an allegation of lack of competence between 17th April 2001 and 9th September 2003 whilst Gaynor McAlister was employed by the Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust.

Keith Ross, chair of the panel, said, "We have carefully considered all the evidence presented to us, and have concluded that the evidence is reliable. We have noted examples in the evidence of:

- Unacceptable standards of note taking
- Failure to provide pre and post operative assessments
- Unacceptable patient interventions
- Deficiencies in workload planning

"We are satisfied that Miss McAlister had the opportunity to remedy these deficiencies but did not do so. Her actions and omissions fall below the standards expected of a registered health professional as set out in the Standards of Proficiency for occupational therapists and we therefore find that her fitness to practise is impaired.

"We have concluded that Miss McAlister should be suspended from the register for a period of one year. In reaching this conclusion we have taken the view that the impairment to Miss McAlister's fitness to practise is such that it presents a risk to patients, and that in these circumstances a caution or condition of practice would not protect the public."

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, and will take action against people who do not.

While she is not registered with the HPC, Gaynor McAlister cannot practise anywhere in the UK using the protected title 'occupational therapist'.

ENDS

Notes to editors

1. Full details of this case including the notice of allegation and panel's findings, will be posted on the HPC website here:

<http://www.hpc-uk.org/legal/ftp/HPC-03-OT-066.htm>

2. Information about the HPC's fitness to practise proceedings can be found on the HPC website here: www.hpc-uk.org/legal

HPC-03-OT-066