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NEWS RELEASE

Birmingham speech and language therapist cautioned by UK health regulator

A speech and language therapist from Birmingham has been cautioned by the Health Professions Council.

A panel of the Conduct and Competence Committee met on the 4th February 2005 to consider the case of Christopher Newbold at Park House, Kennington.

Gordon Sutehall, Chair of the panel said....."The Panel accepts that the allegation is well founded on the basis of Mr Newbold's admissions.

"We note that Mr Newbold acknowledges the seriousness of the allegation and that his fitness to practise is impaired. We note that he fell well below the high standards required in the Health Professions Council's Standard of Conduct, Performance and Ethics and there was severe lack of judgment.

"We accept that the images he viewed were not pornographic or indecent and we note that the allegation does not suggest that this was the case. We note also that although these proceedings arose out of a police investigation, the Crown Prosecution Service decided not to proceed with a prosecution.

"In considering the sanctions available to us we have taken account of the lack of evidence that Mr Newbold presents a risk to patients or the public. We consider that there is a low likelihood of a recurrence of this behaviour. We have also taken consideration of the facts that the incidents admitted occurred in 1999 and that they did not take place in the work place.

"To take no further action in this case would fail to protect the public interest. Mediation is not appropriate in this case. We consider striking off and suspension would be disproportionate. We do not consider in the circumstances that Conditions of Practice would serve a remedial purpose.

"Therefore we are issuing Mr Newbold with a caution and directing the registrar to annotate the register accordingly for a period of 1 year".

The Health Professions Council is a UK wide health regulator set up to protect the public. It sets standards for thirteen 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.