

**ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS**

**V**

**MISS JUDITH LESLEY KAY**

**FINDINGS**

Miss Kay comes before this Committee on the charge set out in the charge sheet. She admitted the facts of the charge but denied that the conviction rendered her unfit to practise veterinary surgery.

Miss Kay qualified as a veterinary surgeon in 1991.

The Committee heard that in 2003 Miss Kay was convicted three times of motoring offences arising out of her drinking and driving. She was placed on probation and disqualified from driving for three years. However, she applied to the Court for earlier restoration of her driving licence, which was granted in January 2006. In May 2006 Miss Kay was convicted of a drinking and driving offence, with an alcohol reading of approximately three-and-two-thirds times the legal limit.

For this Miss Kay was sentenced to imprisonment for four months, the magistrates having regard to the very high alcohol, reading and to her previous convictions.

Miss Kay told the Committee that since her release from prison in June 2006, she had been attending meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous. She said that, following those meetings, in August 2006, she finally accepted that she was an alcoholic. Since then she has been attending AA meetings several times a week. She said that her last alcoholic drink had been about eight weeks prior to the hearing. She further described several events of the last six years which had, she said, caused her great distress and led to severe depression.

The Committee decided that the conviction, which she admitted, rendered her unfit to practise veterinary surgery.

In its discussions as to whether or not to strike her off immediately it became apparent that the Committee, when looking at the alternatives, could see no structured plan that satisfied it that she would remain alcohol-free so as to continue her veterinary practice in a way that would keep animals safe, satisfy the public, and maintain the reputation of the profession. The Committee was only too well aware that the facts of the conviction, and her admission that she had only been alcohol free for eight and a half weeks, raised a significant likelihood that she would again relapse.

The Committee decided that rather than strike off Miss Kay with immediate effect, it would give her a short interval in which to put together a structured plan that would ensure that she was monitored by colleagues when she practised, and that she was also monitored by a medical support programme.

The Committee has resolved to adjourn this case for a short period (the date of the return day to be fixed in the usual way). On its return the Committee will require the following conditions to be in place and confirmed in writing to the Chairman by 22 January 2007.

- 1) That Miss Kay does not practise veterinary medicine alone, but in a multi-vet practice or institution.
- 2) That she meets with a member of the Veterinary Surgeons Health Support Programme and accepts whatever recommendations are made by them. The Committee will require regular progress reports.
- 3) That she registers with a general medical practitioner and consults him/her on a regular basis who will report to the Committee upon her progress.
- 4) That any expenses arising out of the above shall be borne by her.
- 5) The Committee would be helped by Miss Kay providing references from previous employers commenting upon sobriety and veterinary ability.

The Committee will consider its decision at the reconvened hearing, when all options will be available to it.

For the avoidance of doubt, if in default of putting these conditions in place by the time of the resumed hearing, Miss Kay should expect her name to be removed from the *Register*.

**DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**  
**11 DECEMBER 2006**