

ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS

INQUIRY RE:

ALEXANDER MCKINSTRY MRCVS

ANDREW RUTHERFORD MRCVS

REBECCA INMAN MRCVS

DECISION ON SANCTIONS

Mr McKinstry

1. The Committee heard from the following live character witnesses who were called on behalf of Mr McKinstry:
 - i. JN, farmer client;
 - ii. DP, farmer client;
 - iii. AR, MRCVS.

2. The Committee also read numerous testimonials from colleagues, clients and fellow practitioners. The character witnesses and written testimonials exhibited knowledge of the regulatory proceedings and the charges.

3. Mr Eissa addressed the Committee upon aspects of the RCVS Disciplinary Committee Guidance on Sanction 2020, made submissions regarding the core principles to be applied, and referred to the aggravating and mitigating factors in Mr McKinstry's case. Mr Eissa submitted that in this particular case, a Reprimand was sufficient for the purposes of the public interest to mark the disgraceful conduct.

4. The Committee took into account the Sanctions Guidance 2020, and accepted the advice of the Legal Assessor, who referred to the general principles governing the imposition of sanctions.

5. The Committee had in mind that the decision whether to impose a sanction is a matter for its own independent judgment. The primary purpose of the available sanctions is not to punish but: (i) to protect the welfare of animals, and the public (ii) to maintain public confidence in the profession and (iii) to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct.

6. The Committee was aware it has previously found that there was no harm or risk of harm to animals or humans. Nor is it the College's case that the mobility scoring carried out by Mr McKinstry was indeed inaccurate. Therefore, in this case the purpose of any sanction was to maintain public confidence in the profession and to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct.

7. Any sanction imposed must be proportionate to the nature and extent of the conduct and to the maintenance of appropriate standards expected of members of the veterinary profession, and must weigh the seriousness of the disgraceful conduct and the need to protect the public interest, with and

against the interests of Mr McKinstry. No greater sanction should be imposed than is absolutely necessary. Accordingly the Committee considered the available sanctions in reverse order of seriousness.

8. The Committee was mindful of other cases decided by RCVS Disciplinary Committees, including those which were brought to its attention during submissions, but noted that these were not binding and that, while useful to an extent for comparison, the case of Mr McKinstry must be considered on its own facts and with its particular circumstances in mind.

9. The Committee took into account the following aggravating factors:

- i. Premeditated conduct.
- ii. Increased position of trust and responsibility as a Director of the Practice.
- iii. Breach of trust of Farm X, and the SDDG, in purporting to write and submit a letter which confirmed a RoMS accredited mobility scoring had taken place, as part of the SDDG scheme, when it had not.
- iv. He did not inform Dr Inman of his actions thus placing her professional reputation in jeopardy.

10. The Committee considered the following to be mitigating factors in Mr McKinstry's case:

- i. No harm or risk of harm to an animal or human.
- ii. No financial or personal gain.
- iii. A single incident.
- iv. Previous good character over a long and unblemished career of some 22 years.
- v. Open and frank admissions at an early stage to OA and in his dealings with the RCVS.
- vi. Subsequent efforts to avoid repetition of the behaviour and to remediate past misconduct.
- vii. Significant lapse of time since the incident.
- viii. Demonstration of insight into the disgraceful conduct.
- ix. Personal character references and testimonials.

11. The Committee took into account that the professional veterinary standards requiring honest and accurate certification are fundamental standards which underpin the profession. Veterinary certification entails the exercise of a fundamental responsibility which must justify public trust and confidence, because of the reliance placed upon it. Mr McKinstry's actions were premeditated and struck at the heart of a veterinary surgeon's fundamental duty of honest and accurate certification. Further, he risked undermining a scheme designed to promote animal welfare. He put Dr Inman at risk of being professionally discredited. The Committee also took into account that Mr McKinstry breached his increased position of trust and responsibility as a Director of the Practice. He also breached the trust of Farm X, and the SDDG,

in purporting to write and submit a letter which confirmed a RoMS accredited mobility scoring had taken place, as part of the SDDG scheme, when it had not.

12. The Committee also took into account that the dishonesty was not for personal or financial gain. Rather, the misguided motivation was to help Farm X, even if, as the Committee already has decided, such actions in fact served to undermine the farm's interests. In addition, it was a single incident, with no pattern of behaviour.
13. The Committee considered all of the evidence of the depth of Mr McKinstry's insight into what he had done, why it was wrong, and to prevent it recurring in the future. Mr McKinstry, while not in the Committee's view particularly articulate in expressing his insight, did state to the Committee that he knew what he did was wrong, and expressed regret and remorse and showed an understanding that he had breached fundamental professional veterinary standards and how this impacted upon the reputation of the profession. The Committee also took into account his letters to the Professional Conduct Department dated 14 September 2020 and 28 June 2021, which demonstrated reflection, and expressed remorse and acceptance that he was "wholly wrong".
14. The Committee also took account of the answer Mr McKinstry gave to the Committee when asked what steps he had taken to ensure that his disgraceful conduct would not happen again. He stated that he had put in place a farm animal coordinator at the practice whose role it is to liaise with clients to remind them of deadlines associated with health plans which were due for review. This was aimed at preventing a situation in which farmer clients approached the practice at the last minute with their requirements. Thus there was a system of monitoring compliance by farm clients with impending deadlines.
15. The single incident occurred over two and a half years ago, with no repetition of the conduct since.

16. In light of the insight shown, and the evidence of steps taken to remediate the disgraceful conduct, and in all the circumstances, the Committee decided that the risk of repetition was low.
17. The character witnesses and testimonials gave a clear indication of Mr McKinstry's professionalism, skill, dedication to the farms and the animals, his willingness to help and advise clients about their animals over the telephone and in person, both when on and off duty, assisting colleagues in sharing his knowledge, and mentoring junior colleagues.
18. The Committee was mindful of the fundamental importance of accurate and honest veterinary certification, particularly in relation to a scheme designed to safeguard animal welfare and maintain consumer confidence. Taking into account the aggravating and mitigating factors, and the particular circumstances of this case, the Committee found that the particular dishonesty in this case was towards, but not at, the lower end of the spectrum of seriousness.
19. The Committee first considered whether to take no further action, but decided that this would not be appropriate as it would not address the need to uphold public confidence in the profession and maintain proper professional standards. The Committee considered that the findings were too serious for this outcome to be proportionate.
20. The Committee considered a postponement of judgment, however did not consider that this would be proportionate in light of the seriousness of the case, and the demands of the public interest, namely the need to maintain public confidence and uphold standards.
21. The Committee went on to consider whether the sanction of a Reprimand or Warning as to future conduct was an appropriate sanction. The Committee concluded that the disgraceful conduct was too serious for such an outcome. It

was not at the lower end of the spectrum of seriousness. It risked undermining a scheme designed to promote animal welfare, and was carried out dishonestly. Further, the actions struck at the heart of the fundamental principle of honest certification and, in the Committee's view, brought the profession into disrepute.

22. The Committee considered Suspension. The disgraceful conduct was sufficiently serious to warrant more than a Reprimand or Warning. The RoMS accreditation scheme was put in place to protect the welfare of dairy cattle. While there were no direct welfare consequences of Mr McKinstry's actions, they risked undermining those protective measures designed to safeguard animal welfare. Further, those actions were deliberately dishonest and designed to mislead. The undermining of the fundamental tenet of honest certification, in relation to a scheme designed to protect and promote the welfare of animals struck at the heart of the profession.

23. The Committee also took into account that Mr McKinstry has insight, there is no significant risk of repeating his behaviour, and he would be fit to practise after the period of suspension.

24. The Committee carefully weighed the demands of the public interest, as well as the previously stated mitigating and aggravating factors and all the particular circumstances before it. The Committee concluded that a period of Suspension was sufficient and proportionate in this case to meet the need to maintain public confidence in the profession and uphold proper standards. It had a sufficient deterrent effect upon others in the profession and was sufficient to mark that the disgraceful conduct was unacceptable.

25. The Committee considered all of the factors before it, and decided that given the personal mitigation in this case, as set out above, a period of one month was appropriate and proportionate in all the circumstances. It would demonstrate how seriously the Committee considered such behaviour to be,

whilst taking into account all the mitigation. It would also ensure the public interest was met.

26. In coming to this decision, the Committee took into account the principle of proportionality, as well as the evidence relating to Mr McKinstry's financial circumstances, and the effect upon him and his family if he were unable to practise. However, the Committee decided taking into account all of the circumstances before it, the need to uphold public confidence and maintain proper standards of conduct and behaviour led the Committee to conclude that Suspension for one month was proportionate.

27. The Committee therefore decided, in the particular circumstances of this case, to impose Suspension for a period of one month on the basis that it would be proportionate to maintain public confidence in the profession and declare and uphold proper standards of conduct and behaviour in light of the serious nature of the disgraceful conduct.

28. The Committee did consider a longer period of Suspension or Removal from the Register, but in light of all of the factors set out above, including the mitigation, considered that this would be a disproportionate and indeed a punitive outcome.

Dr Rutherford

29. The Committee heard from the following live character witnesses who were called on behalf of Dr Rutherford:

- i. KA, MRCVS;

- ii. KA, farmer client;
- iii. SLM, MRCVS.

30. The Committee also read numerous testimonials from colleagues, clients and fellow practitioners. The character witnesses and written testimonials demonstrated knowledge of the regulatory proceedings and the charges.

31. Mr Jamieson addressed the Committee upon aspects of the RCVS Disciplinary Committee Guidance on Sanction 2020, referred to previous decisions of the RCVS, and referred to the aggravating and mitigating factors in Dr Rutherford's case. Mr Jamieson submitted that in this particular case, a Reprimand was appropriate.

32. The Committee took into account the Sanctions Guidance 2020, and accepted the advice of the Legal Assessor, who referred to the general principles governing the imposition of sanctions.

33. The Committee had in mind that the decision whether to impose a sanction is a matter for its own independent judgment. The primary purpose of the available sanctions is not to punish but: (i) to protect the welfare of animals, and the public (ii) to maintain public confidence in the profession and (iii) to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct.

34. The Committee was aware it has previously found that there was no harm or risk of harm to animals or humans. Nor is it the College's case that the mobility scoring carried out by Dr Rutherford was indeed inaccurate. Therefore, in this

case the purpose of any sanction was to maintain public confidence in the profession and to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct.

35. Any sanction imposed must be proportionate to the nature and extent of the conduct and to the maintenance of appropriate standards expected of members of the veterinary profession, and must weigh the seriousness of the disgraceful conduct and the need to protect the public interest with and against the interests of Dr Rutherford. No greater sanction should be imposed than is absolutely necessary. Accordingly the Committee considered the available sanctions in reverse order of seriousness.

36. The Committee was mindful of other cases decided by RCVS Disciplinary Committees, including those which were brought to its attention during submissions, but noted that these were not binding and that, while useful to an extent for comparison, the case of Dr Rutherford must be considered on its own facts and particular circumstances.

37. The Committee took into account the following aggravating factors:

- i. Premeditated conduct.
- ii. Increased position of trust and responsibility as a Director of the Practice at the time.
- iii. Breach of trust of Farms Y and Z, and the SDDG, in purporting to write and submit two letters which confirmed a RoMS accredited mobility scoring had taken place, as part of the SDDG scheme, when it had not.

38. The Committee considered the following to be mitigating factors in Dr Rutherford's case:

- i. No harm or risk of harm to an animal or human.
- ii. No financial or personal gain.
- iii. While there was more than one incident in respect of two letters having been submitted, they were close in time, and spanned a period of some 2 days, and the Committee saw the events as one incident rather than repeated or sustained conduct.
- iv. Previous good character over an unblemished career of some 13 years.
- v. Open and frank admissions in his dealings with the RCVS.
- vi. Subsequent efforts to avoid repetition of the behaviour and to remediate past misconduct.
- vii. Significant lapse of time since the incident.
- viii. Demonstration of insight into the disgraceful conduct.
- ix. Personal character references and testimonials.

39. The Committee took into account that the professional veterinary standards requiring honest and accurate certification are fundamental standards which underpin the profession. Veterinary certification entails the exercise of a

fundamental responsibility which must justify public trust and confidence, because of the reliance placed upon it. Dr Rutherford's actions were premeditated and struck at the heart of a veterinary surgeon's fundamental duty of honest and accurate certification. Further, he risked undermining a scheme designed to promote animal welfare and maintaining consumer confidence. The Committee also took into account that Dr Rutherford breached his increased position of trust and responsibility as a Director of the Practice. He also breached the trust of Farms Y and Z, and the SDDG, in purporting to write and submit two letters which confirmed a RoMS accredited mobility scoring had taken place, as part of the SDDG scheme, when it had not.

40. The Committee also took into account that the dishonesty was not for personal or financial gain. Rather, the motivation was to help the Farms Y and Z in question, even if, as the Committee already has decided, such actions in fact served to undermine the farm's interests. In addition, it was a single incident, with no pattern of behaviour.

41. The Committee considered all of the evidence of the depth of Dr Rutherford's insight into what he had done, why it was wrong, and to prevent it recurring in the future. Dr Rutherford expressed some insight in his written witness statement, and also in his evidence, for example recognising the impact of his actions on public confidence and expressing regret and remorse. In this regard, the Committee also took into account the evidence of SLM, MRCVS, his character witness, who told the Committee in his oral evidence that a junior vet approached SLM to tell him that Dr Rutherford had shared his experience with junior vets of being subject to regulatory proceedings as a means of teaching junior vets about the consequences of not meeting professional standards. The Committee considered that this evidence, which did not come from Dr Rutherford directly, was indicative of genuine insight, and reflection.

42. The Committee also took account that Dr Rutherford left his Directorship at the practice to work as a locum and had sought help to deal with personal stressors. The Committee considered that this indicated a reflective approach and a desire

to take steps to reduce the pressures which operated upon Dr Rutherford at the time of the disgraceful conduct.

43. The disgraceful conduct occurred over two and a half years ago, with no repetition of the conduct since.

44. In light of the insight shown, and the evidence of steps taken to remediate the disgraceful conduct, and in all the circumstances, the Committee decided that the risk of repetition was low.

45. The character witnesses and testimonials gave a clear indication of Dr Rutherford's professionalism, skill, dedication to the farms and the animals, his willingness to help and advise clients about their animals over the telephone and in person, both when on and off duty, and assisting colleagues in sharing his knowledge, and mentoring others.

46. The Committee was mindful of the fundamental importance of accurate and honest veterinary certification, particularly in relation to a scheme designed to safeguard animal welfare. Taking into account the aggravating and mitigating factors, and the particular circumstances of this case, the Committee found that the particular dishonesty in this case was towards, but not at, the lower end of the spectrum of seriousness.

47. The Committee first considered whether to take no further action, but decided that this would not be appropriate as it would not address the need to uphold public confidence in the profession and maintain proper professional standards. The Committee considered that the findings were too serious for this outcome to be proportionate.

48. The Committee considered a postponement of judgment, however did not consider that this would be appropriate in light of the seriousness of the case,

and the demands of the public interest, namely the need to maintain public confidence and uphold standards.

49. The Committee went on to consider whether the sanction of a Reprimand or Warning as to future conduct was an appropriate sanction. The Committee concluded that the disgraceful conduct was too serious for such an outcome. It was not at the lower end of the spectrum of seriousness. It risked undermining a scheme designed to promote animal welfare, and was carried out dishonestly. Further, the actions struck at the heart of the fundamental principle of honest certification and, in the Committee's view, brought the profession into disrepute.

50. The Committee considered Suspension. The disgraceful conduct was sufficiently serious to warrant more than a Reprimand or Warning. The RoMS accreditation scheme was put in place to protect the welfare of dairy cattle. While there were no direct welfare consequences of Dr Rutherford's actions, they risked undermining those protective measures designed to safeguard animal welfare. Further, those actions were deliberately dishonest and designed to mislead. The undermining of the fundamental tenet of honest certification, in relation to a scheme designed to protect and promote the welfare of animals struck at the heart of the profession.

51. The Committee also took into account that Dr Rutherford has insight, there is no significant risk of repeating his behaviour, and he would be fit to practise following a period of suspension.

52. The Committee carefully weighed the demands of the public interest, as well as the previously stated mitigating and aggravating factors and all the particular circumstances before it. The Committee concluded that a period of Suspension was sufficient and proportionate in this case to meet the need to maintain public confidence in the profession and uphold proper standards. It

had a sufficient deterrent effect upon others in the profession and was sufficient to mark that the disgraceful conduct was unacceptable.

53. The Committee considered all of the factors before it, and decided that given the personal mitigation in this case, as set out above, a period of one month was appropriate and proportionate in all the circumstances. It would demonstrate how seriously the Committee considered such behaviour to be, whilst taking into account all the mitigation. It would also ensure the public interest was met.

54. In coming to this decision, the Committee took into account the principle of proportionality, as well as the evidence relating to Dr Rutherford's financial circumstances, and the effect upon him and his family if he were unable to practise. However, the Committee decided, taking into account all of the circumstances before it, the need to uphold public confidence and maintain proper standards of conduct and behaviour led the Committee to conclude that a period of Suspension for one month was proportionate.

55. The Committee therefore decided, in the particular circumstances of this case, to impose a Suspension for a period of one month on the basis that it would be proportionate to maintain public confidence in the profession and declare and uphold proper standards of conduct and behaviour in light of the serious nature of the disgraceful conduct.

56. The Committee did consider a longer period of Suspension or Removal from the Register, but in light of all of the factors set out above, including the mitigation, considered that this would be a disproportionate and indeed a punitive outcome.

Dr Inman

57. The Committee heard from the following live character witnesses who were called on behalf of Dr Inman:

- i. HM, MRCVS;
- ii. JW, farmer client;
- iii. AC, farm veterinary practice administrator.

58. The Committee also read numerous testimonials from colleagues, clients and fellow practitioners. The character witnesses and written testimonials demonstrated knowledge of the regulatory proceedings and the charges.

59. Mr Jamieson addressed the Committee upon aspects of the RCVS Disciplinary Committee Guidance on Sanction 2020, referred to previous decisions of the RCVS, and referred to the aggravating and mitigating factors in Dr Inman's case. Mr Jamieson submitted that in this particular case, a Reprimand was appropriate.

60. The Committee took into account the Sanctions Guidance 2020, and accepted the advice of the Legal Assessor, who referred to the general principles governing the imposition of sanctions.

61. The Committee had in mind that the decision whether to impose a sanction is a matter for its own independent judgment. The primary purpose of the available sanctions is not to punish but: (i) to protect the welfare of animals, and the public (ii) to maintain public confidence in the profession and (iii) to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct.

62. The Committee was aware it has previously found that there was no harm or risk of harm to animals or humans. Therefore, in this case the purpose of any sanction was to maintain public confidence in the profession and to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct.

63. Any sanction imposed must be proportionate to the nature and extent of the conduct and to the maintenance of appropriate standards expected of members of the veterinary profession, and must weigh the seriousness of the disgraceful conduct and the need to protect the public interest with and against the interests of Dr Inman. No greater sanction should be imposed than is absolutely necessary. Accordingly the Committee considered the available sanctions in reverse order of seriousness.

64. The Committee was mindful of other cases decided by RCVS Disciplinary Committees, including those which were brought to its attention during submissions, but noted that these were not binding and that, while useful to an extent for comparison, the case of Dr Inman must be considered on its own facts and particular circumstances.

65. The Committee took into account the following aggravating factors:

- i. Increased position of trust and responsibility as a RoMS accredited mobility scorer.
- ii. Breach of trust of Farms Y and Z, and the SDDG, in knowingly allowing Dr Rutherford to write and upload the letters which confirmed she had carried out RoMS accredited mobility scoring as part of the SDDG scheme, when she had not.

66. The Committee considered the following to be mitigating factors in Dr Inman's case:

- i. No harm or risk of harm to an animal or human.
- ii. No financial or personal gain.
- iii. The charges relate to one telephone call and therefore the Committee saw it as a single incident rather than repeated or sustained conduct.
- iv. Previous good character over an unblemished career of some 9 years.
- v. Open and frank admissions in her dealings with the RCVS.
- vi. Subsequent efforts to avoid repetition of the behaviour and to remediate past misconduct.
- vii. Significant lapse of time since the incident.
- viii. Demonstration of insight into the disgraceful conduct.
- ix. Personal character references and testimonials.

67. The Committee took into account that the professional veterinary standards requiring accurate and honest certification are fundamental standards which underpin the profession. Veterinary certification entails the exercise of a fundamental responsibility which must justify public trust and confidence, because of the reliance placed upon it. Dr Inman's actions struck at the heart of

a veterinary surgeon's fundamental duty of honest and accurate certification. Further, she risked undermining a scheme designed to promote animal welfare and maintaining consumer confidence by allowing a dishonest departure from the processes required by it. The Committee also took into account that Dr Inman breached her increased position of trust and responsibility as a RoMS accredited mobility scorer. She also breached the trust of Farms Y and Z, and the SDDG, in knowingly allowing Dr Rutherford to write and upload the letters which confirmed she had carried out RoMS accredited mobility scoring as part of the SDDG scheme, when she had not.

68. The Committee also took into account that the dishonesty was not for personal or financial gain. Rather, the motivation was to help the Farms Y and Z in question, even if, as the Committee already has decided, such actions in fact served to undermine the farm's interests. In addition, it was a single incident, with no pattern of behaviour.

69. The Committee considered all of the evidence of the depth of Dr Inman's insight into what she had done, why it was wrong, and to prevent it recurring in the future. Dr Inman expressed insight and demonstrated her reflections in her written witness statement. Further, in her evidence, she demonstrated that recognised the impact of her actions on public confidence and expressed regret and remorse. Her evidence was also that she has reflected on how to change her approach to her work, and expressed a determination to find "better boundaries" so that she is not influenced by the pressures of her clients when she returns from maternity leave. Thus in the Committee's view, her reflections in themselves were a step which she has taken in an attempt to remediate her misconduct.

70. The disgraceful conduct occurred over two and a half years ago, with no repetition of the conduct since.

71. In light of the insight shown, and the evidence of steps taken to remediate the disgraceful conduct, and in all the circumstances, the Committee decided that the risk of repetition was low.

72. The character witnesses and testimonials gave a clear indication of Dr Inman's professionalism, skill, dedication to the farms and the animals, her willingness to help and advise clients about their animals over the telephone and in person, both when on and off duty, and assisting colleagues in sharing her knowledge, and mentoring others.

73. In all the circumstances, while mindful of the fundamental importance of accurate and honest veterinary certification, taking into account the aggravating and mitigating factors, and the particular circumstances of this case, the Committee found that the particular dishonesty in this case was towards, but not at, the lower end of the spectrum of seriousness.

74. The Committee first considered whether to take no further action, but decided that this would not be appropriate as it would not address the need to uphold public confidence in the profession and maintain proper professional standards. The Committee considered that the findings were too serious for this outcome to be proportionate.

75. The Committee considered a postponement of judgment, however did not consider that this would be appropriate in light of the seriousness of the case, and the demands of the public interest, namely the need to maintain public confidence and uphold standards.

76. The Committee went on to consider whether the sanction of a Reprimand or Warning as to future conduct was an appropriate sanction. The Committee concluded that the disgraceful conduct was too serious for such an outcome. It was not at the lower end of the spectrum of seriousness. It risked undermining

a scheme designed to promote animal welfare and was carried out dishonestly. Further, the actions struck at the heart of the fundamental principle of honest certification and, in the Committee's view, brought the profession into disrepute.

77. The Committee considered Suspension. The disgraceful conduct was sufficiently serious to warrant more than a Reprimand or Warning. The RoMS accreditation scheme was put in place to protect the welfare of dairy cattle. While there were no direct welfare consequences of Dr Inman's actions, they risked undermining those protective measures designed to safeguard animal welfare. Further, those actions were deliberately dishonest and designed to mislead. The undermining of the fundamental tenet of honest certification, in relation to a scheme designed to protect and promote the welfare of animals struck at the heart of the profession.

78. The Committee also took into account that Dr Inman has insight, there is no significant risk of repeating her behaviour, and she would be fit to practise after the period of suspension.

79. The Committee carefully weighed the demands of the public interest, as well as the previously stated mitigating and aggravating factors and all the particular circumstances before it. The Committee concluded that a period of Suspension was sufficient and proportionate in this case to meet the need to maintain public confidence in the profession and uphold proper standards. It had a sufficient deterrent effect upon others in the profession and was sufficient to mark that the disgraceful conduct was unacceptable.

80. The Committee considered all of the factors before it, and decided that given the personal mitigation in this case, as set out above, a period of one month was appropriate and proportionate in all the circumstances. It would demonstrate how seriously the Committee considered such behaviour to be, whilst taking into account all the mitigation. It would also ensure the public interest was met.

81. In coming to this decision, the Committee took into account the principle of proportionality, as well as potential impact upon Dr Inman if she were unable to practise. However, the Committee decided taking all into account all of the circumstances before it, the need to uphold public confidence and maintain proper standards of conduct and behaviour led the Committee to conclude that a period of Suspension for one month was proportionate.

82. The Committee therefore decided, in the particular circumstances of this case, to impose Suspension for a period of one month on the basis that it would be proportionate to maintain public confidence in the profession and declare and uphold proper standards of conduct and behaviour in light of the serious nature of the disgraceful conduct.

83. The Committee did consider a longer period of suspension or Removal from the Register, but in light of all of the factors set out above, including the mitigation, considered that this would be a disproportionate and indeed a punitive outcome.

Disciplinary Committee
20 June 2022

