

**ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS**

**INQUIRY RE:**

**HANNAH RUTH WILDE RVN**

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**DECISION ON SANCTION**

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1. The Committee next considered what, if any, sanction to impose. The Committee had regard to the Disciplinary Procedure Guidance on sanction provided by the College and to the advice of the Legal Assessor. The Committee considered separately what the appropriate sanction should be for the conduct Charges 4-5 which were found to amount to disgraceful conduct in a professional respect and for Charges 1-3 relating to the convictions which the Committee had concluded rendered Ms Wilde unfit to practise as an RVN.
2. The Committee took account of the submissions made by Counsel for the College and Ms Wilde's written submissions. The Committee had regard to the testimonials before it, provided by Ms Wilde. They speak to Ms Wilde's general demeanour and competencies as an RVN. However, the Committee noted that a none of those testimonials are signed and there is no reference to the charges being considered by this Committee in any of them.
3. The Committee is aware that its role at this stage is not to be punitive although any sanction may have a punitive affect. It is part of the public interest not to permanently deprive the public of an otherwise competent practitioner. The sanction which the Committee applies must be proportionate to the nature and extent of Ms Wilde's conduct and convictions and the Committee must weigh the public interest against the interests of Ms Wilde.

**Sanction in respect of the Convictions**

4. The Committee took into account the aggravating and mitigating factors identified in this case. The Committee noted that the convictions were for dishonest behaviour. The conduct was repeated and sustained. She used her knowledge as an RVN to forge prescriptions. She breached the trust of her employers by stealing from them.
5. In mitigation the Committee noted that Ms Wilde has no previous disciplinary history. Ms Wilde was apologetic and remorseful regarding her convictions. The Committee noted that there was no actual harm to animals or humans. It is also clear to the Committee that Ms Wilde has significant personal problems.
6. The Committee first considered whether to take no further action and it concluded that such action would not be appropriate or proportionate given the seriousness of its findings. The Committee also considered that a postponement of judgment or undertakings would be wholly inappropriate in all the circumstances. It would not be appropriate as it would not maintain public confidence in the profession or uphold proper professional standards of conduct.
7. The Committee next considered whether a reprimand or warning would be an appropriate sanction. In this case the conduct was repeated over a number of years. The Committee considered that neither a reprimand or warning would be appropriate as they would not maintain public confidence in the profession or uphold proper professional standards of conduct.
8. The Committee concluded that a period of suspension would not be appropriate or proportionate given the multiplicity and seriousness of the convictions.
9. The Committee is of the view that removal is the only appropriate sanction having regard to the dishonest nature of the convictions because Ms Wilde's conduct demonstrated a serious and repeated departure from professional standards and was fundamentally incompatible with remaining on the register.

#### **Sanction in respect of the Conduct Charges 4-5**

10. The Committee took into account the aggravating and mitigating factors identified in this case.
11. The Committee considered that in holding herself out as an RVN to gain employment and thereby receiving a financial gain was an aggravating feature in this case. Ms Wilde also breached the trust and respect the RCVS had in her by making a false declaration on her restoration application form.
12. In mitigation as has already been observed Ms Wilde had difficult personal circumstances. She is apologetic for her behaviour and demonstrates some insight.
13. The Committee first considered whether to take no further action and it concluded that such action would not be appropriate or proportionate given the seriousness of its

findings. The Committee also considered that a postponement of judgment or undertakings would be wholly inappropriate in all the circumstances.

14. The Committee next considered whether a reprimand or warning would be an appropriate sanction. In this case Ms Wilde repeatedly held herself out to two different employers as being an RVN. Further she was not open and honest with her regulator. The Committee considered that it would not be appropriate or proportionate to impose either a reprimand or a warning as they would not maintain public confidence in the profession or uphold proper professional standards of conduct.
15. The Committee considered whether suspension from the RCVSVN Register would be sufficient and proportionate in this case. The Committee noted that an RVN who has been suspended for a period of time can return to the Register after the defined period of suspension without review. The Committee concluded that a period of suspension would not be appropriate or proportionate given the serious and repeated nature of the findings.
16. Paragraph 53 of the Disciplinary Procedure Guidance indicates that removal from the Register may be appropriate where the behaviour is fundamentally incompatible with being a veterinary surgeon[or nurse] Ms Wilde's conduct breached a fundamental principle of the profession to be honest.
17. Ms Wilde demonstrated a lack of respect for her Regulator and a disregard of her Code of Professional Conduct. She deliberately dishonest to her Regulator. In those circumstances the likelihood of repetition was significant in the Committee's view.
18. The Committee concluded that Ms Wilde has fallen far short of the standards expected of an RVN. The Committee considered that the only appropriate sanction is that of Removal from the Register. Such a sanction is required to maintain public confidence in the profession and to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct and behaviour and to maintain confidence in the Regulator.
19. Accordingly, the Committee has decided that removal from the Register is the only appropriate and proportionate sanction in this case.
20. The Committee directs the Registrar to remove Ms Wilde's name from the Register

**VETERINARY NURSE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

**27 MARCH 2018**