

PUBLIC RECORD

Date: 12/11/2024

Medical Practitioner's name: Dr Anna CRAWFORD
GMC reference number: 4624952
Primary medical qualification: BM 1999 University of Southampton

Type of case	Outcome on impairment
Conviction	Impaired
Misconduct	Impaired
XXX	XXX

Summary of outcome
Suspension for 12 months

Legally Qualified Chair:

Legally Qualified Chair:	Mr Mark Scott
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Review on the Papers

This case was reviewed on the papers, with the agreement of both parties, by a Legally Qualified Chair.

Overarching Objective

Throughout the decision making process the chair has borne in mind the statutory overarching objective as set out in s1 Medical Act 1983 (the 1983 Act) to protect, promote and maintain the health, safety and well-being of the public, to promote and maintain public confidence in the medical profession, and to promote and maintain proper professional standards and conduct for members of that profession.

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1. I have noted the background to Dr Crawford' case, which was first considered by a medical practitioners' tribunal in November 2023 (*"the November 2023 Tribunal"*). Prior to the November 2023 Tribunal, Dr Crawford had been convicted of driving when in excess of the legal limit for alcohol in 2011 and 2012. In 2012 she had been sentenced to a three-year driving ban and 120 hours of community service. Undertakings were agreed between Dr Crawford and the GMC, and these remained in place until 2018 when Dr Crawford was removed from the medical register for administrative reasons.
2. During the Covid pandemic Dr Crawford returned to the medical register and started to undertake locum shifts. XXX
3. The November 2023 Tribunal found that on 9 October 2021, whilst working as a locum doctor on a paediatric ward, Dr Crawford was seen consuming alcohol. She was also found to have three or four additional cans of alcohol in her possession. The November 2023 Tribunal also found that on 19 January 2022, Dr Crawford had been detained by police and charged with driving when in excess of the legal limit for alcohol. She was convicted in respect of this at Elgin Sheriff Court on 10 March 2022. On 8 September 2022, she was sentenced to a Restriction of Liberty Order for six months, an Electronic Monitoring order and disqualified from driving for three years. XXX
4. The November 2023 Tribunal enquired with Dr Crawford as to what led her to consume alcohol on 9 October 2021. XXX. She advised it had been a difficult shift and buying the alcohol had been a lapse of judgment on her part. Dr Crawford gave no further explanation as to what prompted her to buy alcohol. The November 2023 Tribunal did not feel that she had provided a credible reason for purchasing and consuming alcohol that day. It determined her actions had put her patients at unwarranted risk of harm. It further determined that as she was covering the labour, post-natal and paediatric wards she was working with particularly vulnerable patients and had therefore breached paragraph 65 of Good Medical Practice.
5. The November 2023 Tribunal concluded that Dr Crawford's conduct had fallen so far short of the standards of conduct reasonably to be expected of a doctor as to amount to serious misconduct. It noted that the misconduct was not easily remediable as XXX. XXX therefore the November 2023 Tribunal could not be certain that the misconduct was highly unlikely to be repeated. Accordingly, it found her fitness to practise was impaired because of her misconduct.

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6. The November 2023 Tribunal also found that her conviction for driving when in excess of the legal limit for alcohol (she was noted to be three times over the limit) was a serious matter and that this was reflected by her sentence. The November 2023 Tribunal accepted that Dr Crawford was remorseful but noted that she was unable to provide a clear explanation as to how the events of that day arose. The November 2023 Tribunal considered that the conviction was not easily remediable as XXX. It also factored in the two previous convictions in respect of the similar conduct and could not determine that the risk of repetition was highly unlikely. It therefore concluded that Dr Crawford's fitness to practise was also impaired because of her conviction.

7. XXX

8. Having found Dr Crawford's fitness to practise impaired by reason off her misconduct, conviction, XXX the November 2023 Tribunal determined to suspend Dr Crawford's registration for a period of twelve months. It considered this duration would mark the seriousness of the conviction and misconduct. It also considered this duration would allow Dr Crawford to develop her insight and take steps to remediate the concerns identified.

9. In order to provide assistance at this review the November 2023 Tribunal recommended that Dr Crawford provide:

- A logbook of CPD activity with reflection;
- XXX;
- XXX;
- XXX;
- XXX;
- Further reflections on her strategies to address the risk of repetition and XXX.

10. Dr Crawford and the GMC have agreed that this review should be considered on the papers in accordance with Rule 21B of the General Medical Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2004. They have provided agreed terms of an order which I could make at this review.

11. I have considered all of the evidence presented to me, and the submissions made by the GMC. No submission was provided by Dr Crawford, but it was noted that she had signed an agreement form dated 4 November 2024. The said agreement form detailed a further twelve-month suspension had been agreed to by Dr Crawford.

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12. I have taken into account that since the previous order was made XXX

13. XXX

14. XXX

15. XXX

16. XXX. The GMC further submits that owing to the November 2023 Tribunal's consideration of XXX and her misconduct and conviction, together with a driving ban continuing to be in place until March 2025, her fitness to practise XXX remains impaired by reason of her conviction and misconduct.

17. The GMC submission also references the November 2023 Tribunal's conclusion that Dr Crawford's genuine remorse, ongoing remediation, and developing insight meant that her actions were not '*fundamentally incompatible with registration*'. Whilst noting that some of the recommendations of the November 2023 Tribunal have not been attended to, the GMC, having regard to XXX and her continued engagement with the fitness to practise proceedings, considers that a further period of suspension is appropriate. In the view of the GMC a further period of twelve months would allow time for Dr Crawford to XXX and address the concerns of the November 2023 Tribunal.

18. In reaching my decision, I have taken account of the Sanctions Guidance. I have borne in mind that the purpose of the sanction is not to be punitive, but to protect patients and the wider public interest, although it may have a punitive effect.

19. I have applied the principle of proportionality, weighing Dr Crawford's own interests with the public interest. The public interest includes amongst other things, the protection of patients, the maintenance of public confidence in the profession, and declaring and upholding of proper standards of conduct and behaviour.

20. I am satisfied that a period of suspension is proportionate and would be sufficient to protect the public and the public interest. I have therefore determined that Dr Crawford's registration be suspended for a period of twelve months.

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21. In reaching this decision, XXX. I also conclude that owing to XXX and her conviction and misconduct, the absence of any further remediation, the limited insight, and the risk of repetition, Dr Crawford's fitness to practise XXX remains impaired as a result of her misconduct and conviction.

22. I have noted that the November 2023 Tribunal found that paragraphs 91, 92 and 97 (a, XXX and f) of the Sanctions Guidance were all relevant. They remain relevant at this juncture and therefore suspension is an appropriate and proportionate sanction. I do not consider that erasure is appropriate on the basis that Dr Crawford's misconduct, conviction XXX are not fundamentally incompatible, particularly as she has some insight and continues to engage both with the fitness to practise proceedings and XXX. I have further noted that the November 2023 Tribunal also found that paragraphs 99 and 100 (a, b and c) were all relevant. They also remain relevant at this time. In my view, a period of twelve months is proportionate and appropriate in order to allow Dr Crawford the maximum time XXX so that she can further remediate and develop her insight.

23. The effect of this direction is that, unless Dr Crawford exercises her right of appeal, the period of suspension will take effect 28 days from when written notice of this determination has been served upon her. The current order of suspension will remain in place until the appeal period has ended, or in the event that she does appeal, that appeal is decided. A note explaining Dr Crawford's right of appeal will be provided to her.

24. Notification of this decision will be served on Dr Crawford in accordance with the Medical Act 1983, as amended.