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PRESS RELEASE

DOCTOR DIAGNOSES THE GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL WITH DEMENTIA

In an astonishing U-turn, the General Medical Council has reinstated Dr. Sarah Myhill to the Medical Register. In the previous twenty one months Dr Myhill was either suspended from the Medical Register or forced to practise medicine under severe restrictions. The GMC has conducted a series of prosecutions against Dr. Myhill since 2001, during which time she has faced the prospect of seven Fitness to Practise Hearings, the most recent having been booked for a full 25 days. All Hearings have been cancelled with no case to answer.

Dr. Myhill has observed *“The GMC has been incompetently prosecuting me since 2001. In doing so it has broken its own procedures and the laws of the land. Allegations against me have been vexatious, inconsequential and often untrue. The GMC is a dysfunctional organisation, not fit for purpose”*.

Sources close to the GMC say that this has been an orchestrated witch hunt against Dr. Myhill and that the GMC will be deeply embarrassed by their most recent incompetent handling of her case. Indeed, embarrassment might not be the GMC's only problem because, after a recent Freedom of Information request, it has transpired that, even only considering the most recent action against Dr Myhill alone, the GMC has spent £62,751.60 on solicitors' fees and other external costs. In addition the GMC's own internal legal team has clocked up 147 fruitless hours on this most recent case, with the investigation team being unable to disclose its hours!

Dr. Myhill is a private GP with a special interest in treating ME. Indeed, she has over 20 years' experience in this field and has treated many thousands of patients. She believes she has been targeted by the GMC because she treats ME as a physical, rather than a psychological disorder. The most recent investigation of her was triggered in June 2009, shortly after Dr. Myhill published a scientific paper showing that ME was associated with mitochondrial failure (Ref: *Int J Clin Exp Med* (2009) 2, 1-16; www.ijcem.com/files/IJCEM812001.pdf). Mitochondria are responsible for energy production in the body.

In its prosecution, the GMC has contravened the 1983 Medical Act by failing to inform Dr. Myhill what charges she faced until after her fourth IOP Hearing.

In addition, the GMC has contravened the 1998 Data Protection Act by taking patients' private and confidential NHS medical records without patient knowledge or consent and without informing the patient. This appears to be routine procedure for the GMC – it has no respect for patient confidentiality. At one of Dr Myhill's public hearings the GMC released so much patient information into the public arena that a seriously ill patient at the centre of one of the complaints could easily be identified. Neither this patient nor the patient's family had complained about Dr Myhill and throughout the investigation process, their wishes regarding anonymity were flagrantly disregarded by the GMC. This loss of anonymity caused much distress to the patient and family, distress that was only made worse when malicious and obscene comments were made about the patient on the public forums of the Bad Science website.

By contrast, Dr. Myhill has consistently refused to use the patient's notes in her defence because permission to use those notes had not been granted by the patient and family in an attempt to protect anonymity. As a result of this disparity in available evidence, Dr. Myhill was denied a fair trial.

In its prosecution the GMC also broke Human Rights legislation. There was no proper separation of prosecution and adjudication teams, Dr. Myhill did not know what charges she faced, the GMC refused to consider the facts given to them by Dr. Myhill and they unquestionably accepted vexatious and untrue allegations from unqualified members of the public and doctors. Indeed, at her third Interim

Orders Panel Hearing in October 2010, Dr. Myhill told the General Medical Council it was acting like a kangaroo court. She was immediately suspended from the practice of medicine because, she was told, “she lacked respect for her disciplinary body”, i.e. the GMC. At her December 2010 hearing the GMC presented Dr Myhill with yet another anonymous complaint from a member of the public reporting that Dr Myhill had acted outside her area of expertise by delivering babies at home. The GMC had not realised this was a spoof featuring Dr Myhill’s pet pig Rosemary who had indeed delivered 10 healthy piglets that week. It was clear that the GMC had not taken even the most basic investigatory steps, involving merely clicking on a weblink which would have revealed all, before presenting this information before a full session of the Interim Orders Panel. In such circumstances is it any wonder that respect begins to ebb away?

Dr. Myhill has written to the GMC President Professor Peter Rubin to inform him that he was overseeing the activities of a dysfunctional organisation, but he never replied to her letter.

The Trustees of the GMC were similarly informed of all the above issues on two occasions, but again there was no response.

Dr. Myhill formally complained to the GMC about the incompetence and dishonesty of six of its officers, but none of her concerns were addressed. One of these officers briefed an expert witness describing Dr. Myhill as “*a male consultant anaesthetic*”. One would think it would be difficult to construct a sentence with four untruths in three words, but in this the GMC has at least succeeded.

No patient has ever complained to the General Medical Council about Dr. Myhill. All complaints have emanated either from other doctors who do not agree with her nutritional approach to medicine and her approach to treating ME, or from anonymous members of the public who do not concur with Dr Myhill’s opinions which, along with an online book, have been made freely available on her website. As Stephen Fry wrote in his latest autobiography, such bloggers “grow up to become trawlers on the internet site and specialise in posting barbarous mean, abusive, look at me anonymous comments..... Such swine specialise in second guessing the motives of those who are brave enough to commit to the risk of making fools of themselves in public and they are a blight on the face of the earth”. Dr. Myhill said “*it is not for the GMC to judge whether one doctor’s opinion is better than another’s. My opinions, which are evidence based from the scientific literature, have been central to the recovery of thousands of ME patients. In its summing up of my case, the GMC states that I have substantially improved the health of 70% of ME sufferers. This is considerably better than the results of the now discredited regimes of graded exercise therapy and cognitive behaviour therapy. Clearly ME is a physical disorder requiring physical treatment*”.

Despite prosecuting Dr. Myhill for ten years, a necessarily stressful and time consuming business for her, the GMC remain unrepentant. It appears that the GMC has no inclination to correct its ways, or to try to restore Dr. Myhill’s professional reputation. The GMC was similarly heavily criticised by Dame Janet Smith in her report on the Shipman enquiry. Some years later she commented that the GMC was “*like a leopard – it never changes its spots*”. Dr. Myhill is calling for a full enquiry into GMC incompetence, law breaking and misfeasance in public office. The GMC is the oldest regulatory body in the world and is showing all the symptoms of an advanced senile dementia.