

Meeting of the s.40A Panel to consider the case of Dr Ronald James (6121825)

Held on 24 February 2026

Panel members present ('the Panel')

Charlie Massey, Chief Executive (in the Chair)

Pushpinder Mangat, Medical Director and Director, Education and Standards

Anthony Omo, General Counsel and Director of Fitness to Practise

In attendance

Jim Percival, Deputy General Counsel and Principal Legal Adviser

James McDermott, Senior Legal Adviser

Becky Bernard, Trainee Solicitor

Katherine Ince, Head of Office of the Chair and Chief Executive (Panel Secretary)

Purpose of this note

- 1 This meeting note records a summary of the Panel's consideration of the relevant decision of the Medical Practitioners Tribunal ('MPT') which considered the Doctor's case ('the decision'), and the Panel's decision on behalf of the General Medical Council as to whether or not to exercise the power to appeal the decision pursuant to section 40A Medical Act 1983 (as amended) ('the Act').

The relevant decision

- 2 The Deputy General Counsel confirmed that the decision was a relevant decision for the purposes of s.40A of the Act. The decision was a decision not to give a direction under s35D within the meaning of s40A(1)(d) Medical Act 1983.

Consideration

- 3 The Panel considered the record of the MPT's determination and the legal advice in detail.
- 4 The Panel was concerned that Dr James failed to engage in the review hearing in January 2026, so was unable to demonstrate that he had addressed the concerns relating to maintenance of knowledge and skill, as identified by the tribunal reviewing his case in June 2024. The Panel also considered it unfortunate that, prior to deciding it did not have a legal

basis to consider impairment, the MPT did not invite submissions from the GMC on this point.

- 5 Despite those concerns, the Panel acknowledged that this was not a doctor whose clinical skills were in question prior to the finding of impairment and ensuing periods of suspension and conditional registration. Further, the Panel noted that due to the time Dr James had spent away from practice, before returning to employment he would need to obtain a licence to practise from the GMC and would then need to undertake a thorough 'return to work' programme.
- 6 Based on their assessment of all the relevant information, and having regard to the legal advice provided, the Panel concluded that the outcome of the tribunal was sufficient to protect the public.
- 7 The Panel therefore decided not to appeal the MPT's decision pursuant to section 40A of the Act.



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Charlie Massey (Chair)

3 March 2026
Dated

Background

- 8 This case concerns the determination of an MPT, which concluded on 30 January 2026, considering the matter under Part 4 of the General Medical Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2004 ('the Rules').
- 9 The determination of the MPT, which includes the background, allegations and the MPT's determinations on Facts, Impairment and Sanction, can be accessed [here](#).

The General Medical Council's power to appeal pursuant to s.40A

- 10 With effect from 31 December 2015, the General Medical Council acquired the power to appeal to the High Court (or equivalent courts in Scotland and Northern Ireland where relevant) against relevant decisions of a MPT if it considers that the decision is not sufficient (whether as to a finding or a penalty or both) for the protection of the public.
- 11 The basis upon which the GMC will consider whether or not to exercise this power to appeal is described in "Appeals by the GMC pursuant to s.40A of the Medical Act 1983 ('s.40A appeals') – Guidance for Decision-makers" ('the Guidance').
- 12 Decisions concerning the exercise of the s40A power to appeal were originally delegated by the Council to the Registrar. However, following recommendations from Sir Norman Williams' Review Council agreed that decision-making in prospective appeals involving decisions of

MPTs be delegated to a three person Executive Panel comprising: the Chief Executive and Registrar as Chair; the Medical Director and Director of Education and Standards; and the Director of Fitness to Practise (or their nominated Deputies).

- 13** As the Guidance makes clear, when considering whether to bring a s.40A appeal in a particular case, it will be necessary to consider the following questions:
- a. Based on their assessment of all of the information held, and in the particular circumstances of the case, and having regard to the factors set out in the Guidance, does the Panel consider that the MPT's decision is not sufficient to protect the public?
 - b. If the Panel is of the view, on its assessment of all the information held, in the particular circumstances of the case, that there are grounds to consider that the MPT's decision is not sufficient, it will consider whether exercising the power of appeal would further, rather than undermine, the achievement of the over-arching objective.
 - c. If the answer is yes, then the GMC may exercise its power of appeal.
 - d. In considering that question the Panel will be required to consider and weigh a number of competing factors (including its assessment of the prospects of success of the appeal, and the nature and importance of the issues which would be aired).