

DOCUMENT 2

GMC versus Dr Gordon Skinner

Pantomime for everyone but the patient

A Fitness to Practise Panel comprising an Ophthalmologist and three lay members have deemed that Dr Gordon R B Skinner has impaired fitness to practise medicine. Their determination mainly focussed on a patient who had travelled some distance to the hearing but the GMC would not then receive her evidence; this is astonishing.

Dr Skinner is pleased that the panel have at least acknowledged that a patient can be hypothyroid if thyroid chemistry is within 95% reference intervals particularly as this is contrary to the views of their own expert witness. He is concerned however that other 'proven' allegations will have serious consequences for patients with hypothyroidism. The panel continue to misinterpret the term 'biochemical thyrotoxicity' as 'clinical thyrotoxicity' and believe that this is an indicator (in the absence of the latter) to reduce a patient's level of thyroid medication; Dr Skinner does not agree that thyroid chemistry must be measured prior to every adjustment of medication and that hypothyroid features which continue or recur following institution of thyroid replacement - for example palpitations - does not per se represent over-replacement and requirement to reduce the level of replacement.

Equally worrying for the future of medical care is the surprising view of the Panel that return of a patient to the care of his/her practitioner – surely the usual and preferred strategy – represents a shortfall in patient follow-up care.

Predictably these concerns expressed in a Document and presented to the Panel by Dr Skinner (Enclosed) were considered by the barrister acting for the GMC to demonstrate 'lack of insight' where insight seems to mean contrite uncritical acceptance of the opinions of the GMC Expert Witnesses one of whom is a co-opted member of the GMC Education Committee. One would be hard put to accept the impartiality and usefulness of this witness and even harder for Dr Skinner to humbly accept the assertion of an Expert who by his own admission

had never treated a patient on Dr Skinner's principles and therefore had no relevant experience.

Dr Skinner has extensive experience culled over many years in the diagnosis and management of hypothyroid patients attending the Louise Lorne Clinic, which has provided a professional and caring service regulated by the Healthcare Commission. None of the patients have ever had significant adverse outcome following treatment. There is a bleak future for hypothyroid patients if the Louise Lorne Clinic is closed on a flawed academic argument and a regulatory mismanagement

Hypothyroidism is an example of an increasing trend in medical practice where sound clinical judgement and decision resulting in return of patients to health is now to be considered an impaired standard of practice if this is not supported by thyroid chemistry. The GMC is letting down doctors and their patients whom they claim to be protecting; it's not good enough.

The finding of impairment by the Fitness to Practise Panel is simply nonsense.