

DOCUMENT 2

GMC versus Dr Gordon Skinner

A Sliver of hope in a sea of despair.

The Panel of the GMC at this Fitness to Practise hearing have at last acknowledged contrary to the view of their own two expert witnesses that diagnosis of hypothyroidism notwithstanding thyroid chemistry within 95% reference intervals does not constitute impaired Fitness to Practise.

Dr Skinner has responded to other 'proved' allegations as in the enclosed document where he argues that the term employment by the Panel namely biochemical thyrotoxicity has no meaning and that there is no requirement to reduce the level of the patient's replacement if there is no clinical toxicity. Secondly thyroid chemistry need not necessarily be measured prior to every adjustment of thyroid chemistry and that hypothyroid features for example palpitations do not per se represent thyrotoxicity and again a requirement to reduce the level of thyroid replacement.

Equally important 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 reasonable and sincerely held concerns of Dr Skinner were considered by the barrister acting for the GMC to demonstrate lack of insight where insight is seemingly defined as contrite uncritical acceptance of the opinions of the GMC Expert Witnesses one of whom is a coopted member of the GMC Education Committee.

One would be hard put to accept the perceived impartiality and usefulness of this witness and even harder for Dr Skinner to thus 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.

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 more importantly patients who they claim to be protecting; this is not good enough.