

**Complaint 280923
Amna Choudry, Membership number
4176
Notice of findings and sanctions**

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May 2020. Amna Choudry, complaint 280923, Membership Number 4176.

The Professional Conduct Panel (PCP), consisting of Anne Chilton, Richard Simpson and Morwenna Vernon met on 7th May 2024 remotely via Zoom to consider the complaint brought by COSRT (Complainant) against Amna Choudry (the Member), a COSRT Student Member.

Also in attendance were Isis Mera (Clerk) and Joanna Coker (Case Manager).

The Member was present and represented herself.

Summary

COSRT instigated the complaint based on information that the Member had been dismissed from an NHS post for gross misconduct and failed to inform COSRT as required. A PCP requested additional information be gathered prior to a Resolution Meeting held on 13th March 2024. At the Resolution Meeting the PCP decided that the allegations met the threshold test and agreed that the complaint should proceed to a Determination Hearing. The PCP also requested that the Member be subject to an interim suspension pending the outcome of the complaint.

Allegations

The allegations were that:

1. The Member did not inform COSRT of the NHS complaint which commenced 28th August 2022, or the outcome of the meeting held on the 4th of August 2023 which resulted in their dismissal for gross professional misconduct, despite being advised to do so on more than one occasion by their course directors.
2. That the Member did not, as requested by their course directors, provide a full transcript of the complaint and process that led to them being dismissed for gross professional misconduct from the NHS.
3. That facts found by GMMH NHS FT, considered as proven by COSRT, constituted misconduct contrary to the COSRT Code of Ethics, negatively affecting Service Users and risking harm to the reputation of COSRT and the professions it oversees.

Relevant parts of the Code of Ethics

The PCP considered whether the following sections of COSRT's Code of Ethics may have been breached if the allegations were found to be proven:

42. Not act or behave in a way (in and out of professional life) which does or could reasonably be expected to harm the reputation of, or trust and confidence in, COSRT or the professions it serves.
43. Consistently evaluate the impacts or potential impacts of your actions or behaviours, giving special consideration to:
- a. The distinct characteristics of the profession served by COSRT including therapeutic services which deal with sensitive topics including sex, intimacy, and relationships.
 - c. The fact that an action or behaviour need not be illegal to harm the reputation or trust and confidence in COSRT or the profession it serves.
 - d. The reasonable expectation that those within the profession served by COSRT may be held to a higher standard than those that would apply to those outside the profession.
44. Follow all the requirements laid out in COSRT policies and procedures.
51. Respond promptly, fully, and honestly to complaints and apologise when appropriate. You must not allow a Service User's complaint to adversely affect their care or service.
52. Co-operate with any lawful investigation or inquiry relating to your therapy practice and inform COSRT within 14 days if, anywhere in the world
- a. A regulator, professional body, police, court, employer, or tribunal is investigating an allegation made against you.
 - b. A regulator, professional body, police, court, employer, or tribunal has formally made any charge or equivalent against you.
 - c. A regulator, professional body, police, court, employer, or tribunal has made a finding against you.
 - d. You have accepted or received a caution or any form of sanction/penalty from police, a regulator, professional body, court, or tribunal; or been criticised by any official inquiry.
53. Inform COSRT and any current Service Users within 14 days if you are suspended or removed by an organisation from a post, have restrictions placed on your practice or any professional membership, or have any sanction imposed on you.

Documents and evidence before the PCP

The PCP were provided with:

- The original complaint instigated by COSRT and all information gathered around the allegations.
- The formal responses submitted by the Member.
- Further information gathered by COSRT.
- The relevant Code of Ethics.
- The Conduct Procedure and Sanctions Protocols (2022).

The PCP read all the above, then received an oral presentation from COSRT and oral evidence from the Member who was questioned by the PCP. The PCP had to consider the following:

- The allegations made.
- The written and oral evidence.
- What weight should be attached to the evidence.
- On balance, whether the complaints should be upheld.
- What sanction(s) should be imposed if the complaints were upheld.

Findings

Allegation One

The PCP noted that this matter was brought to the attention of COSRT by the course directors of the Tavistock Relationships (Training Provider), and the Member only provided the information when requested to submit this to COSRT following a request by the course directors on October 12th 2023 which was 14 months after the complaint commenced.

- The PCP found this allegation Proven.

Allegation Two

The PCP noted that Andrew Davidson course director at Tavistock Relationships (training provider) had reported that he asked Anna Choudry for clarification about her dismissal several times in the period August 2023 to October 2023, but she did not respond with any details other than it “was due to my lack of triage work which is clerical”. She claimed her clinical work was never questioned or stopped throughout the investigation process. The course directors only found out about the dismissal and upheld allegations after she sent the full documentation to COSRT when she forwarded all the documents on 26th October 2023 following the commencement of the complaint.

- The PCP found this allegation Proven.

Allegation Three

The PCP noted the NHS complaint file and its findings.

- The PCP found this allegation Proven.

Decision

The PCP discussed mitigating circumstances information provided by the Member and in response to questions from the PCP. The information provided related to the Member's mental health at the time of the allegations. However, the PCP considered that the Member showed no remorse or understanding of the severity of their conduct, nor their impact on patient care, nor the reputation of COSRT.

The PCP unanimously agreed that the complaint was upheld with all allegations considered proven.

Sanctions

The PCP concluded that:

- Amna Choudry's COSRT Membership should be terminated in line with the Sanctions Protocol.
- The Member should be informed of the decision and related procedures in line with the Conduct Procedure and Sanctions Protocol.