

# DonnaOckenden

Date: 2012 to 2017

Region: London NHS Trust

## The overview:

Donna Ockenden was asked by a London NHS trust to be the lead investigator into the professional conduct of an obstetric and gynaecology consultant practicing in London further to patient and colleague complaints. The cases for investigation all arose from the consultant's gynaecology practice.

## The details:

A GMC investigation into the fitness to practice of the doctor was carried out and Donna Ockenden as case investigator, supported by two expert gynecologists investigated concerns raised regarding the consultant. Donna Ockenden was the author of a detailed final report for submission to the GMC. Her role included gathering information and establishing facts in an unbiased manner, maintaining confidentiality and gaining sufficient evidence to support the case.

The original investigation was undertaken when colleagues raised concerns that the consultant had performed surgery on several occasions resulting in complications and thus compromising patient safety.

The report was the prime evidence in the case. Initially a number of patient safety cases were reviewed by an external gynaecology consultant from another NHS trust. Further to this, the review period was extended to two years in order to review a wider time span and a greater number of cases. 279 patient notes were located and reviewed and 73 were said to be of potential concern. Of these, 66 were said to be of serious concern...

Significant evidence was demonstrated that the consultant did not provide patients with an appropriate standard of care and treatment. There were issues of both poor capability and conduct. These fell below the standards expected of good medical practice.

Further investigation also found that the consultant had invalid indemnity insurance on over 20 occasions, used poor language with patients on two occasions and failed to maintain professional performance. Assessments, clinical management, record keeping, safety and quality were all unacceptable and found proved. The Consultant did not accept there was an honesty problem. The court was not satisfied that the Consultant would not be honest in the future.

Outcome: The Consultant was struck off for deliberate or reckless disregard of principles, failure to hold indemnity insurance over 53 months and abuse of trust. His actions were dishonest and resistant and he covered them up. The Consultant was erased from the register of medical practitioners. In 2017 the Consultant appealed his conviction but he failed and the Court of Appeal upheld the GMC decision. He is no longer able to practice.

The Consultant was struck off the medical register of the GMC despite his appeals and Donna Ockenden, by gathering the evidence in this case, was central to the outcome of this case.

Following on from the investigation Donna Ockenden working with the external gynaecologist was requested by the Trust to act as point of contact to women who had been previous patients of the gynaecologist. A series of individual meetings were arranged with patients and families over several months with patients being supported to make the most appropriate decisions for themselves and their individual health moving forward.