

## Notice of Decision

<b>Registrant</b>	Teresa Morrison
<b>Registration number</b>	3113806
<b>Part of Register</b>	Support Workers in a Care Home Service for Adults
<b>Town of employment</b>	Blairgowrie
<b>Sanction</b>	Warning to stay on your registration for a period of 12 months
<b>Date of effect</b>	9 June 2023

This is notice of a decision of the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

### Our decision

We decided:

1. that based on the facts found your fitness to practise is impaired, as defined in Rule 2 of Part 1 of the Scottish Social Services Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2016 (the Rules) as amended by the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2017 and the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2021
2. to place a warning on your registration, on the part of the Register for Support Workers in a Care Home Service for Adults, for a period of 12 months.

### Findings of fact

We decided there is evidence that while employed as a carer by St Ninians Home Care Ltd, Blairgowrie, you did:

1. on 14 November 2022, while not on duty, visit service user AA's home and drink alcohol with her
2. on 5 September 2022 and during the course of your employment, when BB (a vulnerable person) went missing from their home, fail to report that BB was missing to your manager or the police

and your fitness to practise is impaired because of your misconduct.

## Reasons for finding your fitness to practise is impaired

1. Your fitness to practise is impaired because:
  - a. the behaviour is serious. You breached professional boundaries by attending AA's home and consuming alcohol. Your behaviour fell well below the standards expected of a social service worker. Service users and their carers mainly come into contact with social services at a time when they are most vulnerable. You are expected to recognise and respect that vulnerability and not to build an unprofessional relationship with them. You have breached the trust and confidence placed in you as a social service worker.
  - b. you have also failed to report that BB, a vulnerable person, went missing from the service. By failing to report this to management or to the police, you placed BB at increased risk of harm. Your actions were a careless failure of duty by failing to follow policies and procedures specifically aimed at keeping BB safe. Service users have the right to expect that the care they receive from social service workers will protect them from harm.
  - c. you have failed to meet the relevant standards of practice and work in a lawful, safe, and effective way. You have been involved in two incidents when your behaviour has fallen below the standards expected of a social service worker. However, by taking into consideration the length of time you have worked in the sector, we would not consider that your actions amount to a significant pattern of behaviour.
  - d. You have recognised your failings by not reporting BB as missing and the potential risk you placed BB at by failing to follow policies and procedure. You have also accepted that your actions were not appropriate by attending AA's home and consuming alcohol. You have recognised your wrongdoing and shown an understanding of why this type of behaviour is not acceptable of a social service worker. Given the level of insight and remorse shown, the public would be reassured that your actions were isolated and the risk of you repeating this behaviour would be low.
  - e. your behaviour was serious, and the public would expect your professional regulator to take action by reaffirming the clear standards of professional conduct expected of a social service worker. A finding of impairment must be made in this case to ensure that the integrity of the register is maintained.
2. In relation to findings of fact 1 and 2 you have failed to follow parts 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.7, 5.8, 6.1 of the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers in force from 1 November 2016.

## **The sanction**

After referring to our Decisions Guidance, we decided the appropriate sanction is to place a warning on your registration for a period of 12 months.

## **Reasons for the sanction**

When making our decision we considered the following factors:

### **Factors of concern**

- You placed BB at increased risk of harm
- Your behaviour occurred recently and you have not been working in the social services sector since to demonstrate good practice.

### **Factors in your favour**

- You have shown a good level of insight and remorse
- You had worked in the social services sector for five years and have a good previous history
- You have fully cooperated and engaged with the SSSC investigation.

## **Documents we have referred to**

When making our decision, we referred to the documents:

- Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001
- Scottish Social Services Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2016 (the Rules) as amended by the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2017 and the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2021
- Decisions Guidance for Fitness to Practise Panels and Scottish Social Service Council staff.

## **Imposing the warning on your registration**

Under the Scottish Social Services Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2016 (the Rules) as amended by the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2017 and the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2021, we can impose a warning on your registration if you do not ask for a hearing.

We wrote to you on 26 April 2023 to tell you we wanted to place a warning on your registration. After explaining the consequences of not asking for a hearing, and recommending you take legal advice, you have not asked that the case is referred to a Fitness to Practise Panel. We are therefore permitted by the Rules to impose this warning on your registration.

**Date of effect**

The notice comes into effect on 9 June 2023.