

**Nursing and Midwifery Council
Fitness to Practise Committee**

**Substantive Order Review Meeting
Monday, 16 February 2026**

Virtual Meeting

Name of Registrant: Tasleem Akhtar

NMC PIN: 87C0838E

Part(s) of the register: Registered Nurse – Sub Part 1
Adult Nursing – Level 1 (May 1990)

Relevant Location: West Midlands

Type of case: Misconduct

Panel members: Isabelle Parasram (Chair, lay member)
Elizabeth Coles (Registrant member)
Caroline Ross (Lay member)

Legal Assessor: Emma Boothroyd

Hearings Coordinator: Audrey Chikosha

Order being reviewed: Suspension order (6 months)

Fitness to practise: Impaired

Outcome: **Striking-Off order to come into effect on 7 April 2026
in accordance with Article 30 (1).**

Decision and reasons on service of Notice of Meeting

The panel noted at the start of this meeting that the Notice of Meeting had been sent to Mrs Akhtar's registered email address by secure email on 5 January 2026.

The panel took into account that the Notice of Meeting provided details of the review that the review meeting would be held no sooner than 9 February 2026 and inviting Mrs Akhtar to provide any written evidence seven days before this date.

The panel accepted the advice of the legal assessor.

In the light of all of the information available, the panel was satisfied that Mrs Akhtar has been served with notice of this meeting in accordance with the requirements of Rules 11A and 34 of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2004 (as amended) (the Rules).

Decision and reasons on proceeding in the absence of Mrs Akhtar

The panel next considered whether it should proceed in the absence of Mrs Akhtar and the NMC. It had regard to Rule 21 and heard the advice of the legal assessor.

The panel noted that there had been no engagement by Mrs Akhtar with the NMC in relation to these proceedings and, as a consequence, there was no reason to believe that adjourning and referring this case to a hearing would secure her attendance. Furthermore, the panel bore in mind the strong public interest in the expeditious review of this order prior to its expiry on 6 April 2026.

The panel noted that the NMC has made all reasonable efforts to give Mrs Akhtar the opportunity to provide representations and was satisfied that there would be no unfairness in proceeding in the absence of Mrs Akhtar today.

The panel also considered whether on the information before it, it could make decisions on the charges without the assistance of submissions from a case presenter on behalf of the

NMC. It was determined that it had sufficient information to review Mrs Akhtar's current impairment and review this order in the absence of both the NMC and Mrs Akhtar.

Decision and reasons on review of the current order

The panel decided to impose a striking-off order. This order will come into effect at the end of 6 April 2026 in accordance with Article 30(1) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 (as amended) (the Order).

This is the second review of a substantive suspension order originally imposed for a period of 9 months by a Fitness to Practise Committee panel on 6 December 2024. This was reviewed on 11 August 2025, where the panel extended the order for a period of 6 months.

The current order is due to expire at the end of 6 April 2026.

The panel is reviewing the order pursuant to Article 30(1) of the Order.

The charges found proved which resulted in the imposition of the substantive order were as follows:

'That you, a registered nurse:

1. Around February 2019 grabbed patient A's testicles without clinical justification.

...

3. On 29 November 2019:

a. ...

b. said to patient C words to the effect of "oh it's fine you touched my boobs I will be touching yours later."

4. On 7 November 2019:

a. ...

b. said to patient D words to the effect of "oh you've got stretch marks."

...

6. *Departed from accepted practice when carrying out general medical assessments in that you asked each of the following patients to partially undress:*

a. *Patient A around February 2019.*

b. *Patient B on 26 November 2019.*

c. *Patient C on 29 November 2019.*

d. *Patient D on 7 November 2019.*

7. *Failed to treat each of the following patients with dignity when carrying out their general medical assessments:*

a. *Patient A around February 2019.*

b. *Patient B on 26 November 2019.*

c. *Patient C on 29 November 2019.*

d. *Patient D on 7 November 2019.'*

AND in light of the above, your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of your misconduct.'

The first reviewing panel determined the following with regard to impairment:

'The panel noted that the conduct in the charges found proved are serious and resulted in emotional harm to patients, including distress and anxiety. The panel took into account that there is no new information before it today to suggest that Mrs Akhtar has developed her insight or reflection since the initial substantive hearing.

In its consideration of whether Mrs Akhtar has taken steps to strengthen her practice, there was no information before today's panel to suggest that Mrs Akhtar has strengthened her practice since the initial hearing.

The original panel determined that Mrs Akhtar was liable to repeat matters of the kind found proved. Today's panel has received no new information to suggest that Mrs Akhtar has remediated her practice and reduced the risk of repetition. In light of this the panel determined that Mrs Akhtar is liable to repeat matters of the kind found proved. The panel therefore decided that a finding of continuing impairment is necessary on the grounds of public protection.

The panel has borne in mind that its primary function is to protect patients and the wider public interest which includes maintaining confidence in the nursing profession and upholding proper standards of conduct and performance. The panel determined that, in this case, a finding of continuing impairment on public interest grounds is also required.

For these reasons, the panel finds that Mrs Akhtar's fitness to practise remains impaired.'

The first reviewing panel determined the following with regard to sanction:

'...

The panel next considered whether a conditions of practice on Mrs Akhtar's registration would be a sufficient and appropriate response. The panel is mindful that any conditions imposed must be proportionate, measurable and workable. The panel bore in mind the seriousness of the facts found proved at the original hearing and concluded that a conditions of practice order would not adequately protect the public or satisfy the public interest. The panel was not able to formulate conditions of practice that would adequately address the concerns relating to Mrs Akhtar's misconduct.

The panel considered the imposition of a further period of suspension. It was of the view that a suspension order would allow Mrs Akhtar further time to fully reflect on her previous failings and engage with the NMC. The panel concluded that a further six month suspension order would be the appropriate and proportionate response and would afford Mrs Akhtar adequate time to further develop her insight and take steps to strengthen their practice. It would also give Mrs Akhtar an opportunity to approach past and current health professionals to attest to her honesty and integrity in her workplace assignments since the substantive hearing.

The panel determined therefore that a suspension order is the appropriate sanction which would continue to both protect the public and satisfy the wider public interest. Accordingly, the panel determined to impose a suspension order for the period of six months would provide Mrs Akhtar with an opportunity to engage with the NMC and develop reflection. It considered this to be the most appropriate and proportionate sanction available.

This suspension order will take effect upon the expiry of the current suspension order, namely the end of 6 October 2025 in accordance with Article 30(1).

Any future panel reviewing this case would be assisted by:

- Engagement with the NMC's proceedings*
- Evidence of a written reflective piece taking into account the panel's findings and addressing the impact of her actions on the patients and the consequences in terms of the public's perception of the nursing profession.*
- Any evidence of strengthened practice including any relevant training and learning*
- Details of any employment (paid or unpaid)*
- Character references and/or testimonials*
- Indication from Mrs Akhtar outlining her intentions in relation to her nursing career'*

Decision and reasons on current impairment

The panel has considered carefully whether Mrs Akhtar's fitness to practise remains impaired. Whilst there is no statutory definition of fitness to practise, the NMC defines it as whether a professional on the register can practise as a nurse, midwife or nursing associate safely and effectively without restriction. In considering this case, the panel has carried out a comprehensive review of the order in light of the current circumstances. Whilst it has noted the decision of the last panel, this panel has exercised its own judgement as to current impairment.

The panel has had regard to all of the documentation before it, including the NMC bundle.

The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal assessor.

In reaching its decision, the panel was mindful of the need to protect the public, maintain public confidence in the profession and to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct and performance.

The panel considered whether Mrs Akhtar's fitness to practise remains impaired.

The panel noted that Mrs Akhtar has not engaged with these proceedings at all. It had no new information before it to undermine the findings of the previous reviewing panel. The panel noted that the last reviewing panel provided a list of recommendations which would assist today's panel and Mrs Akhtar has not provided any of the recommended documentation.

The panel noted that the charges found proved are serious and relate to failures to treat patients with dignity. Regarding whether or not the misconduct in this case is remediable, the panel noted that Mrs Akhtar has had a cumulative period of 13 months subject to a suspension order and in that time has not provided any evidence of steps taken to strengthen her practice, reflection or insight. The panel therefore determined that there remains a real risk of harm and risk of repetition.

The panel therefore decided that a finding of continuing impairment is necessary on the grounds of public protection.

The panel has borne in mind that its primary function is to protect patients and the wider public interest which includes maintaining confidence in the nursing profession and upholding proper standards of conduct and performance. The panel determined that, in this case, a finding of continuing impairment on public interest grounds is also required.

For these reasons, the panel finds that Mrs Akhtar's fitness to practise remains impaired.

Decision and reasons on sanction

Having found Mrs Akhtar fitness to practise currently impaired, the panel then considered what, if any, sanction it should impose in this case. The panel noted that its powers are set out in Article 30 of the Order. The panel has also taken into account the 'NMC's Sanctions Guidance' (SG) and has borne in mind that the purpose of a sanction is not to be punitive, though any sanction imposed may have a punitive effect.

The panel first considered whether to take no action and allow the order to lapse upon expiry but concluded that this would be inappropriate in view of the finding of impairment and risks identified. The panel decided that it would be neither proportionate nor in the public interest to take no further action.

It then considered the imposition of a caution order but again determined that, due to the seriousness of the case, and the public protection issues identified, an order that does not restrict Mrs Akhtar's practice would not be appropriate in the circumstances. The SG states that a caution order may be appropriate where *'the case is at the lower end of the spectrum of impaired fitness to practise and the panel wishes to mark that the behaviour was unacceptable and must not happen again.'* The panel considered that Mrs Akhtar's misconduct was not at the lower end of the spectrum and that a caution order would be inappropriate in view of the issues identified. The panel decided that it would be neither proportionate nor in the public interest to impose a caution order.

The panel next considered whether a conditions of practice on Mrs Akhtar's registration would be a sufficient and appropriate response. The panel is mindful that any conditions imposed must be proportionate, measurable and workable. The panel bore in mind the

seriousness of the facts found proved at the original hearing and concluded that a conditions of practice order would not adequately protect the public or satisfy the public interest. The panel was not able to formulate conditions of practice that would adequately address the concerns relating to Mrs Akhtar's misconduct without being overly onerous.

The panel next considered imposing a further suspension order. The panel noted that Mrs Akhtar has not demonstrated any insight into her misconduct. The panel was of the view that considerable evidence would be required to show that Mrs Akhtar no longer posed a risk to the public. The panel bore in mind the NMC Guidance (REV-2A) on standard reviews of substantive orders which states:

'If the panel concludes that continuing or imposing a conditions of practice order or suspension order is unlikely to result in the professional returning to safe unrestricted practice within a reasonable period of time, it should ensure that the professional is removed from the register.'

The panel noted it had no evidence of strengthened practice, reflection or remediation since the last review nor since the charges were found proved. It noted that Mrs Akhtar is only on the register as a result of this substantive order and has not demonstrated any willingness to engage with these proceedings or address the misconduct. The panel therefore determined that a further period of suspension is unlikely to result in Mrs Akhtar returning to practice within a reasonable period of time.

In reaching its decision on imposing a striking-off order, the panel took into account NMC Guidance (REV-2h) on Removal from the register when a substantive order is in place which reads:

'This guidance is intended to help substantive order review panels decide what action to take where

- a professional hasn't addressed outstanding fitness to practise concerns, and*

- *continuing/imposing a conditions of practice order or suspension order is unlikely to mean the professional will return to safe unrestricted practice within a reasonable period of time.*

There is a persuasive burden on the professional at a substantive order review to demonstrate that they have fully acknowledged why past professional performance was deficient and through insight, application, education, supervision or other achievement sufficiently addressed the past impairments¹.

*While Suspension Orders and Conditions of Practice Orders can be varied or extended, **they are not intended to exist indefinitely**. In time the professional must be allowed to practise without restriction or they must leave the register. It is neither in the interests of the public nor the professional's own interests that they are kept in limbo'*

In line with the above guidance, the panel considered the following:

'The panel can impose a striking off order, removing the professional from the register. At a substantive order review, the panel will take into account both the concerns themselves and the professional's conduct since they were sanctioned. The panel will ask:

- *Are there now fundamental questions about the nurse, midwife or nursing associate's professionalism?*
- *Can public confidence in nurses, midwives and nursing associates now be maintained if the nurse, midwife or nursing associate is not struck off from the register?*
- *Is striking-off now the only sanction which will be sufficient to protect patients, members of the public, or maintain professional standards?*

For example, a reviewing panel could impose a striking off order if the professional has shown they clearly lack insight, pose a risk of repeating the behaviour, or their conduct suggests harmful deep-seated personality or attitudinal problems.

Cases where striking off is likely to be appropriate include when:

- *the professional has shown limited engagement and/or insight,*

- *the professional has breached a substantive order; or*
- *the professional has otherwise made no or negligible progress towards addressing issues with their fitness to practise.'*

The panel also took into account NMC Guidance on Deciding between suspension and strike off (SAN-3) which reads:

'Determining the proportionate sanction is often difficult when the Committee is deciding between a suspension or a striking-off order. In such cases, the Committee should:

- ...
- ...
- *Consider the professional's insight and attitude to addressing the concerns, and whether it is realistically possible that these will change positively during the suspension period. If it is unlikely the professional will try to address the concerns, there may not be appropriate for them to be suspended in the hopes that they will eventually return to practice.*
- *Professionals are under an obligation to cooperate with their regulator. Where professionals have failed to engage with the fitness to practise process, it won't usually be appropriate to use a suspension order as a means of giving them a 'last chance' to engage, reflect or show insight.'*

From the information before it, the panel determined that given Mrs Akhtar has not meaningfully engaged with the NMC or demonstrated insight and has made no progress towards addressing the misconduct in this case, a striking off order is appropriate in these circumstances. The panel was of the view that there was no realistic prospect of Mrs Akhtar addressing the concerns and returning to safe practice given her lack of engagement thus far.

The panel bore in mind that it is not in the public interest or a professional's interests to remain on the register indefinitely when they are not fit to practise and that public confidence in the professions is more important than the fortunes of any individual member.

As such, the panel determined that a striking-off order is the appropriate sanction to both protect the public and satisfy the wider public interest.

This striking-off order will take effect upon the expiry of the current suspension order, namely the end of 6 April 2026 in accordance with Article 30(1).

This decision will be confirmed to Mrs Akhtar in writing.

That concludes this determination.