

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

**Substantive Order Review Hearing
Friday, 9 January 2026**

Virtual Hearing

Name of Registrant:	Jacqueline Kerr Vallance Morse
NMC PIN	87Y0177S
Part(s) of the register:	Registered Nurse - Sub Part 1 RN1: Adult Nurse (Level 1) - 11 April 1990
Relevant Location:	Ilford
Type of case:	Misconduct
Panel members:	Judith Webb (Chair, Lay member) Emily Coffey (Lay member) Melanie Lumbers (Registrant member)
Legal Assessor:	Graeme Dalgleish
Hearings Coordinator:	Teige Gardner
Nursing and Midwifery Council:	Represented by Stephanie Stevens, Case Presenter
Mrs Morse:	Not present and unrepresented
Order being reviewed:	Suspension order (12 months)
Fitness to practise:	Impaired
Outcome:	Suspension order to lapse with a finding of impairment upon expiry in accordance with Article 30 (1), namely 23 January 2026

Decision and reasons on service of Notice of Hearing

The panel was informed at the start of this hearing that Mrs Morse was not in attendance and that the Notice of Hearing had been sent to Mrs Morse's registered email address by secure email on 11 December 2025.

Ms Stevens, on behalf of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), submitted that it had complied with the requirements of Rules 11 and 34 of the 'Nursing and Midwifery Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2004', as amended (the Rules).

The panel accepted the advice of the legal assessor.

The panel took into account that the Notice of Hearing provided details of the substantive order being reviewed, the time, dates and that the hearing was to be held virtually, including instructions on how to join and, amongst other things, information about Mrs Morse's right to attend, be represented and call evidence, as well as the panel's power to proceed in her absence.

In the light of all of the information available, the panel was satisfied that Mrs Morse has been served with notice of this hearing in accordance with the requirements of Rules 11 and 34.

Decision and reasons on proceeding in the absence of Mrs Morse

The panel next considered whether it should proceed in the absence of Mrs Morse. The panel had regard to Rule 21 and heard the submissions of Ms Stevens who invited the panel to continue in the absence of Mrs Morse.

Ms Stevens submitted that there had been no engagement at all by Mrs Morse with the NMC since November 2023 in relation to these proceedings and, as a consequence, there was no reason to believe that an adjournment would secure her attendance on some future occasion. She submitted that there is a strong public interest in the expeditious review of this case. She submitted that Mrs Morse had voluntarily absented herself.

The panel accepted the advice of the legal assessor.

The panel has decided to proceed in the absence of Mrs Morse. In reaching this decision, the panel has considered the submissions of Ms Stevens and the advice of the legal assessor. It has had particular regard to any relevant case law and to the overall interests of justice and fairness to all parties. It noted that

- No application for an adjournment has been made by Mrs Morse;
- Mrs Morse has not engaged with the NMC for over two hearings before her substantive hearing and has not responded to any of the emails sent to her about this hearing;
- There is no reason to suppose that adjourning would secure her attendance at some future date; and
- There is a strong public interest in the expeditious review of the case as the current order expires in two weeks.

In these circumstances, the panel has decided that it is fair to proceed in the absence of Mrs Morse.

Decision and reasons on review of the substantive order

The panel decided to allow Mrs Morse's suspension order to lapse with a finding of impairment.

Mrs Morse's order will lapse at the end of 23 January 2026 in accordance with Article 30(1) of the 'Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001' (the Order).

This is the first review of a substantive suspension order originally imposed for a period of 12 months by a Fitness to Practise Committee panel on 20 December 2024.

The current order is due to expire at the end of 23 January 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, while working as a senior ward sister/ward manager at King George Hospital in Essex:

- 1) On multiple occasions between 6/7/15 and 9/8/16 failed to work the complete bank shift for which you were paid*
- 2) ...*
- 3) And your actions as specified in charges 1 and 2 were dishonest in that:*
 - a) You knew it was wrong to fail to work a complete shift for which you were paid*
 - b) ...*
- 4) ... '*

The original panel determined the following with regard to impairment:

'The panel finds that patients were put at risk as a result of Mrs Morse's misconduct. Mrs Morse's misconduct had breached the fundamental tenets of the nursing profession and therefore brought its reputation into disrepute. It was satisfied that confidence in the nursing profession would be undermined if its regulator did not find charges relating to dishonesty extremely serious. Therefore, the panel finds that all four limbs of the test are engaged.

Regarding insight, the panel considered that the only evidence in which Mrs Morse accepts the charge was when she was interviewed by the Trust on 21 December 2016 where an explanation was given by Mrs Morse for her actions. However, the panel found that, although Mrs Morse accepted the facts at this time, there was no real understanding shown at the time.

The panel found that there is nothing before the panel to demonstrate Mrs Morse's insight into her actions and the impact on patients. The panel considered that Mrs

Morse showed no insight into the position she put colleagues in by leaving them short staffed and acting dishonestly and the potential impact of her misconduct, whilst working as a Band 7 nurse, had on her colleagues.

The panel also took account of Witness 1's written statement which stated:

"Jacqueline lacked insight and didn't reflect well on the risk to patient safety and the extra pressure she had put on her colleagues".

The panel also noted, and was submitted by Mr Webb, that Witness 1 stated in their written statement that "There is a huge risk to patient safety".

The panel accepts that it is considering impairment today some eight years after the incidents occurred. However, the panel, as a result of Mrs Morse's lack of engagement, have no new up to date material or evidence to consider with regards to Mrs Morse's impairment.

The panel is of the view that there is a risk of repetition based on there being minimal evidence of insight and remediation, and the panel also took into account Mrs Morse's dishonesty is a deep-seated attitudinal issue. The panel therefore decided that a finding of impairment is necessary on the grounds of public protection.

The panel bore in mind that the overarching objectives of the NMC; to protect, promote and maintain the health, safety, and well-being of the public and patients, and to uphold and protect the wider public interest. This includes promoting and maintaining public confidence in the nursing and midwifery professions and upholding the proper professional standards for members of those professions.

The panel determined that a finding of impairment on public interest grounds is required because public confidence would be lost in the nursing profession if the public knew that a Band 7 Ward Manager was not completing bank shifts and leaving the ward and patients early on a frequent basis, whilst also being paid for hours not worked.

Having regard to all of the above, the panel was satisfied that Mrs Morse's fitness to practise is currently impaired.'

The original panel determined the following with regard to sanction:

'The panel next considered whether placing conditions of practice on Mrs Morse'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 took into account the SG, in particular:

- *No evidence of harmful deep-seated personality or attitudinal problems;*
- *The conditions will protect patients during the period they are in force;*
and
- *Conditions can be created that can be monitored and assessed.*

The panel is of the view that there are no practical or workable conditions that could be formulated, given the lack of insight, nature of the charges in this case which are attitudinal and repeated, and the lack of engagement from Mrs Morse.

Furthermore, the panel concluded that the placing of conditions on Mrs Morse's registration would not adequately address the seriousness of this case and would not protect the public.

The panel then went on to consider whether a suspension order would be an appropriate sanction. The panel was of the view that this case does not represent the most serious case of dishonesty and also took into account the financial amount calculated to be lost by the Counter Fraud Investigation.

The panel was satisfied that in this case, the misconduct was not fundamentally incompatible with remaining on the register. The panel also considered that a suspension order provides Mrs Morse with the opportunity to come before a reviewing panel and demonstrate remediation and insight, and possibly return to the nursing profession. The panel noted that Mrs Morse's failings were not clinical, and so a

suspension order with review allows the opportunity for a Band 7 nurse with good clinical skills to return to the register.

The panel also noted the passage of time which has occurred in this case. The panel was mindful that it has taken several years for this case to come before them and the challenges that this creates. The panel were satisfied that a suspension order proportionately marks the gravity of what has happened and ensures the public can see standards in the nursing profession upheld. The panel also was satisfied that this sanction allows Mrs Morse the opportunity to reengage with the regulator and evidence proper standards required of the nursing profession.

It did go on to consider whether a striking-off order would be proportionate but, taking account of all the information before it including the admissions made to the Trust at the time of their investigation by Mrs Morse, the panel concluded that it would be disproportionate. Whilst the panel acknowledges that a suspension may have a punitive effect, it would be unduly punitive in Mrs Morse's case to impose a striking-off order.

Balancing all of these factors the panel has concluded that a suspension order would be the appropriate and proportionate sanction.

The panel noted the hardship such an order may cause Mrs Morse, however this is outweighed by the public interest in this case.

The panel considered that this order is necessary to mark the importance of maintaining public confidence in the profession, and to send to the public and the profession a clear message about the standard of behaviour required of a registered nurse.

The panel determined that a suspension order for a period of 12 months was appropriate in this case to mark the seriousness of the misconduct.'

Decision and reasons on current impairment

The panel has considered carefully whether Mrs Morse's fitness to practise remains impaired. Whilst there is no statutory definition of fitness to practise, the NMC has defined fitness to practise as a registrant's suitability to remain on the register 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. It has taken account of the submissions made by Ms Stevens on behalf of the NMC. She provided a brief background to the case and reminded the panel that all sanctions are available to them today. She submitted that Mrs Morse has not engaged with the NMC since November 2023. Ms Stevens submitted that, as a result of Mrs Morse's lack of engagement, she has been unable to provide evidence that she has strengthened her practice nor show insight into her failings as stated within the charges found proved. Ms Stevens submitted that the charges found proved are serious, as they relate to repeated dishonesty over an extended period of time. Therefore, she submitted that there remains a risk of harm in this case, and a finding of impairment remains necessary on the grounds of public protection.

Ms Stevens submitted that a well-informed member of the public would be concerned if Mrs Morse is not found impaired at today's hearing. She further submitted that the public would lose confidence in the nursing profession and the NMC as the regulator if no finding of impairment is found today. Therefore, a finding of impairment is necessary in the wider public interest.

Ms Stevens submitted that the panel could consider a further 12-month suspension order to allow Mrs Morse to provide evidence that she has strengthened her practice and has insight into her failings. However, Ms Stevens submitted that, in light of Mrs Morse not engaging with the NMC and expressing interest in leaving the register in November 2023, the panel should also consider imposing a strike-off order. She submitted that it is for the panel to decide on the most appropriate and proportionate order.

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 Morse's fitness to practise remains impaired.

The panel noted that Mrs Morse has not engaged with the NMC since November 2023. They noted that the charges found proved are serious as they relate to repeated dishonesty over an extended period of time. However, the panel was of the view that the charges found proved are on the lower end of the spectrum in regard to dishonesty. Mrs Morse has not provided any evidence since the original substantive hearing regarding strengthening her practice or improving her insight into her failings in the charges found proved. In light of her lack of engagement, the panel determined that there remains a risk of repetition in this case. 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. With that in mind, 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 Morse's fitness to practise remains impaired on both public protection and public interest grounds.

Decision and reasons on sanction

Having found Mrs Morse's fitness to practise remains 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 but concluded that this would be inappropriate in view of the seriousness of the case. 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 Morse's practice would not be appropriate in the circumstances as there has been no engagement where strengthening of practice or insight has been evidenced. 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 Morse's misconduct was not at the lower end of the spectrum due to the dishonesty that was found proved 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 Morse'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 the lack of engagement from Mrs Morse, 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 Morse's misconduct as the charges found proved were not clinical in nature.

The panel next considered imposing a further suspension order. The panel noted that Mrs Morse has not evidenced her strengthening her practice nor has she demonstrated any insight into her misconduct. The panel was of the view that evidence would be required to show that Mrs Morse no longer posed a risk to the public. In addition, having noted Mrs Morse's lack of engagement, the panel determined that a further period of suspension would not serve any useful purpose in all of the circumstances.

The panel then considered a striking-off order. The panel was of the view that, whilst the dishonesty is serious, Mrs Morse's dishonesty was on the lower end of the spectrum and not all the charges relating to dishonesty were found proved. As expressed by the original panel, this panel found that a striking off order would be disproportionate and inappropriate considering the circumstances of this case. The panel was mindful of the NMC guidance on allowing an order to lapse with a finding of impairment (REV-2h), and it noted the events which led to the suspension order took place almost 10 years ago.

The panel determined that the most appropriate and proportionate action to take in this case would be to allow Mrs Morse's order to lapse with a finding of impairment. In coming to this decision, the panel noted that Mrs Morse has not paid her registration fees since 2017 and is only on the register due to the current substantive order. Further, it noted that in November 2023, Mrs Morse expressed an interest in being voluntarily removed from the NMC register but it appeared that this was not pursued by Mrs Morse. The panel was of the view that the public would be protected by allowing this substantive order to lapse with a finding of impairment, as Mrs Morse would be unable to return to practice as a registered nurse until she completes a return to practice course and sufficiently addresses the impairment issues which would remain against her name.

In addition, the panel determined that the public interest would be satisfied by allowing the order to lapse as the seriousness of Mrs Morse's misconduct would be marked by the continued finding of impairment. The panel also noted that given the length of time since the events that led to the substantive suspension order, it would be in Mrs Morse's own interest to conclude this matter. Therefore, the panel decided to allow Mrs Morse's suspension order to lapse with a finding of impairment.

Mrs Morse's suspension order will lapse with a finding of impairment upon the expiry of the current suspension order, namely the end of 23 January 2026 in accordance with Article 30(1). That means from 23 January 2026 Mrs Morse's name will no longer be on the NMC register.

This decision will be confirmed to Mrs Morse in writing.

That concludes this determination.

