

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

**Substantive Order Review Meeting
Monday 8 June 2026**

Virtual Meeting

Name of Registrant: Stefania Pezzi

NMC PIN: 04G0051C

Part(s) of the register: Registered Nurse - Adult (RN1) 23 July 2004

Relevant Location: Kent

Type of case: Misconduct

Panel members: Graham Coulston-Herrmann (Chair, Lay member)
Claire Cawley (Registrant member)
Janine Green (Lay member)

Legal Assessor: Tracy Ayling KC

Hearings Coordinator: Emily Mae Christie

Order being reviewed: Suspension order (12 months)

Fitness to practise: Impaired

Outcome: **Striking-Off order to come into effect on 23 July 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 Ms Pezzi's registered email address by secure email on 6 May 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 8 June 2026, and invited Ms Pezzi 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 Ms Pezzi 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 review of the current order

The panel decided to replace the suspension order with a striking-off order. This order will come into effect at the end of 23 July 2026 in accordance with Article 30(1) of the *'Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 (as amended)'* (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 25 June 2025.

The current order is due to expire at the end of 23 July 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. *In your application form to Superior Healthcare dated 9 June 2021, failed to provide your full employment history in that you omitted reference to your employment by Kent Community Health NHS Trust (the Trust) between January and May 2019.*
2. *In a CV provided to Superior Healthcare as part of your employment application in 2021 failed to provide your full employment history in that you omitted reference to your employment by the Trust between January and May 2019.*
3. *Your conduct at charges 1 and/or 2 was dishonest in that you sought to conceal from Superior Healthcare that:*
 - (a) you had not successfully completed your probationary period;*
and/or
 - (b) you had been dismissed by the relevant Trust; and/or*
 - (c) you had been referred to the NMC. [in relation to charge 2 only]*
4. *In your application form to Superior Healthcare dated 9 June 2021 stated that from January 2019 you decided to step back from nursing responsibilities, whereas you worked as a nurse between January and May 2019.*
5. *In a CV provided to Superior Healthcare as part of your employment application in 2021 stated that you had taken 7 months off from January 2019 whereas you had worked as a nurse between January and May 2019.*
6. *Your conduct at charges 4 and/or 5 was dishonest in that you sought to conceal from Superior Healthcare that:*
 - (a) you had not successfully completed your probationary period;*
and/or
 - (b) you had been dismissed by the relevant Trust; and/or*

(c) you had been referred to the NMC [in relation to charge 5 only].

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

The original panel determined the following with regard to impairment:

'In coming to its decision, the panel had regard to the Fitness to Practise Library, updated on 27 March 2023, which states:

'The question that will help decide whether a professional's fitness to practise is impaired is:

"Can the nurse, midwife or nursing associate practise kindly, safely and professionally?"

If the answer to this question is yes, then the likelihood is that the professional's fitness to practise is not impaired.'

Nurses occupy a position of privilege and trust in society and are expected at all times to be capable of being safe, kind and professional. Patients and their families must be able to trust nurses and midwives with their lives and the lives of their loved ones. To justify that trust, nurses must make sure that their conduct at all times justifies both their patients' and the public's trust in the profession.

In this regard the panel considered the judgment of Mrs Justice Cox in the case of CHRE v NMC and Grant in reaching its decision. In paragraph 74, she said:

'In determining whether a practitioner's fitness to practise is impaired by reason of misconduct, the relevant panel should generally consider not only whether the practitioner continues to present a risk to members of the public in his or her current role, but also whether the need to uphold proper professional standards and public

confidence in the profession would be undermined if a finding of impairment were not made in the particular circumstances.'

In paragraph 76, Mrs Justice Cox referred to Dame Janet Smith's "test" which reads as follows:

'Do our findings of fact in respect of the doctor's misconduct, deficient professional performance, adverse health, conviction, caution or determination show that his/her/ fitness to practise is impaired in the sense that S/He:

- a) has in the past acted and/or is liable in the future to act so as to put a patient or patients at unwarranted risk of harm; and/or*
- b) has in the past brought and/or is liable in the future to bring the medical profession into disrepute; and/or*
- c) has in the past breached and/or is liable in the future to breach one of the fundamental tenets of the medical profession; and/or*
- d) has in the past acted dishonestly and/or is liable to act dishonestly in the future.'*

The panel was satisfied that limbs b) c) and d) were engaged. It noted that, during the formal investigation process, there was very little evidence to suggest that Ms Pezzi had demonstrated remorse or insight. However, it took into account her comments in the Case Management Form completed in anticipation of the hearing, in which she stated:

'I am, however, deeply sorry that I misled Superior Healthcare and wish I could go back and change the situation. All I can do is apologise profusely and hope that they, and the NMC, can forgive me and understand my reasons for omitting the details of my last

role in my application to Superior Healthcare were not to deceive but to obtain work and keep a roof over my head.'

The panel found that these comments demonstrated limited evidence of remorse for her actions.

In terms of insight, the panel found there was limited evidence that Ms Pezzi understood the seriousness of her misconduct. While there was some reflection on her personal circumstances and regret over her actions, there was no clear evidence that she appreciated the potential impact of her dishonesty on public protection or on public confidence in the nursing profession.

The panel also considered a character reference provided by Ms Pezzi's current line manager, dated 6 July 2023 which states:

'my experience been with SP has only ever demonstrated honesty and integrity in her role. During the recruitment process she was open about her referral to the NMC and she has kept me fully informed of the process at all times.'

With respect to remediation, the panel noted that there was no evidence of formal remediation, such as training or reflective work, directly addressing the misconduct found proved, particularly in relation to dishonesty.

Nevertheless, the panel was of the view that the dishonesty in this case is remediable, and that Ms Pezzi has the capacity to remediate her behaviour. The panel found no evidence of deep-seated attitudinal issues or concerns.

While the panel acknowledged the limited expressions of remorse and insight, it noted that Ms Pezzi appeared to have prioritised her own interests above those of the public and the integrity of the nursing profession. There was no evidence before the panel that she had reflected meaningfully on the wider implications of her conduct.

In light of all the circumstances, the panel determined that there remains a risk of repetition. It found that Ms Pezzi is liable in the future to bring the nursing profession into disrepute, to breach fundamental tenets of nursing practice, and to act dishonestly. Accordingly, the panel concluded that Ms Pezzi's fitness to practise is currently impaired on the grounds of public protection and in the wider public interest.'

The original panel determined the following with regard to sanction:

'The panel next considered whether placing conditions of practice on Ms Pezzi'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:

- Potential and willingness to respond positively to retraining; and*
- Conditions can be created that can be monitored and assessed.*

The panel noted that Ms Pezzi has not fully engaged in the fitness to practise process and has indicated that it is her intention to retire from the profession. In any event, the panel was of the view that there are no practical or workable conditions that could be formulated, given the nature of the charges in this case. The misconduct identified in this case was not something that can be addressed through retraining.

Furthermore, the panel concluded that the placing of conditions on Ms Pezzi's registration would not adequately address the seriousness of this case and would not protect the public or address the wider public interest.

The panel then went on to consider whether a suspension order would be an appropriate sanction. The SG states that suspension order may be appropriate where some of the following factors are apparent:

- *A single instance of misconduct but where a lesser sanction is not sufficient;*
- *No evidence of harmful deep-seated personality or attitudinal problems;*
- *No evidence of repetition of behaviour since the incident; and*
- *The Committee is satisfied that the nurse or midwife has insight and does not pose a significant risk of repeating behaviour.*

The panel acknowledged that this was a finely balanced decision, particularly considering that the panel determined that Ms Pezzi has shown limited insight. The panel therefore went on to consider whether a striking-off order would be an appropriate sanction. The panel was of the view that it may have been possible to justify either a suspension or a striking-off order in accordance with the NMC's Sanctions Guidance.

The panel noted that whilst the case involved multiple allegations, all the misconduct related to a single job application and did not amount to a sustained or broader pattern of dishonesty. The panel accepted that the misconduct was serious, and recognised that in other cases of a similar nature, a striking-off order may have been appropriate. However, the panel carefully considered Ms Pezzi's comments within the CMF, which it found to demonstrate remorse and provided some insight into her difficult personal circumstances at the time of the misconduct. It also took into account the NMC's submission, which proposed suspension as the minimally sufficient sanction.

In line with the SG, which directs that the least restrictive sanction should be applied where it is sufficient to protect the public and maintain professional standards, the panel concluded that striking off was not the only suitable sanction to achieve those objectives.

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 well cause Ms Pezzi. 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 and to allow Ms Pezzi time to reflect and if she so wishes, re-engage with her regulator.'

Decision and reasons on current impairment

The panel has considered carefully whether Ms Pezzi's fitness to practise remains impaired. Whilst there is no statutory definition of fitness to practise, the NMC has defined fitness to practise as the ability of a professional on our register to 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 Ms Pezzi's fitness to practise remains impaired.

The panel found that there has been no change in circumstances since the original hearing. It noted that the original panel found that Ms Pezzi had limited insight and had not taken steps to strengthen her practice. At this meeting, the panel had nothing before it to demonstrate that Ms Pezzi had further developed her insight or taken steps to strengthen her practice. Therefore, the panel determined that Ms Pezzi still had insufficient insight and had not taken steps to strengthen her practice.

The original panel determined that Ms Pezzi was liable to repeat matters of the kind found proved. In light of the fact that the panel has no evidence before it today to show that Ms Pezzi has addressed the concerns through insight, remediation, or strengthened practice, this panel agreed with the previous panel that Ms Pezzi remains 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 bore 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. It noted that this is a case involving dishonesty, and nurses have a professional obligation to support transparency and safeguarding in healthcare recruitment processes. The panel was of the view that a member of the public informed of the charges found proved, including dishonesty, would find it unacceptable that the NMC, as regulator, did not find continuing impairment in this case. Therefore, the panel determined that a finding of continuing impairment on public interest grounds is also required.

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

Decision and reasons on sanction

Having found Ms Pezzi's 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 took into account the NMC's guidance on sanctions and substantive order reviews and bore in mind that the purpose of a sanction is not punitive, though any sanction imposed may have a punitive effect.

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

Having found that there was no new information before it and given that Ms Pezzi has not engaged with the NMC, the panel determined that the risk to public protection and the public interest remained high, and that any sanction below that of a suspension order was not appropriate in this case.

The panel considered imposing a further suspension order. The panel noted that Ms Pezzi has not demonstrated any insight into the concerns, nor has she strengthened her practice or demonstrated any further remediation. The panel was of the view that considerable evidence would be required to show that Ms Pezzi no longer posed a risk to the public. Given Ms Pezzi's lack of engagement and the seriousness of the concerns, including dishonesty, the panel determined that a further period of suspension would not be proportionate or appropriate in the circumstances.

Therefore, the panel went on to consider whether a striking-off order was appropriate and proportionate. The panel took into account that Ms Pezzi has not engaged with the NMC for a significant period of time, and, at the substantive hearing, she had explained in an email dated 28 May 2025 that she would not be *'undertaking any further employment as a nurse.'* The panel also noted that Ms Pezzi's PIN has lapsed, and as such, she would not remain on the NMC register but for these proceedings. However, due to her lack of engagement and the seriousness of the charges found proved, the panel determined that it was necessary to take action to prevent Ms Pezzi from practising in the future and concluded that the only sanction that would adequately protect the public and serve the public interest was a striking-off order.

This striking-off order will take effect upon the expiry of the current suspension order, namely the end of 23 July 2026, in accordance with Article 30(1).

This decision will be confirmed to Ms Pezzi in writing.

That concludes this determination.