

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

**Substantive Order Review Hearing
Thursday, 18 June 2026**

Virtual Hearing

Name of Registrant: Animol Puthanpurackal Thomas

NMC PIN: 22C17670

Part(s) of the register: Nursing - Sub Part 1
RNA, Registered Nurse – Adult (March 2022)

Relevant Location: Essex

Type of case: Misconduct and Lack of knowledge of English

Panel members: Michaela McAleer (Chair, lay member)
Richard Desir (Registrant member)
Deborah Morel (Lay member)

Legal Assessor: Alain Gogarty

Hearings Coordinator: Isabella Payne

Nursing and Midwifery Council: Represented by Tom Hoskins

Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas: Not present and unrepresented at the hearing

Order being reviewed: Suspension order (12 months)

Fitness to practise: Impaired

Outcome: **Striking-off order to come into effect on 24 June 2026
in accordance with Article 30 (1)**

Decision and reasons on service of Notice of Hearing

The panel was informed at the start of this hearing that Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas was not in attendance and that the Notice of Hearing letter had been sent to Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas' registered email address by secure email on 14 May 2026.

Mr Hoskins, 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 allegations, the time and dates of the hearing and that it was to be held virtually, including instructions on how to join and, amongst other things, information about Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas' right to attend, be represented and call evidence, as well as the panel's power to proceed in her absence.

In light of all of the information available, the panel was satisfied that Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas has been served with the Notice of Hearing in accordance with the requirements of Rules 11 and 34.

Decision and reasons on proceeding in the absence of Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas

The panel next considered whether it should proceed in the absence of Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas. The panel had regard to Rule 21 and heard the submissions of Mr Hoskins who invited the panel to continue in the absence of Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas.

Mr Hoskins submitted that there had been no engagement at all by Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas with the NMC since March of 2023. Mr Hoskins submitted that there was no application for an adjournment, and due to her lack of engagement, there was no reason to believe that an adjournment would secure her attendance on some future occasion.

The panel accepted the advice of the legal assessor.

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

- Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas has not engaged with the NMC since her last email dated 12 March 2023, did not attend the substantive hearing, or the subsequent substantive review hearing and has not responded to any of the telephone calls/emails sent to her about this hearing;
- No application for an adjournment has been made by Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas;
- Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas has voluntarily absented herself;
- There is no reason to suppose that adjourning would secure her attendance at some future date;
- This is a mandatory review of the current suspension order as it is scheduled to expire on 24 June 2026;
- There is a strong public interest in the expeditious review of the case.

In these circumstances, the panel has decided that it is fair to proceed in the absence of Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas.

Decision and reasons on review of the substantive order

The panel decided to replace the current suspension order with a striking off order

This order will come into effect at the end of 24 June 2026 in accordance with Article 30(1) of the 'Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001' (the Order).

This is the second review of a substantive suspension order originally imposed for a period of 12 months by a Fitness to Practise Committee on 24 May 2024. This was reviewed on 11 June 2025 and a further 12-month suspension order was imposed.

The current order is due to expire at the end of 24 June 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. On 11 February 2022, whilst a pre-registered Band 4 nurse, failed to:

- a. Recognise that a patient was having a seizure.*
- b. Escalate the incident by pulling the alarm bell.*
- c.*

2. On 1 April 2022 failed to check a patient's stool chart to ascertain whether the patient required their laxative medication.

3. On 1 April 2022 when it was identified that the 06.00 medications for a patient had not been signed for, failed to recognise when prompted whether the patient should be given their medication or not.

4. On 26 April 2022 drew up the incorrect dosage of insulin to be administered to a patient.

5. On 26 April 2022 having put one or more tablets into a patient's mouth thereafter;

- a. Pushed them in.*
- b. Poured water into their mouth.*

6. On 26 April 2022 incorrectly attempted to lift a patient by placing your arm under the patient's arm.

And in light of the above your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of your misconduct.

Charge in relation to lack of knowledge of English:

Charge 1

- 1. That you, a registered nurse, between 12 November 2021 and 12 May 2022 did not have the necessary knowledge of English to practise safely and effectively.*

And in light of the above, your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of your lack of knowledge of English.'

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

'The panel considered whether Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas's fitness to practise remains impaired.

At this hearing the panel noted that Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas has not engaged with the process and no new evidence has been provided to demonstrate insight, remorse or strengthening of her practice during the intervening period. She has also not provided any evidence of her improved knowledge and understanding of English language or having taken an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test. In light of this the panel has concluded that Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas still has insufficient insight into her actions and there remains a likelihood that matters of the kind found proved may be repeated.

The panel noted the seriousness of the charges found proved by the original panel and highlighted that the list of recommendations provided by the previous panel to assist the future reviewing panel have not been adhered to. The misconduct charges included actual harm caused to patients, medication errors, failure to identify and respond to acute medical incidents and not adhering to manual handling procedures. The panel further noted that the separate charge

surrounding lack of knowledge of English was a compounding factor and appeared to exacerbate underlying poor practice.

The panel determined there is no evidence provided to demonstrate Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas is no longer impaired. In light of the serious charges and no material evidence to demonstrate insight and strengthening of practice, there is an ongoing risk of harm to patients and the public associated with Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas' practice and a finding of impairment is necessary on public protection grounds.

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 Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas' fitness to practise remains impaired.'

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

'Having found Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas' fitness to practise currently impaired, the panel then considered what, if any, sanction it should impose in this case...

.....

The panel considered the imposition of a further period of suspension. It was of the view that a suspension order would allow Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas further time to fully reflect on her previous misconduct and give another opportunity to engage with the NMC to demonstrate remediation, strengthened practice and improved knowledge of the English language. The panel concluded that a further

12 month suspension order would be the appropriate and proportionate sanction and would afford Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas additional time to further develop her insight and take steps to strengthen their practice. It would also give Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas an opportunity to approach past and current health professionals to attest to her performance in the workplace.

The panel determined that a strike-off order would not be appropriate or proportionate. It has not identified any deep-seated attitudinal problems and that the misconduct is not fundamentally incompatible with remaining on the register. The panel has acknowledged that the concerns raised are remediable and therefore Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas should be provided with further opportunity to engage with the NMC and demonstrate remediation.

The panel took into account the fact that although it had the power to impose a striking off order in respect of the misconduct only it could not take into account the lack of knowledge of English as there had not been a two year period of suspension. The panel therefore concluded that a suspension order is the appropriate and proportionate 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 12 months would provide Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas with an opportunity to engage with the NMC.

This suspension order will take effect upon the expiry of the current suspension order, namely the end of 24 June 2025 in accordance with Article 30(1).

Before the end of the period of suspension, another panel will review the order. At the review hearing the panel may revoke the order, or it may confirm the order, or it may replace the order with another order.

Any future panel reviewing this case would be assisted by:

- *Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas' engagement with the NMC and attendance at any further review hearings.*
- *Evidence of improved knowledge of English language, including; any up to date IELTS test results and further evidence of continued learning and practice in English to show improved comprehension and communication;*
- *Evidence of insight and remediation;*
- *A reflective piece regarding the seriousness of the misconduct found proved and the importance of comprehending and communicating effectively in English; and*
- *A statement from Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas which outlines her intentions for practising in the future.*
- *Evidence of continued professional development including training in recognition and management of seizures, how to respond in emergency situations, manual handling and medicines management.'*

Decision and reasons on current impairment

The panel has considered carefully whether Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas'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 and submissions that had been available to the original substantive hearing panel in relation to Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas's personal circumstances in mitigation. It has taken account of the submissions made by Mr Hoskins on behalf of the NMC.

Mr Hoskins submitted that this is a mixed allegation case made up of misconduct and a lack of knowledge of English.

Mr Hoskins submitted that, whilst the misconduct may previously have been capable of remediation, Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas' continued lack of engagement and absence of any remediation, or cooperation with the NMC indicate that remediation is no longer a viable consideration. Mr Hoskins further submitted, that during the period of suspension, Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas should have engaged with the regulatory process and provided evidence to demonstrate that their fitness to practice is no longer impaired. However no such evidence had been provided.

Mr Hoskins submitted that Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas previous misconduct was that of a serious nature and occurred over a relatively short period of time. The misconduct gave rise to both actual and potential patient harm, thereby raising significant concerns regarding public protection.

Mr Hoskins further submitted that, throughout the duration of Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas' suspension orders, no evidence has been provided to demonstrate insight, strengthening of practice, or remediation. In the absence of any engagement or evidence addressing the concerns identified by the previous panel, Mr Hoskins invited the panel to find Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas' fitness to practice remains currently impaired. Mr Hoskins also submitted that such a finding is required in the wider public interest, in order to maintain public confidence in the profession and uphold professional standards.

Furthermore, Mr Hoskins acknowledged that a lack of English competence is a concern capable of remediation. However, he submitted that no evidence had been provided to demonstrate that the registrant has taken any steps to address this concern during the suspension order. He invited the panel to impose a striking-off order on the misconduct ground.

The panel 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 Puthanpurackal Thomas's fitness to practise remains impaired.

The panel considered that there had been no engagement from Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas since March 2023 and therefore no evidence of improvement, training or reflection. The panel determined that a finding of impairment on public protection grounds is required because if Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas was allowed to continue to practise as a nurse without restriction, there is a risk of repetition. The panel therefore determined that Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas' fitness to practise remains impaired on public protection grounds.

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 concluded that public confidence in the profession would be undermined if a finding of impairment were not made in this case, given that no steps had been taken by the registrant to address ongoing impairment identified in her case. It therefore determined that Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas' fitness to practise also remains impaired on the grounds of public interest.

When considering Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas' lack of knowledge of English, the panel noted that Ms Puthanpurackal-Thomas' has shown no evidence of any training or assessment of her knowledge of English, nor has she provided any evidence of insight in relation to the misconduct in her case. As a consequence, the panel could not be satisfied that her knowledge of English is now at the necessary standard to practise as a nurse safely. The panel therefore decided that a finding of impairment is necessary on the grounds of public protection and public interest.

Having regard to all of the above, the panel were satisfied that Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas' fitness to practise remains impaired on both public protection and public interests grounds.

Decision and reasons on sanction

Having found Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas'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 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 misconducts. The panel decided that it would be neither proportionate nor in the public interest to take no further action.

The panel 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 Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas' 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, but the Committee wants to mark that what happened was unacceptable and must not happen again'* The panel considered that this case 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 Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas'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 Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas'

misconduct. The panel found that there are no workable or measurable conditions that could be put in place in respect of the lack of knowledge of English.

The panel next considered imposing a further suspension order. The panel referenced the SG which outlined why a suspension order would have no practical purpose in this context and would not be in the public interest. The panel considered that Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas continued lack of engagement may indicate an attitudinal concern. The panel was unable to confirm whether this lack of engagement arises from an inability or an unwillingness to engage with the regulatory process, and noted that no up to date information had been provided by Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas as to her personal circumstances.

The panel were provided with access to mitigating factors in this case which were considered by the original panel in this substantive hearing. The panel also noted that her previous employer did not feel there were any attitudinal issues as Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas was previously willing to respond to training. However the panel carefully considered that it has been over three years (March 2023) since Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas has engaged with the NMC and in the absence of any attempt at remediation, reflection or training, the question whether Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas has an attitudinal issue now becomes relevant.

The panel noted that Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas has not demonstrated any insight into her previous failings. The panel was of the view that considerable evidence would be required to show that Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas no longer posed a risk to the public. The panel determined that a further period of suspension would not serve any useful purpose in all of the circumstances and would not be in the public interest.

The panel had regard to the NMC Guidance on Removal from the register when there is a substantive order in place (REV-2a Standard Reviews of Substantive orders before they expire).

- The panel took into account that the registrant has been subject to substantive orders since 24 May 2024;
- There has been no engagement from the registrant since March 2023;

- The registrant has shown no insight/understanding;
- There has been no progress made towards being fit to practice;
- The registrant nor the panel have identified any barriers to the professional progressing.

The panel concluded that a further suspension order is unlikely to result in the registrant returning to safe unrestricted practice within a reasonable period of time. In such circumstances the panel therefore considered the next option available which is removal from the register. The panel noted that in relation to the knowledge of English the sanction of striking-off is not available as the registrant has not been subject to a suspension order for a continuous period of two years. However, the sanction of a strike-off is available for the misconduct component of this case.

The panel determined that it was necessary to take action to prevent Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas 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 is on the misconduct component of the case. The panel therefore directs the Registrar to strike Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas' name off the NMC Register.

This striking-off order will take effect upon the expiry of the current suspension order, namely the end of 24 June 2026 in accordance with Article 30(1)

This decision will be confirmed to Ms Puthanpurackal Thomas in writing.

That concludes this determination.