

**BEFORE THE FITNESS TO PRACTISE COMMITTEE  
OF THE GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL**

**GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL**

**F(22)30**

**AND**

**GARETH LONG (01-24213)**

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**NOTICE OF INQUIRY  
SUBSTANTIVE HEARING**

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Take notice that an inquiry will be conducted in the above matter by the Fitness to Practise Committee of the General Optical Council.

A substantive hearing will be proceeding:

**Blended hearing**

This means part of the hearing will be held physically in person and part of the hearing will be held remotely via video conference facilities.

The substantive hearing will take place on:

**Physically – Wednesday 22 to Tuesday 28 March 2023 at the GOC Offices: 10 Old Bailey, London EC4M 7NG from 09:30am.**

**Remotely – Wednesday 29 to Thursday 30 March 2023 via MS Teams from 9:30am.**

The Inquiry will be based upon the allegation submitted by the Council (see below) and will determine whether the fitness to practise of **Gareth Long** is impaired by virtue of the provisions contained in section 13D(2) of the Opticians Act 1989.

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Vineeta Desai  
Hearings Manager, General Optical Council

**01 December 2022**

## ALLEGATION

The Council alleges that in relation to you, Gareth Long (01-24213), a registered optometrist, whilst employed at Spa Medica [redacted]:

- 1) On or around 14 December 2021, you:
  - a. Failed to verify Patient A's identity prior to the consultation resulting in the patient being misdiagnosed;
  - b. Failed to conduct an adequate examination of Patient A's eye in that you incorrectly advised Patient A that the patient had cystoid macular oedema;
  - c. Upon receiving Patient A's complaint on 14 December 2021, you inserted additional notes on Patient A's records for 14 December 2021 which were inaccurate in that you wrote:
    - i. "Regarding the note stating, 'cystoid macular oedema' that [Patient A] had presented to his wife: I am not certain where this came from." despite stating that you had written the note for another Px;
    - ii. "I did see another Px immediately after [Patient A] who I diagnosed with cystoid macular oedema, and this Px asked me to write the name of the condition down for him" despite knowing that this Px had never asked for or received a note of diagnosis;
    - iii. "I did note that as I handed the Px this note as requested, he was sat next to [Patient A] in the waiting area" despite knowing that Patient A was not seated next to anybody in the waiting area;
    - iv. "It occurs to me that [Patient A] may have picked up paperwork belonging to this other Px whilst in the waiting area" despite knowing this did not take place;
    - v. "[Patient A] was confused about the reason for his visit today" despite knowing Patient A showed no signs and/or symptoms of confusion;
  - d. Inappropriately recorded on Patient A's notes "it would be wise for [Patient A] to be accompanied by a chaperone" despite Patient A showing no signs and/or symptoms that a chaperone would be needed;
- 2) Your actions as set out at 1c) above were dishonest in that you amended Patient A's records after speaking with your manager on or around 14 December 2021, in order to hide your error in misdiagnosing cystoid macular oedema of Patient A;

And by virtue of the facts set out above, your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of misconduct

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**Committee Members:** Hermione McEwen(Lay)  
Nicola Enston (Lay)  
Victoria Smith (Lay)  
Gemma O' Rourke (Optometrist)  
Kalpana Theophilus (Optometrist)

**Legal Adviser:** TBC

**Hearings Officer:** TBC

**Transcribers:** Marten Walsh Cherer Limited

If you require further information relating to this hearing, please contact the Council's Hearings Manager at [hearings@optical.org](mailto:hearings@optical.org).