

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

GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL

AND

F(24)03

SALLY HILTON (D-11927)

**DETERMINATION SUMMARY OF A SUBSTANTIVE HEARING
23 – 24 MAY & 28 - 31 MAY 2024 & 29 July 2024**

Committee Members:	Mr James Kellock (Chair) Ms Asmita Naik (Lay) (23-24 May & 28-31 May only). Mr John Vaughan (Lay) Mr Ian Taylor (Dispensing Optician) Ms Sue Deal (Dispensing Optician)
Clinical adviser:	Dr Desmond Dunleavy
Legal adviser:	Ms Charlotte Mitchell-Dunn
GOC Presenting Officer:	Ms Sharmistha Michaels
Registrant present/represented:	Yes and represented
Registrant representative:	Mr John Graham (Graham Law Ltd)
Hearings Officer:	Ms Humera Asif
Facts found proved:	1 and Schedule A
Facts not found proved:	N/A
Misconduct:	N/A
Impairment:	Impaired
Sanction:	Suspension for 12 months (with review)
Immediate order:	Immediate order imposed.

ALLEGATION

The Council alleges that in relation to you, Sally Hilton(D-11927), a registered Dispensing Optician:

1) You have the *[redacted]* set out in Schedule A.

And by virtue of the facts set out above, your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of [redacted].

Schedule A (not for publication)

DETERMINATION

Admissions in relation to the particulars of the allegation

The Registrant denied the allegation in its entirety.

Findings in relation to the facts

The Committee found particulars 1 and Schedule A proved.

Findings regarding impairment

The Committee found that the Registrant's fitness to practise as a Dispensing Optician is currently impaired on the basis that she is *[redacted]*.

Sanction

The Committee determined suspension for a period of 12 months.

A review hearing will be held between four and six weeks prior to the expiration of this order.

The Committee considered a reviewing Committee may be assisted by the following:

- 1) Continuing engagement with the GOC and the fitness to practise committee.
- 2) Independent third-party evidence demonstrating a sustained period of at least six months *[redacted]*.
- 3) Any testimonials or references relating to the Registrant's progress in relation to her *[redacted]*.
- 4) A reflective statement covering the Registrant's current insight into her *[redacted]*.

Immediate order

The Committee was satisfied that an immediate order was necessary for the protection of the public and in the public interest. The Committee was therefore concerned that if no immediate order was made, the Registrant could return to practise with an unmanaged [redacted] condition. The Committee therefore concluded that an immediate order was necessary to protect members of the public and in the public interest. Accordingly, the Committee imposed an immediate order of suspension.

Revocation of interim order

The Committee directed that the current interim order that has been in place be revoked.

Chair of the Committee: Mr James Kellock

Signature ...  **Date: 29 July 2024**

Registrant: Mrs Hilton

Signaturesent via email..... **Date: 29 July 202**

NOTICE TO REGISTRANT:

- The GOC will enter these conditions against your name in the register save for any conditions that disclose information about your health.
- In accordance with Section 13C(3) of the Opticians Act 1989, the GOC may disclose to any person any information relating to your fitness to practise in the public interest.
- In accordance with Section 13B(1) of the Opticians Act 1989, the GOC may require any person, including your learning/workplace supervisor or professional colleague, to supply any information or document relevant to its statutory functions.

FURTHER INFORMATION
Transcript
A full transcript of the hearing will be made available for purchase in due course.
Appeal
Any appeal against an order of the Committee must be lodged with the relevant court within 28 days of the service of this notification. If no appeal is lodged, the order will take effect at the end of that period. The relevant court is shown at section 23G(4)(a)-(c) of the Opticians Act 1989 (as amended).
Professional Standards Authority
<p>This decision will be reported to the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) under the provisions of section 29 of the NHS Reform and Healthcare Professions Act 2002. PSA may refer this case to the High Court of Justice in England and Wales, the Court of Session in Scotland or the High Court of Justice in Northern Ireland as appropriate if they decide that a decision has been insufficient to protect the public and/or should not have been made, and if they consider that referral is desirable for the protection of the public.</p> <p>Where a registrant can appeal against a decision, the Authority has 40 days beginning with the day which is the last day in which you can appeal. Where a registrant cannot appeal against the outcome of a hearing, the Authority's appeal period is 56 days beginning with the day in which notification of the decision was served on you. PSA will notify you promptly of a decision to refer. A letter will be</p>

sent by recorded delivery to your registered address (unless PSA has been notified by the GOC of a change of address).

Further information about the PSA can be obtained from its website at www.professionalstandards.org.uk or by telephone on 020 7389 8030.

Effect of orders for suspension or erasure

To practise or carry on business as an optometrist or dispensing optician, to take or use a description which implies registration or entitlement to undertake any activity which the law restricts to a registered person, may amount to a criminal offence once an entry in the register has been suspended or erased.

Contact

If you require any further information, please contact the Council's Hearings Manager at 10 Old Bailey, London, EC4M 7NG or, by telephone, on 020 7580 3898.