

Dr Michael Watt – Voluntary Erasure (VE) FAQ

GMC Media Line

The Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service (MPTS) - the body responsible for conducting hearings – has granted Dr Watt's application for voluntary erasure. This means the doctor will be removed from the register and he will not be able to practise medicine in the UK.

The MPTS makes independent decisions about cases referred by the GMC.

A GMC spokesperson said:

'We are extremely disappointed that the Medical Practitioners Tribunal has allowed Dr Watt's application for voluntary erasure as we felt it was in the public interest for the allegations to be heard by the tribunal in an open and transparent way.

'Patients of Dr Watt have suffered immense harm and our thoughts are with them and their families.'

FAQs

What is Voluntary Erasure (VE)?

Doctors can at any time apply for voluntary erasure, which means they choose to be removed from the medical register and cannot practice medicine in the UK.

If they have already been referred for a Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service (MPTS) hearing their application is decided by the tribunal, which operates separately from the GMC.

In this case the tribunal granted Dr Watt's application for voluntary erasure. We are extremely disappointed by this decision as we felt it was in the public interest for the allegations to be heard by the tribunal in an open and transparent way.

Could Dr Watt just apply to go back on the register?

Dr Watt cannot practise as a doctor in the UK whilst he remains off our register. He can apply to be restored to the register in the future; if he applied we would resume investigations into the outstanding fitness to practise concerns.

Any application would be referred to a tribunal hearing to determine whether to restore him to the register, with the onus on him to demonstrate he was fully fit to practise.

Who are the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service (MPTS)?

The MPTS runs hearings, which make independent decisions about whether doctors are fit to practise medicine. If necessary, MPTS tribunals can restrict or remove a doctor's right to practise medicine in the UK.

The MPTS is independent in its decision making and operates separately from the investigatory role of the GMC. The MPTS makes independent decisions about cases referred by the GMC.

Who is the GMC accountable to?

The GMC is accountable to the UK parliament. The Professional Standards Authority (PSA), conducts and publishes annual performance reviews of the GMC. The PSA sets the standards for good regulation which the GMC must meet.

What is the GMC's view of this decision?

We are extremely disappointed that the MPTS has allowed Dr Watt's application for Voluntary Erasure, as we felt it was in the public interest for the allegations to be heard by the tribunal in an open and transparent way.

Patients of Dr Watt have suffered immense harm and our thoughts are with them and their families.

What happens to the GMC's investigations into Dr Watt's practice?

As Dr Watt is now no longer on the register, this means we no longer have any powers to consider his fitness to practise any further. As a result, we are unable to continue with our investigations.

Who can I talk to about my complaint?

Patients and families can contact the GMC's Fitness to Practise team.

Email: fpddecisions@gmc-uk.org

Direct Dial: 0161 240 8216

Who can I complain about this decision to?

You can contact the MPTS directly if you wish to complain about the VE decision.

Email: enquiries@mpts-uk.org

Call: 0161 923 6602

Is Dr Watt unwell?

We cannot comment on the status of Dr Watt's health.