

**Strictly Private and
Confidential**

**REPORT OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT COMMITTEE FOLLOWING AN
INQUIRY HELD PURSUANT TO SECTION 58 OF THE HEALTH AND
SOCIAL CARE PROFESSIONALS ACT 2005 (AS AMENDED) ("THE ACT")**

Name of Registrant: Ms. Anna Marie Stack Rivas

Registrant in Attendance: No

Registration Board: Physiotherapists Registration Board

Registration No: PT031856

Registrant Address: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Case Number: C366, C408 and C489

Date(s) of Inquiry: 14 and 15th January, 9th February and 23rd March, 2026

Members of Inquiry Committee: Dr. Shane McCarthy, Chairperson

Ms. Isibéal McCoy, Registered Professional
Physiotherapist Member

Mr. Joe O’Sullivan, Registered Professional
Optometrist Member

Legal Assessor: Thomas Hogan S.C.

Appearances:

For the Registrar:

Mr. Eoghan O'Sullivan BL instructed by **Ms. Hannah Unger**, of Fieldfisher Solicitors

For the Registrant:

Unrepresented and did not appear

Hearing

In public

The Nature of the Complaints that resulted in the Inquiry:

In respect of **Case C366** the Preliminary Proceedings Committee, on 16 April 2024, having considered all information furnished to them in relation to the complaint of [REDACTED] (the "Complaint") dated 23 June 2023 pursuant to Part 6 of the Act, was of the opinion that there was sufficient cause to warrant further action being taken in relation to the Complaint against the Registrant on the ground of professional misconduct within the meaning of Section 52(1)(a) of the Act as that term is defined by Section 50 of the Act.

The Complaint was referred by the Preliminary Proceedings Committee pursuant to Section 56(1)(b) of the Act to a Professional Conduct Committee.

In respect of **Case C408** the Preliminary Proceedings Committee, on 16 April 2024, having considered all information furnished to them in relation to the complaint of [REDACTED] (the "Complaint") dated 24 October 2023 pursuant to Part 6 of the Act, was of the opinion that there was sufficient cause to warrant further action being taken in relation to the Complaint against the Registrant on the ground of professional misconduct within the meaning of Section 52(1)(a) of the Act as that term is defined by Section 50 of the Act.

The Complaint was referred by the Preliminary Proceedings Committee pursuant to Section 56(1)(b) of the Act to a Professional Conduct Committee

In respect of **Case C489** the Preliminary Proceedings Committee, on 08 July 2025, having considered all information furnished to them in relation to the complaint of Claire O'Cleary, the Registrar of the Physiotherapists Registration Board of Health and Social Care Professionals Council (CORU), (the "Complaint") pursuant to Part 6 of the Act, was of the opinion that there was sufficient cause to warrant further action being taken in relation to the Complaint against the Registrant on the ground of professional misconduct within the meaning of Section 52(1)(a) of the Act as that term is defined by Section 50 of the Act.

The Complaint was referred by the Preliminary Proceedings Committee pursuant to Section 56(1)(b)(i) of the Act to a Professional Conduct Committee

The three cases proceeded as a single inquiry.

Preliminary Matters

Service

1. The Committee was satisfied from a review of all of the relevant correspondence that the Registrant was properly and appropriately served and that the Registrant had been notified by email of the relevant material.
2. Specifically, the Committee was satisfied on the evidence presented in respect of each of the complaints that the provisions of Section 57 of the Act were complied with. Firstly, the Committee was satisfied that each of the complaints were referred to a Committee of Inquiry, secondly, that the Registrant was notified of the nature of the matters the subject of the inquiry and in each case given the particulars of the evidence in support of the complaints and thirdly, notified of the opportunity to be present and represented to defend the allegations.
3. The Registrant was in each case notified in sufficient time of the date, time and place of the hearing.
4. For all the foregoing reasons, the Committee was satisfied as to service.

Decision to Proceed in the Absence of the Registrant

1. The Registrant did not appear at the commencement of the inquiry and the Registrar sought to proceed in her absence. Having carefully considered the submissions on behalf of the Registrar as to service of notice of the proceedings on the Registrant and having taken advice from the legal assessor the Committee were satisfied that it was appropriate in all the circumstances to proceed with the inquiry in the absence of the Registrant.
2. The Committee was mindful that it should take particular care in considering whether to proceed with the hearing of an inquiry in the absence of a Registrant where the Registrant is not legally represented.
3. The Committee was satisfied (for the reasons above) that the Registrant was properly served with notice of the proceedings and had voluntarily absented herself from the inquiry on the basis of her previous communications wherein she expressly stated that she would not be participating unless certain conditions were satisfied.
4. The conditions demanded for the Registrant's attendance at the proposed two day inquiry were set out in an email of 18 December, 2025, as follows:-

- (i) That the hearing be facilitated in an “Eire Court of Record”.
- (ii) The Registrant would be paid €25,000 per day to attend the inquiry.
- (iii) That requested documentation would be furnished at least 1 month in advance of the hearing.

5. The Committee recognises a Registrant’s right to be present, with or without representation and to participate in an inquiry but does not accept that it is open to a registrant to impose conditions on that attendance. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Committee considered the conditions proposed by the Registrant.
6. The Committee was not satisfied that the proposed conditions had any legitimate basis or were reasonable or appropriate. The Committee were of the view that the conditions were imposed in an attempt by the Registrant to obstruct the inquiry proceeding and were tantamount to a refusal by the Registrant to participate in the inquiry.
7. Having been informed that CORU would not accept her conditions it remained open to the Registrant to attend. The Registrant was informed that the inquiry could proceed in her absence and further, that the Registrar would rely upon the correspondence that had passed between the parties in support of an application to do so. The Committee is satisfied that the Registrant voluntarily waived her right to be present and participate in the inquiry.
8. In light of the foregoing the Committee has no grounds to believe that an adjournment would be of any assistance to the Registrant and none was sought. Moreover, the Committee had no grounds to believe that postponing the hearing of the inquiry would or might result in the Registrant attending voluntarily and without the imposition of conditions. Any such postponement would be futile and would be unfair to the witnesses, the public and the Registrar.
9. The Committee is conscious of its obligations under the Act and the statutory objective of protecting the public and ensuring that complaints are disposed of in a fair, economical and expeditious way. The allegations relate to events in 2022 and the Committee believe that it would not be in the public interest for there to be unnecessary delay in the hearing and conclusion of the inquiry.

Allegations (Case C366)

That you, while registered as a Physiotherapist with the Physiotherapists Registration Board ("the Board")

1. On or around 5 February 2022, at a time when a similar complaint had already been referred forward by the PPC against you, at an unidentified location spoke at a public event, where you identified yourself as a healthcare worker and made one or more of the following comments with respect to the Covid-19 pandemic and/or Covid-19 vaccinations and/or vaccines and/or viruses and/or other public health issues:

a) In respect of your CORU registration and the wearing of masks stated: "Hi everybody I'm delighted to speak although I'll probably be struck off after this. I want to talk about informed consent which is very lacking right now in our health system and I it actually disgusts me... I worked in the healthcare system for over 20 years. I used to be a healthcare assistant.... I've spoken a few times and my registration board don't like what I'm saying. I have always followed the guidelines within my work which I love with passion. I have never outstepped or broken any rules within them but still my registration board don't like what I say in my private life....Also, in my profession we always go by evidence-based science. I have been dismayed for the last two years but not one bit of evidence, science, is being followed in my profession nor in the medical system. They've all been censored whether it be about the masks which are harmful, they don't do anything to stop viruses or anything else. They used be used in a sterile and now they are being told that everyone even out on the streets have to wear it. There's no science. The science out there tells you it's more harmful than good" or words to that effect; and/or,

b) In respect of Covid-19 vaccines stated: "I don't like calling a vaccine, it's a bloody genetic therapy. So people don't realise that their DNA and RNA are being interfered with." or words to that effect; and/or,

c) In respect of flu vaccines stated: "they're bribing you into taking the flu shot and this experimental vaccine. They're also bullying and intimidating the people who decide for our body our choice, that we do not want to take any vaccine that is not, that is in experimental stage. It has to stop. It has to stop" or words to that effect; and/or,

d) Stated: "Our family have been lied to and abused over the last two years and some have unfortunately been maimed or died from being part of this experiment but yet the leader of NEPHET, an unelected, jumped up bureaucrat is continuing to lie to the people with a smile on his face. We need to stop. We keep resisting and fighting for complete accountability and justice for those who succumb to the lies and intimidation. I plead with medical professionals, healthcare professionals and medical staff to start speaking up now before it's too late. We all have a duty of care, a moral obligation to do so" or words to that effect; and/or,

2. On or around 24 July 2022 at a time when a similar complaint had already been referred forward by the PPC against you, at or around [REDACTED] spoke at a public event where you identified yourself as a healthcare worker and where you made one or more of the following comments with respect to the Covid-19 pandemic and/or Covid-19 vaccinations and/or vaccines and/or viruses and/or other public health issues:

a) In respect of Covid-19 vaccines stated: "Because the truth is coming out now. Like what really is upsetting me the last three years is especially since this 'so called vaccine', this gene therapy shot that they've been giving people, they haven't given proper informed consent" or words to that effect; and/or,

b) In respect of Covid-19 vaccines stated: "The trials don't finish until 2023 and many people, all people who took this vaccine took it in good faith because they believed in their doctors or their medical practitioners who were giving them this and now a lot of people are, there's been huge mortality since the roll out. Nothing during this pandemic, nothing during the height of the covid situation it's been since the roll out and that's what's really made me so sad because I had family members take it and it's only if they had got the real thing and not the placebo. It's only time will tell like you know the damage it's going to do and already it has done because we're seeing an awful lot of sudden deaths especially between 30s and to in their 50s. Sudden deaths just died unexpectedly, never really sick in their life, very healthy people, two in the GAA I can think of, high profile players that played for Tyrone and Kilkenny am and no one is asking questions. And Roy Butler the soccer player. Ya and many more that we don't even know of, you know that are young people with myocarditis, pericarditis all these are being diagnosed in young people. Young people shouldn't get this, it's, it's crazy and their prognosis is very poor and some of them can't even return back to sport and look at all the soccer players and athletes all over the world that have succumb to this gene therapy and also that can't go back to play their loved, their beloved sport. These are fit healthy people. They're ruined for life and it either takes you, kills you or it'll actually damage your immune system as the years go on and now they're pushing booster after booster" or words to that effect; and/or,

c) In respect of Covid-19 vaccines responded "oh absolutely" or words to that effect when the interviewer stated that RTE and/or the government were accessories to murder, and/or,

d) In respect of Covid-19 vaccines stated: "People are easily manipulated and a lot people really do love their media and believe what these corrupt politicians and scientists are saying " or words to that effect; and/or,

e) In respect of Covid-19 and mask wearing stated: "the corona virus is the common cold so people are going to be fear mongered in again they're going to bring the masks back which are since the 80s there's studies up until 2022 that are saying they're null and void. They do nothing, they actually cause more damage to your health. They effect every part of your body. You're, you're, you're not getting oxygen into your lungs if you're wearing a mask" or words to that effect; and/or,.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE that it is alleged that the act(s) and/or omission(s) and/or pattern(s) of conduct at one or more of Allegations 1 – 3 above, amount individually and/or in combination and/or cumulatively to act(s) and/or omission(s) and/or pattern(s) of conduct that constitute a breach/breaches of the following sections of the Physiotherapists Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics, adopted by the Physiotherapists Registration Board [contained in the Schedule to the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Physiotherapists Bye-law 2019 (S.I. No. 45 of 2019) which came into effect on 28 February 2019]:

3. Maintain high standards of personal conduct and behaviour:

3.1 You must:

b. conduct yourself in a manner that enhances public confidence in you and your profession.

c. respect the roles and expertise of other health and social care professionals and work in partnership with them

3.2 You must not:

d. behave in a way that would call into question your suitability to work as a health or social care professional

4. Use Social Media responsibly

4.1 You must:

b. always consider the possible impact on service users and others before publishing any material, information or comments on social media, taking care to avoid abusive, unsustainable or defamatory comments.

and thereby constitute(s) professional misconduct.

Allegations (Case C408)

That you, while registered as a Physiotherapist with the Physiotherapists Registration Board ("the Board")

1. On or around 31 July 2021, at a time when a similar complaint had already been referred forward by the PPC against you, at an unidentified location spoke at a public event, where you identified yourself as a healthcare worker and made one or more of the following comments with respect to the Covid-19 pandemic and/or Covid-19 vaccinations and/or vaccines and/or viruses and/or other public health issues:

a) Stated: "I work in healthcare, I have been ridiculed in my own parish for speaking out about the truth. I've also been disciplined by my work for what I have been saying, for counteracting what they have been pushing for the last 18 months. Now I could have risked, now I am risking my job and my livelihood or words to that effect; and/or,

b) In respect of Covid-19 stated: "I am reaching out to my fellow limerick men and women, the beautiful people of Limerick that have been conned by this absolute scam and it's going on all over the world. People are being, the media are censoring the truth. RTE, Virgin Media, all of them are censoring the truth. We are only getting one narrative and the other side is not getting a chance to talk and anyone that actually speaks out whether you're a doctor, a professor or a scientist are being totally vilified in the press and being absolutely, their livelihoods are being taken away or they are trying to take their livelihoods away from them. And we have to know, we have to reach those people who just watch the mainstream media every day, that it's been a lie. If we had a real pandemic you would see our graveyards full" or words to that effect; and/or,

c) In respect of the Covid-19 pandemic stated: "Explain how they pulled the corona virus, you know all the legal, all those unlawful, unconstitutional laws into power in 2020 in a matter of days despite the Act being several hundred or thousands of pages long. They have this planned for a long time" or words to that effect; and/or,

d) In respect of PCR tests and Covid-19 stated: "They just happened to test them and it came up positive and mind you this test that they have been using is called a PCR test and the man who found it Carols Mullice stated very clearly that was never to be used for, as a diagnostic. And they continued all over the world to use this test. Also the HSE has admitted that at 40/45 cycles they are warming these tests at and guess what that means 100% false positives. So this is how they are pulling the cases out of their ass" or words to that effect; and/or, e) In respect of Covid-19 stated: "Explain why they find autopsies of anyone dying from or with covid and I will say 'with' because no one died from Covid" or words to that effect; and/or, f) In respect of Covid-19 stated: "Explain also how millions of protesters across the globe aren't getting sick with Covid and I will give you an example. I have been up at every at almost every protest. ■■■

been around a wonderful amazing loving people and I've never been sick. And they're talking that it's highly contagious. It's all BS" or words to that effect; and/or,

g) In respect of wearing masks and Covid-19 stated: "Explain how the people who are wearing masks and following the rules are the only one catching Covid and that's a fact. Because they've been so brainwashed that if they have a little cold or hay fever, they automatically think they have covid and they run then and get a fake test" or words to that effect; and/or,

h) In respect of vaccines stated "Vaccines in general cause, maim and damage and kill kids. And they're causing chronic illnesses in our children today" or words to that effect; and/or,

i) Stated: "Explain why the hospitals were emptier than normal during the height of a pandemic. They were never overwhelmed. But right now in all the hospitals they're inundated in the emergency department from not people with covid but people with adverse reactions from these experimental shots" or words to that effect; and/or

2. Such further or other allegations as may be notified to you in advance of the Inquiry.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE that it is alleged that the act(s) and/or omission(s) and/or pattern(s) of conduct at one or more of Allegations 1 – 2 above, amount individually and/or in combination and/or cumulatively to act(s) and/or omission(s) and/or pattern(s) of conduct that constitute a breach/breaches of the following sections of the Physiotherapists Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics, adopted by the Physiotherapists Registration Board [contained in the Schedule to the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Physiotherapists Bye-law 2019 (S.I. No. 45 of 2019) which came into effect on 28 February 2019]:

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b. always consider the possible impact on service users and others before publishing any material, information or comments on social media, taking care to avoid abusive, unsustainable or defamatory comments.

and thereby constitute(s) professional misconduct.

Allegations (Case C489)

That you, while registered as a Physiotherapist with the Physiotherapists Registration Board ("the Board")

1. In or around March 2024 participated in a podcast hosted by Sarah Plumley wherein you made one or more of the following comments with respect to the Covid-19 pandemic and/or Covid-19 vaccinations and/or vaccines and/or viruses and/or other public health issues:

a) In respect of the medical establishment and Covid-19 stated: "So, I never from then on, I never trusted the medical establishment. They're lying. And then I happened to work in disability paediatrics. And that's been a really hard journey. I love my job, but I'm seeing damage every day and it's only getting worse. And again, there's no informed consent. When someone comes in, I do a treatment or I'm advising. Of course, you give informed consent. But when it comes to their child going to a GP, there's no informed consent. There's no risks and benefits, you know, and given they're just kind of hushed up. And when a parent like myself questions something, you're just demonised or you're told, you know, you know nothing. Are you questioning me? My doctor that knows more than you, you know....So, and I kind of knew before this whole scam of the Convid, I call it Convid, not Covid", or words to that effect; and/or,

b) In respect of the Covid-19 pandemic stated: "the only way that they could really try and put in bring in mandatory vaccination was some kind of plandemic, you know, a pandemic, which doesn't exist anyway. But so, when it happened, when I heard this in in November 2019, I knew, OK, and I started panicking and I started telling friends and family they weren't really listening because so sure, it's only in China and I was like, but it's not. It's just all made up. Like I don't know where it came from, but I just knew it was all a hoax in a way" or words to that effect; and/or,

c) In respect of wearing masks and Covid-19 stated "So I went to protests, spoke out about the damage of masks, spoke about the science of how it would affect your health wearing masks. That was one of the videos that they brought into my case at the

moment. And then I was speaking about the elderly and in another video, I spoke about April 2020 and the nursing homes and how it was more end of life they were putting through than they were dying from Covid and they withdrew care and it's on record, you know, so but everything is censored here" or words to that effect; and/or,

d) In respect of the recording of Covid-19 statistics and Covid-19 stated "And even I remember a lovely client of mine, mother was telling me that her own, I think, was it uncle died of a drug overdose in Dublin, and they all knew it. Well, the immediate family knew about it, but to lessen the stigma which the doctors told them. Well, you know, if you we don't want them to see that he died from a drug overdose. Sure we can always say he died from Covid and we mark it on his death cert. So this is what was going on, pure absolute fraud and murder" or words to that effect; and/or,

e) In respect of Covid-19 and vaccines stated "They talk about the Covid vaccine as it kills so many. But there's been many people who have died and maimed from the childhood vaccines and the HPV vaccines, but they're not being reported" or words to that effect; and/or

f) In respect of HPV vaccines stated: "It's called Regret.ie, and it's a great website for support. Your parents that have children that have been affected by the HPV. And so it's Regret.ie and in there there's a lot of studies and information and documentaries, everything about this lethal vaccine. But they've just gaslit parents. Parents have just not thought. They're like, well, like I've only my daughter, I'll give it to my son. In talking about they'll get cells on their throats, like it's total nonsense, like people not thinking about this" or words to that effect; and/or,

g) In respect of HPV and cervical screening stated: "HPV is a virus. I question viruses now I'm at that stage. But to think of people who still believe in viruses, that the HPV is supposed to go in and out of your body, you know, you can fight it and get rid of it, and you might never know you had it. And a lot of people carry it like they say it right. But the thing is, is with the HPV, there's other things. It's very little if it does cause cervical cancer, right. There's many other things it can cause. But now in Ireland they swab solo for the HPV and they don't include anything else. And I was shocked the last time I go there. Now I don't want any of them anymore because I don't know. We all know what's on those little swabs. There's ethyl oxide or whatever it's called. It's a cancer causing crap that's on the top of the swab. So it's just Big Pharma controls our country, controls our government, controls our pharmaceutical. It's huge here" or words to that effect; and/or,

h) In relation to the previous inquiry in relation to your fitness to practise (C245) you stated: "So this is the first case. There's the same guy has made two other complaints, and my legal team were trying to put them all together. They should be all together because they're related to the same thing. But CORU had decided to have them separate. So I'm over the first one which took. It's been gone on since April 2021.

We're now in '24. It's supposed to conclude this month, actually. But they haven't a date yet. Yes, the judges found me censure. So even on the day of the judgment, my legal team were still trying to get me to take undertakings. And I said no. And they said you might lose your licence. I said I don't care. I said, I'm telling the truth. I've been telling the truth. And at the end of the day, they will not remove my licence because you could bite them in the ass in the future. Now they gave me censure, which is the second lowest form of punishment. Really, what it is, is just a rap on the knuckles or a slap on the wrist. And it'll be on my name in the registry. But I have two more complaints to deal with, so it could go on for years, you know. And when this one closes, another one opens, you know" or words to that effect; and/or,

i) In relation to the previous inquiry in relation to your fitness to practise (C245) you stated: you stated "I go back to work next week. I always was able to work throughout all this, which is gas. They told me I was a danger to the public, but they allowed me to continue in my work. So there you go. The contradiction is unreal" or words to that effect; and/or,

2. In or around December 2023, participated in an interview which was posted on the online video sharing platform "Rumble" wherein you made one or more of the following comments with respect to the Covid-19 pandemic and/or Covid-19 vaccinations and/or vaccines:

a) In respect of the Covid-19 pandemic stated "I suppose I've been active from the beginning in 2020 and I kind of, even before that, I kind of realised that this whole pandemic when it was starting in 2019 I was trying to tell my family oh my god this is all.. this is what they need, because I suppose I was interested in the whole mandatory vaccine stuff" or words to that effect; and/or,

b) In respect of the Covid-19 pandemic stated "When the whole China thing started, I went oh my god. I was trying to tell everyone around me in November 2019 thinking I was half mad. They didn't really care at that stage and then when it just all arrived here in March I was kind of panicking and I even in April wrote to my Manager saying, in the HSE, I'm a physiotherapist, oh my god this is a scam, we can't let this happen" or words to that effect.

3. Held yourself out as a physiotherapist and/or HSE employee when making one or more of the comments referenced in allegations 1 and/or 2, in breach of your verbal undertaking to the Council of CORU on 09 April 2021 to refrain from holding yourself out as a physiotherapist and/or HSE employee if/when expressing views in relation to the government's handling of and approach to Covid-19 or if/when expressing personal views as the efficacy and/or necessity of public health guidelines relating to Covid-19.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE that it is alleged that the act(s) and/or omission(s) and/or pattern(s) of conduct at one or more of Allegations 1 – 4 above, amount

individually and/or in combination and/or cumulatively to act(s) and/or omission(s) and/or pattern(s) of conduct that constitute a breach/breaches of the following sections of the Physiotherapists Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics, adopted by the Physiotherapists Registration Board [contained in the Schedule to the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Physiotherapists Bye-law 2019 (S.I. No. 45 of 2019) which came into effect on 28 February 2019]:

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3.2 You must not:

d. behave in a way that would call into question your suitability to work as a health or social care professional

4. Use Social Media responsibly

4.1 You must:

b. always consider the possible impact on service users and others before publishing any material, information or comments on social media, taking care to avoid abusive, unsustainable or defamatory comments.

22. Demonstrate ethical awareness

22.1 You must:

b. always behave with integrity and honesty

and thereby constitute(s) professional misconduct.

Evidence presented to the Committee:

The Committee heard evidence from the following witnesses:-

1. [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
4. [REDACTED]
5. [REDACTED]
6. [REDACTED]
7. [REDACTED]
8. [REDACTED]

The Registrant did not appear, did not give evidence or call any witnesses. In advance of the inquiry the Registrant served a document purporting to be an affidavit which was not properly sworn. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Committee received and considered the contents of the affidavit together with the exhibits (including a statement by the Registrant).

The Committee considered the following exhibits:

- A. The Core Book.
- B. Booklet of Correspondence
- C. Affidavit of Anna Marie Stack Rivas
- D. Screenshot - [REDACTED] Video
- E. Screenshot – [REDACTED] Conversation
- F. Screenshot – [REDACTED]
- G. Complaint February 2021
- H. PPC minute April 2021
- I. High Court Order
- J. Screenshot – Podcast website
- K. Correspondence relating to the sanction hearing

Advice of the Legal Assessor

The Committee received legal advice from the Legal Assessor as to the correct approach to determine findings in a disciplinary matter. The Committee was advised that they should consider all of the allegations and sub-allegations contained in the respective notices of inquiry, review the documentary and oral evidence and then consider whether the allegations or any of them have been made out against the Registrant. The Committee were reminded that the onus of proof was on the Registrar at all times and there was no obligation on the Registrant to disprove the allegations. Nor should any adverse inference be taken from the Registrant not appearing or participating in the inquiry. The standard of proof to be applied is the criminal standard of proof – beyond reasonable doubt. The standard of proof was explained to the Committee. The Committee was advised that it must first consider whether as a matter of fact the facts supporting each of the allegations had been made out beyond a reasonable doubt. If satisfied that the facts have been proven to the requisite standard, then the Committee should go on to consider whether the allegations as proven as to fact constitute misconduct, again to the criminal standard of proof. The Committee was reminded to decide the case solely on the evidence as presented. The weight to be attached to any particular piece of evidence was a matter for the Committee. The Committee was told that they could infer matters from the evidence. The Committee was told that they could admit hearsay evidence but the weight that they should give it depended upon whether it was determinative of an important issue. The Committee was advised to treat the videos that they had been shown and the evidence concerning how many people might have watched them with some caution. The Committee was also advised to treat the correspondence from Forsa and Hayes McGrath as falling short of formal admissions. The Committee was advised that it was not obliged to accept the expert evidence but if not accepting same should give reasons for not doing so. The Committee was advised that it was entitled to take into account the evidence of [REDACTED] as to the scientific consensus regarding Covid 19, vaccines and public health guidelines on mask wearing and other health precautions at the relevant time. The Committee was advised in relation to the definition of misconduct and that for such a finding an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct must be serious. The Committee was advised that it should give reasons for its findings. The Legal Assessor referred the Committee to the authorities which had been referred to by the Registrar and explained that those authorities suggested that one's conduct outside of a profession can reflect on one's professional obligations. Finally, the Legal Assessor brought the Committee's attention to the Registrant's position concerning the allegations as set out in her affidavit and statement attached to the affidavit. The Committee were advised that they could consider the individual sub-allegations cumulatively. The Committee were informed that they were not obliged to follow the Legal Assessor's advice but should they depart from it they should provide clear and cogent reasons for doing so. The Registrar agreed with the advices.

Findings of the Committee:

Withdrawal of Allegation

The allegation that the Registrant breached Principle 4 of the Code of Conduct in relation to social media use was withdrawn by the Registrar in respect of each case.

The Scientific Evidence

In considering all of the allegations the Committee had regard to the evidence of [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] gave evidence to the Committee as to the nature of a pandemic, the nature of the coronavirus and its arrival in Ireland, the distinction between Covid-19 and the common cold, the declaration of a pandemic made in relation to Covid, the types of illnesses and sickness caused by the coronavirus through 2020, whether there were people who were particularly vulnerable to serious illness or death if they contracted Covid, whether people died as a result of contracting Covid-19 and evidence in relation to data in connection with those deaths, the calculation of data and the efficacy of the calculations concerning Covid deaths and the impact the pandemic had on hospital and ICU admissions between 2020 and 2022.

The Committee accepts the unchallenged evidence of [REDACTED] as to the scientific consensus prevailing at the relevant time concerning the consequences of Covid 19, the distinction between Covid 19 and the common cold, the types of illnesses caused by coronavirus, whether people died as a result of Covid 19 and how the numbers were calculated, the impact of the pandemic on hospital and ICU admissions, the efficacy of mask wearing to stop the spread of airborne infection, the safety of masks, the development, efficacy, effectiveness and safety of Covid 19 vaccines (including whether there was any evidence to suggest that they caused sudden death among young adults or death or chronic illness amongst children), the success of the vaccination programme, the efficacy of PCR tests and the public health guidelines in general.

The Committee was satisfied that [REDACTED] evidence represented the scientific consensus at the relevant time.

Case 366

Allegation 1

Finding as to Fact

The Committee found Allegation 1 and each of the sub-allegations proved cumulatively as to fact beyond a reasonable doubt.

Reasons for Decision

The Committee accepts the evidence of [REDACTED] (and the Registrant's registration file) that as at the date of the alleged misconduct the Registrant was registered as a physiotherapist.

The Committee accepts that at that time the Registrant was the subject of a similar complaint that had been referred forward by the PPC (Case C245). The Committee had regard to Exhibit G which was the complaint of [REDACTED] as contained in his email to Fitness to Practise of 10 February, 2021, and CORU complaint form in which he complained that the Registrant, *inter alia*, ignored public health guidelines, advised members of the public to stop wearing masks and was spreading medical misinformation and conspiracy theories. The Committee also had regard to the minutes of the meeting of the PPC of 21 April, 2021, at Exhibit H.

The Committee watched the video of the event which was evidently a public event at which members of the public can be seen and also read the transcript of the video. The Committee accepted the evidence of [REDACTED] stenographer, that the transcript was an accurate transcription but also had the benefit of confirming for themselves that the transcript accurately recorded what was allegedly said by the Registrant at the event.

The Committee is satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the individual in the video of the public event is the Registrant. The Committee is satisfied from the photographs of the Registrant from her registration documentation (Core Book, p. 448, 449 and 463) that the Registrant and the speaker in the video are one and the same person. Furthermore, the Registrant identifies herself in the video.

While no formal admissions were made by the Registrant concerning the allegations the Committee had regard to the letter from Forsa dated 7 September 2023, and letter from Hayes McGrath dated 10 January, 2024. The Forsa letter refers to the videos of February 2022, and July 2022, and claims that the Registrant is simply exercising her constitutional right, as enshrined in the Irish Constitution, to freely express her convictions and opinion rather than denying that is the Registrant in the videos. Similarly, Hayes McGrath place emphasis on the fact that the Registrant does not identify herself as a physiotherapist in the videos rather than deny that it is the Registrant. The Committee has also had regard to the affidavit furnished by the Registrant and witness statement exhibit thereto in which she rejects the allegations in their entirety but not on the basis that she never made the alleged statements but rather on the basis that she was expressing her private opinions and beliefs in her

private rather than professional working life which she claims are separate. These matters fall short of admissions and on their own and without other evidence would not have satisfied the Committee to the requisite standard that the Registrant participated at the event and made the alleged statements.

Having watched the video and read the transcript the Committee is satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the Registrant spoke the words and expressed the views attributed to her in allegations 1(a) to (d) and that she did so at a public event, having identified herself as a healthcare worker to those present.

Finding as to Professional Misconduct

The Committee found Allegation 1 and each of the sub-allegations proved cumulatively as to professional misconduct beyond reasonable doubt.

Reasons for the Decision

The Committee considered each of the sub-allegations in the round as being all statements made by the Registrant at the same event.

The Committee is firmly of the view that the opinions expressed and statements made by the Registrant at the event were irresponsible for a healthcare professional to make to a public gathering. In light of the scientific consensus, the Committee believes that her statements were misinformed, misleading, alarmist, reckless and potentially dangerous.

The Committee accepts the unchallenged evidence of [REDACTED]. She highlighted that the Code of Conduct is intended to protect the public and uphold the clinical and ethical standards of the profession of physiotherapy. [REDACTED] identified that under Principle 3 of the Code of Conduct physiotherapists are required to conduct themselves in a manner that enhances public confidence in the practitioner and the profession and respect the role and expertise of other medical colleagues and not call into question one's suitability to work as a health care professional. In her view it was this part of the Code that was most applicable to the allegations under consideration. In her view the statements made by the Registrant were not in line with the scientific evidence at the time nor with how healthcare workers were operating within the healthcare system and complying with rules that were supported by the medical and scientific community within Ireland, internationally and by the World Health Organisation. Against this background it was, in her opinion, disingenuous of the Registrant and dangerous to be advising people not to comply with the rules and contending that the system was trying to harm people. In her opinion it was dangerous in light of the role of physiotherapists in advising people and educating them across a broad spectrum of health issues. In this regard she emphasised the importance of the

credibility of physiotherapists. She stated that people listen to physiotherapists and heed what they are saying. Misinformation can influence behaviour and risks leading people, their loved ones or elderly relatives into a vulnerable situation. In her opinion this went against the whole tenet of the ethics of the profession.

██████████ emphasised that the profession of physiotherapy is science based and informed by evidence and research. In her view to suggest that the whole medical system was not adhering to science was dangerous. In her view it was irresponsible and without any scientific basis to say that the Covid 19 vaccines were genetic therapies that were harming people's DNA and RNA. Similarly it was irresponsible to suggest that people were being bribed and bullied to take an experimental vaccine. In her opinion it was inappropriate for a physiotherapist to be claiming that people had been maimed or died from being part of this alleged experiment. Overall, her opinion was that the Registrant's conduct was serious because it could lead to people putting themselves in danger or exposing themselves to serious illness. Further, it was significant that there was an outstanding complaint at that time in relation to similar conduct because the Registrant had time to reflect on her behaviour but continued to behave in this way.

The Committee recognises that opinions in relation to the government and the HSE's handling of the Covid-19 pandemic including the efficiency or necessity of public health guidelines relating to Covid-19 were divided and gave rise to significant public discourse and debate at the time, however, the Committee believes that the statements made and views expressed by the Registrant went beyond what could be described as reasonable or rational debate.

At the time that the Registrant spoke at the event she had given an undertaking to Council (on the 9th April, 2021) in lieu of an application to suspend her registration pending an inquiry into similar conduct to that the subject matter of this inquiry, *inter alia*, to refrain from holding herself out as a physiotherapist and/or HSE employee if or when expressing views in relation to the government's handling of and approach to Covid-19 and if or when expressing views as to the efficiency or necessity of public health guidelines relating to Covid-19. While the Registrant took care when speaking at the event not to hold herself out as a physiotherapist and/or HSE employee she identified herself as a healthcare worker. The Committee is satisfied that at the time of speaking at the event the Registrant was aware that she was skirting the boundaries of what was appropriate.

The Committee is satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that in speaking at the public event in the manner so found the Registrant breached the Physiotherapists Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics (the 'Code of Conduct') by:-

- (i) Failing to respect the roles and expertise of other health and social care professionals and work in partnership with them. (3.1(c))
- (ii) Behaving in a way that would call into question her suitability to work as a health or social care professional. (3.2(d))

The Committee is further satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the breaches of the Code of Conduct were serious and constitute professional misconduct (as defined by Section 50 of the Act) within the meaning of Section 52(1)(a) of the Act.

In the Committee's view the breaches of the Code of Conduct were serious. By identifying herself as a health care worker the Registrant spoke from a position of authority on healthcare matters and thereby elevated the reliability and trustworthiness of what she was saying. In doing so she sought to influence people to reject public health guidelines and thereby placed them at risk. This she did in the face of a similar complaint to her regulator.

In acting in this way the Registrant did not respect the expertise of other healthcare professionals and called into question her suitability to work as a health care professional.

The Committee was not satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the Registrant acted in breach of Principle 3.1(b) of the Code of Conduct. The Registrant did not hold herself out as a physiotherapist.

Allegation 2

Finding as to Fact

The Committee found Allegation 2 and each of the sub-allegations proved cumulatively as to fact beyond a reasonable doubt.

Reasons for Decision

The Committee accepts the evidence of [REDACTED] (and the Registrant's registration file) that as at the date of the alleged misconduct the Registrant was registered as a physiotherapist.

The Committee accepts that at that time the Registrant was the subject of a similar complaint that had been referred forward by the PPC (Case C245). The Committee had regard to Exhibit G which was the complaint of [REDACTED] as contained in his email to Fitness to Practise of 10 February, 2021, and CORU complaint form in

which he complained that the Registrant, *inter alia*, ignored public health guidelines, advised members of the public to stop wearing masks and was spreading medical misinformation and conspiracy theories. The Committee also had regard to the minutes of the meeting of the PPC of 21 April, 2021, at Exhibit H.

The Committee watched the video of the event which was evidently a public event at which members of the public can be seen and also read the transcript of the video. The Committee accepted the evidence of [REDACTED], stenographer, that the transcript was an accurate transcription but also had the benefit of confirming for themselves that the transcript accurately recorded what was allegedly said by the Registrant at the event.

The Committee is satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the individual in the video of the event at or around [REDACTED] is the Registrant. The Committee is satisfied from the photographs of the Registrant from her registration documentation (Core Book, p. 448, 449 and 463) that the Registrant and the speaker in the video are one and the same person. Furthermore, the Registrant identifies herself in the video.

While no formal admissions were made by the Registrant concerning the allegations the Committee had regard to the letter from Forsa dated 7 September 2023, and letter from Hayes McGrath dated 10 January, 2024. The Forsa letter refers to the videos of February 2022, and July 2022, and claims that the Registrant is simply exercising her constitutional right, as enshrined in the Irish Constitution, to freely express her convictions and opinion rather than denying that is the Registrant in the videos. Similarly, Hayes McGrath place emphasis on the fact that the Registrant does not identify herself as a physiotherapist in the videos rather than deny that it is the Registrant. The Committee has also had regard to the affidavit furnished by the Registrant and witness statement exhibit thereto in which she rejects the allegations in their entirety but not on the basis that she never made the alleged statements but rather on the basis that she was expressing her private opinions and beliefs in her private rather than professional working life which she claims are separate. These matters fall short of admissions and on their own and without other evidence would not have satisfied the Committee to the requisite standard that the Registrant participated at the event and made the alleged statements.

Having watched the video and read the transcript the Committee is satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the Registrant spoke the words and expressed the views attributed to her in allegations 1(a) to (d) and that she did so at a public event, having identified herself as a healthcare worker to those present.

Finding as to Professional Misconduct

The Committee found Allegation 2 and each of the sub-allegations proved cumulatively as to professional misconduct beyond reasonable doubt.

Reasons for the Decision

The Committee considered each of the sub-allegations in the round as being all statements made by the Registrant at the same event.

The Committee is firmly of the view that the opinions expressed and statements made by the Registrant at the event were irresponsible for a healthcare professional to make to a public gathering. In light of the scientific consensus, the Committee believes that her statements were misinformed, misleading, alarmist, reckless and potentially dangerous.

The Committee accepts the unchallenged evidence of [REDACTED]. She highlighted that the Code of Conduct is intended to protect the public and uphold the clinical and ethical standards of the profession of physiotherapy. [REDACTED] identified that under Principle 3 of the Code of Conduct physiotherapists are required to conduct themselves in a manner that enhances public confidence in the practitioner and the profession and respect the role and expertise of other medical colleagues and not call into question one's suitability to work as a health care professional. In her view it was this part of the Code that was most applicable to the allegations under consideration. In her view the statements made by the Registrant were not in line with the scientific evidence at the time nor with how healthcare workers were operating within the healthcare system and complying with rules that were supported by the medical and scientific community within Ireland, internationally and by World Health Organisation. Against this background it was, in her opinion, disingenuous of the Registrant and dangerous to be advising people not to comply with the rules and contending that the system was trying to harm people. In her opinion it was dangerous in light of the role of physiotherapists in advising people and educating them across a broad spectrum of health issues. In this regard she emphasised the importance of the credibility of physiotherapists. She stated that people listen to physiotherapists and heed what they are saying. Misinformation can influence behaviour and risks leading people, their loved ones or elderly relatives into a vulnerable situation. In her opinion this went against the whole tenet of the ethics of the profession.

[REDACTED] identified that informed consent (to treatment) is a basic tenet of the wider medical community and the physiotherapy community. In [REDACTED] view it was disingenuous and irresponsible to suggest that the vaccine was being administered without informed consent. Similarly, by questioning the authenticity of the vaccine and claiming it was a gene therapy the Registrant showed an inability to be able to discern good from bad science. The Registrant's rejection of proper evidence based medicine was worrying. In [REDACTED] opinion the claim by the Registrant to ascribe the cause of athletes suffering sudden adult death syndrome to the vaccine was unsubstantiated

and dangerous. Suggesting that RTE and/or the Government were accessories to murder was irresponsible. It suggested that the powers that be and the health system were working against people and colluding to give people the wrong advice. In [REDACTED] opinion the suggestion that the media, corrupt politicians and scientists were manipulating people was similarly disingenuous and irresponsible. In her view, the fact that it came from a healthcare professional lent gravitas to what was being said. The claim that masks prevented oxygen getting into your lungs and were harmful was not science based nor was it in line with a physiotherapists training in respiratory medicine. Overall, her opinion was that the Registrant's conduct was serious because it could influence people's behaviour and put their lives at risk or the greater community's lives at risk. At the relevant time there was increasing scientific knowledge about the virus and evidence to support social distancing, mask-wearing and vaccines. In [REDACTED] opinion, by declaring herself as a healthcare worker the Registrant was lending gravitas to what she was saying and undermining the whole medical system and the profession of physiotherapy.

The Committee recognises that opinions in relation to the government and the HSE's handling of the Covid-19 pandemic including the efficiency or necessity of public health guidelines relating to Covid-19 were divided and gave rise to significant public discourse and debate at the time, however, the Committee believes that the statements made and views expressed by the Registrant went beyond what could be described as reasonable or rational debate.

At the time that the Registrant spoke at the event she had given an undertaking to Council (on the 9th April, 2021) in lieu of an application to suspend her registration pending an inquiry into similar conduct to that the subject matter of this inquiry, *inter alia*, to refrain from holding herself out as a physiotherapist and/or HSE employee if or when expressing views in relation to the government's handling of and approach to Covid-19 and if or when expressing views as to the efficiency or necessity of public health guidelines relating to Covid-19. While the Registrant took care when speaking at the event not to hold herself out as a physiotherapist and/or HSE employee she identified herself as a healthcare worker. The Committee is satisfied that at the time of speaking at the event the Registrant was aware that she was skirting the boundaries of what was appropriate.

The Committee is satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that in speaking at the public event in the manner so found the Registrant breached the Physiotherapists Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics (the 'Code of Conduct') by:-

- (i) Failing to respect the roles and expertise of other health and social care professionals and work in partnership with them. (3.1(c))

- (ii) Behaving in a way that would call into question her suitability to work as a health or social care professional. (3.2(d))

The Committee is further satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the breaches of the Code of Conduct were serious and constitute professional misconduct (as defined by Section 50 of the Act) within the meaning of Section 52(1)(a) of the Act.

In the Committee's view the breaches of the Code of Conduct were serious. By identifying herself as a health care worker the Registrant spoke from a position of authority on healthcare matters and thereby elevated the reliability and trustworthiness of what she saying. In doing so she sought to influence people to reject public health guidelines and thereby placed them at risk. This she did in the face of a similar complaint to CORU that she had attended public events in [REDACTED], where she allegedly spread misinformation and encouraged those present not to follow public health guidelines such as mask wearing and social distancing.

In acting in this way the Registrant did not respect the expertise of other healthcare professionals and called into question her suitability to work as a health care professional.

The Committee was not satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the Registrant acted in breach of Principle 3.1(b) of the Code of Conduct. The Registrant did not hold herself out as a physiotherapist.

Case C408

Allegation 1

Finding as to Fact

The Committee found Allegation 1 and each of the sub-allegations proved cumulatively as to fact beyond a reasonable doubt.

Reasons for Decision

The Committee accepts the evidence of [REDACTED] (and the Registrant's registration file) that as at the date of the alleged misconduct the Registrant was registered as a physiotherapist.

The Committee accepts that at that time the Registrant was the subject of a similar complaint that had been referred forward by the PPC (Case C245). The Committee had regard to Exhibit G which was the complaint of [REDACTED] as contained in his email to Fitness to Practise of 10 February, 2021, and CORU complaint form in which he complained that the Registrant, *inter alia*, ignored public health guidelines, advised members of the public to stop wearing masks and was spreading medical misinformation and conspiracy theories. The Committee also had regard to the minutes of the meeting of the PPC of 21 April, 2021, at Exhibit H.

The Committee watched the video of the event which was evidently a public event at which members of the public can be seen and also read the transcript of the video. The Committee accepted the evidence of [REDACTED] stenographer, that the transcript was an accurate transcription but also had the benefit of confirming for themselves that the transcript accurately recorded what was allegedly said by the Registrant at the event.

The Committee is satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the individual in the video of the public event is the Registrant. The Committee is satisfied from the photographs of the Registrant from her registration documentation (Core Book, p. 448, 449 and 463) that the Registrant and the speaker in the video are one and the same person. Furthermore, the Registrant identifies herself in the video.

While no formal admissions were made by the Registrant concerning the allegations the Committee had regard to the letter from Forsa dated 7 September 2023, and letter from Hayes McGrath dated 10 January, 2024. The Forsa letter refers to the videos of February 2022, and July 2022, and claims that the Registrant is simply exercising her constitutional right, as enshrined in the Irish Constitution, to freely express her convictions and opinion rather than denying that is the Registrant in the videos. Similarly, Hayes McGrath place emphasis on the fact that the Registrant does not identify herself as a physiotherapist in the videos rather than deny that it is the Registrant. The Committee has also had regard to the affidavit furnished by the Registrant and witness statement exhibit thereto in which she rejects the allegations in their entirety but not on the basis that she never made the alleged statements but rather on the basis that she was expressing her private opinions and beliefs in her private rather than professional working life which she claims are separate. These matters fall short of admissions and on their own and without other evidence would not have satisfied the Committee to the requisite standard that the Registrant participated at the event and made the alleged statements.

Having watched the video and read the transcript the Committee is satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the Registrant spoke the words and expressed the views attributed to her in allegations 1(a) to (d) and that she did so **at a public event**, having identified herself as a healthcare worker to those present.

Finding as to Professional Misconduct

The Committee found Allegation 1 and each of the sub-allegations proved cumulatively as to professional misconduct beyond reasonable doubt.

Reasons for the Decision

The Committee considered each of the sub-allegations in the round as being all statements made by the Registrant at the same event.

The Committee is firmly of the view that the opinions expressed and statements made by the Registrant at the event were irresponsible for a healthcare professional to make to a public gathering. In light of the scientific consensus, the Committee believes that her statements were misinformed, misleading, alarmist, reckless and potentially dangerous.

The Committee accepts the unchallenged evidence of [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] general observations above concerning the obligations of physiotherapists under the Code of Conduct, the scientific evidence and authority of healthcare workers such as physiotherapists are apposite in the consideration of this allegation.

In [REDACTED] opinion it was disingenuous of the Registrant to suggest to people that they might be ridiculed or disciplined at work for speaking the “truth”. In [REDACTED] opinion it was irresponsible to claim that there was no pandemic or that it was a lie. It was unethical to be espousing conspiracy theories in public in her capacity as a healthcare worker. Implying that PCR tests (which were a corner stone of fighting the virus) did not work and encouraging them not to use them put people and the wider community at risk. To suggest, as a healthcare worker, that no one died from Covid or that it wasn’t contagious was untrue and irresponsible. In the same vein, calling out tests as fake risked influencing people’s behaviour. In [REDACTED] opinion the claim by the Registrant, as a paediatric physiotherapist, that vaccines were maiming, damaging and killing kids or causing them chronic illness was ridiculous, very disingenuous and not in line with the ethics of her profession. Similarly, the suggestion that hospitals were never overwhelmed during the pandemic were not true. Overall, [REDACTED] was of the opinion that the Registrant’s behaviour called into question her suitability to work as a healthcare professional. In [REDACTED] view her inability to assess medical evidence and discern between good and bad science could lead people to make poor decisions.

The Committee recognises that opinions in relation to the government and the HSE’s handling of the Covid-19 pandemic including the efficiency or necessity of public health guidelines relating to Covid-19 were divided and gave rise to significant public discourse and debate at the time, however, the Committee believes that the

statements made and views expressed by the Registrant went far and beyond what could be described as reasonable or rational debate.

At the time that the Registrant spoke at the event she had given an undertaking to Council (on the 9th April, 2021) in lieu of an application to suspend her registration pending an inquiry into similar conduct to that the subject matter of this inquiry, *inter alia*, to refrain from holding herself out as a physiotherapist and/or HSE employee if or when expressing views in relation to the government's handling of and approach to Covid-19 and if or when expressing views as to the efficiency or necessity of public health guidelines relating to Covid-19. While the Registrant took care when speaking at the event not to hold herself out as a physiotherapist and or HSE employee she identified herself as a healthcare worker. The Committee is satisfied that at the time of speaking at the event the Registrant was aware that she was skirting the boundaries of what was appropriate.

The Committee is satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that in speaking at the public event in the manner so found the Registrant breached the Physiotherapists Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics (the 'Code of Conduct') by:-

- (i) Failing to respect the roles and expertise of other health and social care professionals and work in partnership with them. (3.1(c))
- (ii) Behaving in a way that would call into question her suitability to work as a health or social care professional. (3.2(d))

The Committee is further satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the breaches of the Code of Conduct were serious and constitute professional misconduct (as defined by Section 50 of the Act) within the meaning of Section 52(1)(a) of the Act.

In the Committee's view the breaches of the Code of Conduct were serious. By identifying herself as a health care worker the Registrant spoke from a position of authority on healthcare matters and thereby elevated the reliability and trustworthiness of what she saying. In doing so she sought to influence people to reject public health guidelines and thereby placed them at risk. This she did in the face of a similar complaint to CORU that she had attended public events in Dublin and Limerick, where she allegedly spread misinformation and encouraged those present not to follow public health guidelines such as mask wearing and social distancing.

In acting in this way the Registrant did not respect the expertise of other healthcare professionals and called into question her suitability to work as a health care professional.

The Committee was not satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the Registrant acted in breach of Principle 3.1(b) of the Code of Conduct. The Registrant did not hold herself out as a physiotherapist.

Case C489

Allegation 1

Finding as to Fact

The Committee was not satisfied that Allegation 1 was proved as to fact beyond a reasonable doubt.

Reasons for Decision

The Committee were not satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the Registrant was the individual being interviewed or that any person actually listened to the podcast.

Finding as to Professional Misconduct

The Committee did not go on to consider the allegation of professional misconduct in circumstances where Allegation 1 was not proven as to fact.

Allegation 2

Finding as to Fact

The Committee was not satisfied that Allegation 2 was proved as to fact beyond a reasonable doubt.

Reasons for Decision

The Committee were not satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that any person actually watched the interview.

Finding as to Professional Misconduct

The Committee did not go on to consider the allegation of professional misconduct in circumstances where Allegation 2 was not proven as to fact.

Allegation 3

Finding as to Fact

The Committee was not satisfied that Allegation 3 was proved as to fact beyond a reasonable doubt.

Reasons for Decision

This allegation relied upon Allegations 1 and 2 being proven as to fact beyond reasonable doubt which they were not.

Finding as to Professional Misconduct

The Committee did not go on to consider the allegation of professional misconduct in circumstances where Allegation 3 was not proven as to fact.

Fitness to Practise Committee Recommendation in Respect of Sanction

The Committee recommends that the following sanction(s) be imposed on the Registrant:

- (i) That the Registrant be censured pursuant to s. 66(1)(a) of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act, 2005, as amended.
- (ii) That the following condition(s) be attached to the Registrant's registration pursuant to s. 66(1)(b) of the Act:-

That the Registrant shall refrain from holding herself out as a physiotherapist and/or healthcare worker if/when expressing views in public in relation to the government's handling of and approach to Covid-19 or if/when expressing views in public as the efficacy and/or necessity of public health guidelines relating to Covid-19.

Rationale for Sanction:

1. In considering its recommendation on sanction the Committee has had careful regard to and followed the guidance on sanction published by CORU. The Committee also had regard to the submissions on sanction on behalf of the Registrar and the advice of the legal assessor as to the principles to apply.
2. The Committee is of the view that the facts giving rise to the findings are very serious. While there was no evidence of any person being harmed as a consequence of acting upon the statements made by the Registrant her claims undermined public confidence in the health care system generally and risked members of the public rejecting public health guidelines to their detriment.
3. The Committee commenced its consideration with the least permitted sanctions under the Act, namely, admonishment and censure and is of the view that these sanctions are inadequate to address the seriousness of the underlying conduct, nor would they protect the public or uphold the standards of the profession.
4. The Committee next turned to consider the attachment of conditions to registration. The Committee is of the view that in order to protect the public conditions are required to deter the Registrant from engaging in similar conduct in the future.
5. In considering what conditions are necessary and proportionate the Committee has been mindful of the fact that there is no suggestion that the Registrant is anything other than a competent physiotherapist.
6. The recommended sanction will demonstrate to the Registrant and the profession at large the necessity for health care professionals to respect and support each other and not behave in a way that will call into question their suitability to work as a health care professionals by spreading disinformation on important public health matters. Further, it will serve to reassure the public that when they look to health care professionals for guidance on public health issues they can have confidence in the reliability of the information they receive.
7. In making its recommendation on sanction the Committee has had regard to the following aggravating factors:
 - (i) The Registrant made the statements the subject of the allegations at a time when she was already the subject of a complaint to CORU for making similar statements in public.
 - (ii) The complaints are not confined to an isolated incident.

- (iii) The Registrant was aware at the time of making the statements that she was crossing the boundary between her private and professional life. She acknowledged as much when she publicly stated that she would probably be struck off by her regulator for making her comments.
- (iv) There is no evidence of any insight on the part of the Registrant into her conduct. Regrettably it all points the other way. This has not been helped by the Registrant's failure to engage with the process.
- (v) Findings were made against the Registrant in respect of the earlier complaint. She was censured and conditions attached. The conditions (as confirmed by the High Court) required the Registrant to, *inter alia*, undergo a course or courses on professionalism and ethics.

8. The Committee has also had regard to the following mitigating factors:

- (i) In mitigation, the Registrant did not hold herself out as a physiotherapist when she made the statements the subject of the findings. This was in accordance with the undertaking that she gave which was limited in its scope.
- (ii) The complaints, while inquired into separately, were made by the same complainant, relate to very similar conduct and could have been considered together. The Committee is mindful not to sanction the Registrant on the double.
- (iii) There is no suggestion that the Registrant is anything other than a competent physiotherapist. The complaints were not made by a patient of the Registrant or her employer.
- (iv) The Committee is not aware of any subsequent complaint(s) since these events (or prior).

9. In making its recommendation on sanction the Committee has attempted to be as lenient to the Registrant as possible.

10. Overall, the Committee believes that the recommended sanction is appropriate and proportionate in all the circumstances. It will protect the public, uphold the

standards of the profession of physiotherapy and maintain public confidence in the profession and the regulatory process.

Signed: 
Dr. Shane McCarthy, Chairperson

Date: **21st April, 2026**