

On **12 September 2023** the General Pharmaceutical Council’s Investigating Committee considered an allegation in relation to **Mr Jason Sterling Zimmel, registration number: 2039731** and determined to issue the registrant concerned with a warning in relation to the conduct alleged.

The Committee concluded that the appropriate outcome in this case is a warning with the wording of:

*Following an intelligence led inspection on 30 November 2021, resulting from information provided by Patient A. It was found that the pharmacy of which the registrant was superintendent (‘SI’) and regular Responsible Pharmacist (‘RP’), did not have a process to record sales or refusals of medicines containing codeine or any other adequate audit process to monitor sales of these medicines. As part of the inspection the pharmacy was issued with an action plan to make improvements on their governance of medicines containing codeine.*

*As the SI and RP, the registrant had a statutory role in managing the “keeping, preparing and dispensing of all medicinal products”. It is clear from the evidence obtained that the provisions for the sale of medicines containing codeine were not managed adequately nor with the relevant safeguards in place. In allowing such a situation to develop and continue the registrant’s failures amount to a serious and persistent failure to meet the standards for pharmacy professionals, which has put patients at risk by the inappropriate sale and supply of medicines containing codeine, which are known for their misuse and their potential to become addictive.*

*As the SI, and regular RP at Sterling Pharmacy, the registrant would have been aware of his obligation to ensure the safe and effective provision of pharmacy services. Further, that he was accountable for making sure that the following Standards for Registered Pharmacies (2018) were being met:*

- *Principle 1: The governance arrangements safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of patients and the public.*
- *Principle 2: Staff are empowered and competent to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of patients and the public*

- *Principle 4: The way in which pharmacy services, including the management of medicines and medical devices, are delivered safeguards the health, safety and wellbeing of patients and the public.*

*Pharmacy professionals are expected to provide person-centred care (Standard 1, Standards for Pharmacy Professionals May 2017). The registrant failed to consider the impact of the lack of monitoring and safeguards in place and did not recognise that the systems were insufficient to prevent patients from purchasing medicines containing codeine, which are liable to misuse.*

*Pharmacy professionals must use their professional judgement (Standard 5, Standards for Pharmacy Professionals May 2017). The registrant as the SI failed to exercise his professional judgement by allowing serious systemic weaknesses in the governance and management of risk. This included no records being kept nor any audit being done in respect of the supply of medicines containing codeine.*

*Pharmacy professionals are expected to demonstrate leadership (Standard 9, Standards for Pharmacy Professionals May 2017). The registrant failed to assess the risks in the care the pharmacy provided and to do everything he could to keep these risks as low as possible. The pharmacy's systemic weaknesses were so serious, that they presented immediate patient safety risks and required an action plan.*

*In the circumstances, the registrant is reminded that, in future, he must ensure that any pharmacy systems and governance are such as to enable pharmacy to supply its services safely and effectively.*

*This warning will remain in place for a period of 12 months.*