
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2002 No. 253

The Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001

PART V

FITNESS TO PRACTISE

Investigation of allegations: procedural rules

32.—(1) The Council shall make rules as to the procedure to be followed by the Health Committee and the Conduct and Competence Committee in considering any allegation and before making an order under article 29(5).

(2) The rules shall, in particular, make provision—

- (a) empowering each Committee to refer to the other any allegation which it considers would be better dealt with by that other Committee;
- (b) empowering each Committee, before it holds any hearing to which sub-paragraph (f) applies, where it considers that it would assist it in performing its functions, to hold a preliminary meeting in private attended by the parties and their representatives and any other person it thinks appropriate;
- (c) requiring the person concerned to be given notice of the allegation without delay;
- (d) giving the person concerned an opportunity to submit written representations within a prescribed period;
- (e) for the Committee, where it sees fit, to notify the person making the allegation of the representations provided under sub-paragraph (d) and to invite him to deal within a prescribed period with any points raised by the Committee in respect of those representations;
- (f) giving the person concerned an opportunity to put his case at a hearing if—
 - (i) before the end of the prescribed period, he asks for a hearing; or
 - (ii) the Committee considers that a hearing is desirable;
- (g) entitling the person concerned to be represented whether by a legally qualified person or otherwise at any such hearing;
- (h) where an allegation is referred by the Council, Screeners or the Investigating Committee to the Health Committee or the Conduct and Competence Committee, for the Council to give notice of that referral to specified persons who shall include the Secretary of State, the Scottish Ministers, the National Assembly for Wales and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland, and, where they are known, to any person referred to in article 25 paragraph (2)(a) or (b);
- (i) giving any person, other than the person concerned, who, in the opinion of the relevant Committee, taking account of any criteria included in the rules, has an interest in proceedings before it, the opportunity to submit written representations;

- (j) requiring a hearing before a Committee to be held in public except in so far as may be provided by the rules;
- (k) requiring the Committee to notify the person concerned of its decision, its reasons for reaching that decision and of his right of appeal;
- (l) requiring the person by whom the allegation was made to be notified by the Committee of its decision and of its reasons for reaching that decision;
- (m) empowering the Committee to require persons (other than the person concerned) to attend and give evidence or to produce documents;
- (n) about the admissibility of evidence;
- (o) enabling the Committee to administer oaths;
- (p) where the person concerned has been convicted of a criminal offence, for the conviction to be proved by the production of a certified copy of the certificate of conviction, or, in Scotland, an extract conviction, relating to the offence and for the findings of fact upon which the conviction is based to be admissible as proof of those facts.

(3) Each stage in proceedings under Part V and article 37 shall be dealt with expeditiously and the Committee concerned may give directions as to the conduct of the case and for the consequences of failure to comply with such directions (which may include the making of an order or refusal of an application if the failure to comply was without reasonable excuse).

(4) The Council may provide in the rules for the Chairman of the Committee to hold the meeting referred to in paragraph (2)(b) or to give the directions mentioned in paragraph (3) and, subject to the agreement of the parties to his acting on behalf of the Committee, to take such action as the Committee would be competent to take at such a meeting.

(5) In this article “parties” means the Council and the person concerned.