

## Mr Simon James Blue, Phar19/464P

### Charge

On 29 April 2020 the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal considered a charge laid by a Professional Conduct Committee against Mr Simon James Blue, registered pharmacist of Christchurch (the Pharmacist).

The first particular of the charge alleged the Pharmacist was convicted in the District Court of an offence which reflected adversely on his fitness to practise as a Pharmacist. He was convicted of stealing Rubifen, a class B Controlled Drug, which is an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975.

The second particular alleged that Mr Blue had practised his profession for five days while not holding a current Annual Practising Certificate (APC).

### Background

The Pharmacist moved to Australia in 2013 and worked in a Pharmacy in New South Wales. Between 15 March 2016 and 24 November 2016, he was investigated by Australian authorities for alleged theft of Ritalin tablets from the Australian pharmacy.

After notification from the Australian authorities in May 2016, the Pharmacy Council of New Zealand wrote to the Pharmacist on 17 May 2016. He was advised that as he did not currently hold an APC, he was not entitled to practise pharmacy in New Zealand. It said he could not complete any of the tasks listed in the pharmacist scope of practice, even if it was under the supervision of another practising pharmacist.

On 10 November 2016 the Pharmacist asked the Australian authorities to surrender his registration and his name was removed from the register. On 24 November 2016 that Agency was notified that the outcome of the investigation was that the Pharmacist had misappropriated 6900 Ritalin tablets from his former employer for his personal use over a two year period. However, the Agency decided not to take any further steps because the Pharmacist had surrendered his registration and had indicated an intention to commence study in a different field.

Prior to his request to surrender his registration in Australia he had moved back to New Zealand. The Pharmacist took temporary employment in the role of a pharmacy technician at a pharmacy in Dunedin for 5 days between 3 and 7 October 2016. During that time he completed tasks that fell within the registered pharmacist scope of practice, including handling, preparing and dispensing medicines. He did not have an Annual Practising Certificate. It was during this time he stole Rubifen from the Controlled Drugs safe at the Pharmacy.

The Pharmacist accepted that he used to have an addiction. He did not intend to ever return to pharmacy and was re-training in a different field.

### Finding

The hearing proceeded on the basis of an agreed summary of facts and the Pharmacist accepted the charge.

The Tribunal found the charge was established in respect of both particulars.

### Penalty

The Tribunal cancelled the registration of the Pharmacist, censured the Pharmacist, fined the Pharmacist \$500.00 in respect of the second particular (practising without an APC) and ordered the Pharmacist to pay costs of \$8,000.00.

The full decision of the Tribunal can be viewed at: [Phar19/464P - Blue](#)