Fitness to practise report to SMT

Date of report: 30 April 2026
Date of last report: 31 March 2026

Introduction:

- This is a point in time report, meaning that the data has been collated based on the FTP caseload as at the date of this report.
- FTP matters are separated into three keys stages: triage, pre-proceedings and proceedings issued. We also have carriage of applications for restoration to the register subsequent to a fitness to practise direction by the Statutory Committee. Please see further explanation provided as follows:

Triage – concerns awaiting jurisdiction test ("JT") to determine whether they come within our remit to investigate as a fitness to practise concern.

Pre-proceedings – fitness to practise cases undergoing investigation with a view to applying threshold criteria ("TC") to determine whether they should be referred to a fitness to practise committee. In some instances, threshold will have been met but the case has not yet been referred to a fitness to practise committee as we are in the process of drafting referral papers.

Proceedings issued – these are cases that have either been referred to the Scrutiny Committee or the Statutory Committee (the latter for interim order or principal hearing).

Restoration – these are applications for restoration to the register of pharmacists by former registrants previously struck off by the Statutory Committee in a fitness to practise direction. The registrar must refer restoration applications to the Statutory Committee under paragraph 9 of Schedule 3 to the Pharmacy (NI) Order 1976. A former registrant is entitled to submit an application for restoration for up to 5 years from and including the date of removal/strike-off.

Team members in FTP:			
IB	Ian Black (Case Presentation Lawyer) (temporary contract)	MS	Maha Shams (Regulatory Paralegal) (temporary contract)
CK	Charlene Kelly (Case Presentation Lawyer)	JMcA	Jane McArdle (Clinical Governance Pharmacist) (0.4 FTE) (temporary contract)
AG	Alan Goleac (Regulatory Paralegal)		

Caseload overview:

Caseload overview	
Total number of cases in last month's caseload	**45**
Total number of cases in current caseload	**44**
Number of new concerns received since last report	**10** Substantive concerns = 9 Self-declarations ('SDs') potentially raised in error = 1
Number of cases closed since last report	**11** Cases closed in 'Triage' – Did not satisfy JT = 8 Closed in 'Pre-proceedings' – Did not satisfy TC = 3 Closed in 'Proceedings Issued' – Closed by Scrutiny Committee = 0 Closed in 'Proceedings Issued' – Closed by Statutory Committee = 0
Number of cases considered by High Court or FtP Committees since last report	**2** Scrutiny Committee meetings **1** Statutory Committee Principal Hearing

Concerns/cases at each stage:

Triage		
	Total no of cases	**Cases stayed (JT on hold)**
No of cases/concerns	3	2
Comments	The number of concerns in triage remains the same since the latest report sent to SMT on 31.03.2026 when there were 3 concerns in triage. Current triage caseload, where possible, are all being actioned and a risk assessment is in the process of being applied. • **26-128** – Self-declaration raised in error.	• **26-105** – Is with the SPPG. • **26-116** – Is with the SPPG.

Pre-proceedings				
	Total no of cases	**Cases with ongoing investigation**	**Cases with threshold met and referral papers being drafted**	**Cases stayed (TC on hold)**
No of cases	24	19	5	0
Comments	The number of matters in pre-proceedings has decreased since the previous report to SMT on 31.03.2026. This is as a result of: - **3** matters closed due to lack of TC. - **2** matters progressed from 'triage' to 'pre-proceedings' due to JT being met.	**1.** 19-131 **2.** 23-111 **3.** 23-112 **4.** 23-113 **5.** 24-128 **6.** 24-139 **7.** 25-115 **8.** 25-165 **9.** 25-166 **10.** 25-170 **11.** 25-176 **12.** 25-178 **13.** 25-179 **14.** 26-103 **15.** 26-111 **16.** 26-114 **17.** 26-117 **18.** 26-120 **19.** 26-125	**20.** 22-122 (awaiting papers from legal representatives) **21.** 23-103 (awaiting papers from legal representatives) **22.** 23-106 (awaiting papers from legal representatives) **23.** 24-106 (finalising evidence before drafting referral papers) **24.** 25-108 (awaiting referral papers from legal advisor)	N/A

Cases in backlog (Surpassed 52 weeks)
12

Cases:

1. 19-131 – Parallel investigations policy previously applied, recent discharge of parallel investigatory bodies jurisdiction. MS collating evidence prior to TC application.
2. 22-122 – TC met and now progressing matter to FtP proceedings. Preparation of papers remains with instructed legal representatives. MS keeping under review.
3. 23-103 – TC met and now progressing matter to FtP proceedings. Preparation of papers remains with instructed legal representatives. AG keeping under review.
4. 23-106 – TC met and now progressing matter to FtP proceedings. Preparation of papers remains with instructed legal representatives. AG keeping under review.
5. 23-111 – Further FtP investigation required prior to application of TC. AG keeping under review.
6. 23-112 – Further FtP investigation required prior to application of TC. Actions being progressed with instructed legal representatives. AG keeping under review.
7. 23-113 – Further FtP investigation required prior to application of TC. AG keeping under review.
8. 24-106 – Further FtP investigation required, Society now in receipt of requested material. AG keeping under review.
9. 24-128 – Matter remains with the SPPG. Parallel investigations policy has been applied. AG keeping under review.
10. 24-139 – Further FtP investigation required prior to application of TC. Society now in receipt of requested material. AG keeping under review.
11. 25-108 – TC met and now progressing matter to FtP proceedings. Preparation of papers remains with legal representatives. MS keeping under review.
12. 25-115 – Third-party investigation being carried out. AG keeping under review.

Proceedings Issued				
	Total no of cases	**Cases stayed**	**Cases before Statutory Committee**	**Cases before Scrutiny Committee**
No of cases	16	0	15	1
Comments	The number of cases in proceedings issued has remained the same since last report dated 31.03.2026.		**1** case has been referred from the Scrutiny Committee to the Statutory Committee: • 22-108 **1** case has been before the Statutory Committee for Preliminary Hearing: • 24-104 - directed that the Registrant's name be **struck off** the register. **8** cases have concluded but require review of the substantive order as per the legislative framework - these cases cannot be expedited as these timelines are based on legislative provisions. **1.** 20-102 **2.** 20-119 **3.** 22-110 **4.** 22-111 **5.** 23-107 **6.** 24-102 **7.** 24-103 **8.** 24-105 **4** cases are being sought for listing as soon as possible in 2026. **1.** 23-104 – Due to be listed for PH in second half of 2026. Clinical expert has been engaged. Within the jurisdiction of the ***FTP team***. [Dates TBC]	**1** matter has been put before the Scrutiny Committee: • 25-168 - the Scrutiny Committee properly disposed of the case by way of a **'warning'** to the registrant.

			2. 23-102 – Due to be listed for PH. Awaiting receipt of papers from instructed legal counsel. Within the jurisdiction of the ***FTP team***. [Dates TBC] **3.** 24-101 – Due to be listed for PH. Require expert medical opinion before convening panel. Within the jurisdiction of the ***FTP team.*** [Dates TBC] **4.** 23-110 – Being polled for PH in second half of 2026. Endeavouring to progress the misconduct matter via Scrutiny before convening PH. Within the jurisdiction of ***FTP & Adjudication teams***. [Dates TBC] **1** case has had the parallel investigations policy discharged, and is being prepared for Principal Hearing: • 21-108	

Cases with interim orders	**Cases in backlog (Surpassed 52 weeks)**
3	6
1. 21-108 **2.** 23-104 **3.** 23-110	<u>Cases:</u> **1.** 21-108 – Parallel investigations policy was applied for prolonged period of time. Criminal process since concluded. Legal representatives instructed. **2.** 22-108 – Parallel investigations policy was applied for prolonged period of time. Criminal process since concluded, matter has been referred from the Scrutiny Committee to the Statutory Committee. **3.** 23-102 – Awaiting receipt of papers from instructed legal counsel. IB instructed. **4.** 23-104 – Due to be listed for principal hearing in second half of 2026. IB instructed.

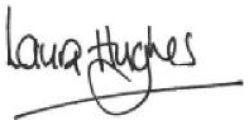
	5. 23-110 – Endeavouring to progress the misconduct matter via Scrutiny before convening PH. IB instructed. **6.** 24-101 – Require expert medical opinion before convening panel. IB instructed.

Restoration	
Total no of cases	The Registrar is currently in receipt of **one** application for restoration under paragraph 9 of Schedule 3 of the 1976 Order. The applicant has submitted documentation in support of the application. The Registrar is now reviewing and assessing the papers for the purposes of a referral to the Statutory Committee. **This matter is currently being polled for listing dates**.

Listings in 2026

So far in 2026, the following matters have been considered by or are listed before the High Court, Scrutiny Committee or Statutory Committee:

Venue	Number of Listings
High Court proceedings – interim order extension applications	1
High Court proceedings – PSA s29 appeal ***Note:** **Only 2 matters are subject to appeal. From the 3 listings, this will require 4 days in total.***	**3***
Scrutiny Committee meetings	3
Interim order applications	1
Case management meetings	2
Interim order reviews	3
Principal hearings* ***Note:** **From the 2 listings, this will require 3 days in total.***	**2***
Reviews of principal sanction	8
TOTAL	**23**



Laura Hughes
Registrar & Director of Regulation