

Nursing Council of New Zealand – *The Director of Proceedings v Krippner*

In its decision dated 23 December 2004, the Nursing Council ordered that a nurse, Gaynor Krippner, must practise under conditions, following a finding of professional misconduct. Mrs Krippner was also ordered to pay 30% of the prosecution costs and her interim name suppression was lifted.

The charge of professional misconduct arose from the care of an elderly resident at a rest home between 1998 and 2002. In its interim decision dated 3 November 2004 the Nursing Council found that Mrs Krippner had administered Imovane (a sedative) to the resident in contravention of the directions of the prescriber, and that she had drafted a prescription for Imovane including administration directions that were different from the original prescription, without consultation with the prescriber. It was also found that Mrs Krippner failed to adequately assess, monitor, evaluate or respond to the resident's weight loss or her falls.

The Council observed that “changing a prescription without consultation with a patient/client's prescriber is negligent and not acceptable”. Cumulatively the particulars concerning the weight loss and the falls met the disciplinary threshold for professional misconduct because “it is a basic skill of registered nurses to assess, monitor, evaluate the progress of clients and plan care on the basis of information gathered”.

In imposing the conditions of practice, the Council stated: “One of the expected competencies of registered nurses is that they understand and accept all responsibilities of registered nurse practice. To decide to avoid certain aspects of care is inappropriate.”