

Social worker who lacked ‘basic knowledge’ struck off

A tribunal service panel found the social worker had insufficient knowledge of legal frameworks and assessment processes

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A social worker who showed “a lack of basic social work knowledge” after he moved to practice in England from Portugal has been struck off.

At a review hearing held this month, a HCPC tribunal service panel found the social worker had not addressed failings that led to him being suspended in 2015.

The panel found the social worker had insufficient knowledge of legislation, including the Mental Capacity Act and Mental Health Act. His understanding of adult social care assessments and the differences between working with children and adults was also lacking, the panel said.

The social worker qualified in Portugal in 2007 and registered with the HCPC in 2013. The regulator assesses all international applications for registration against its standards of proficiency.

After securing registration, the social worker joined a council’s temporary staff register and began a voluntary placement organised by a local NHS care trust. His line manager became concerned he lacked knowledge on key legislation and processes.

**Fundamental concepts**

At an interview and assessment at the end of his placement, he showed a “lack of understanding of fundamental social work concepts”, and he was referred to the HCPC.

The social worker was originally given a conditions of practice order, but was later suspended by a HCPC panel for failing to address issues with his practice.

He complained that the suspension had “been having a severe effect on his ability to work in any unqualified role in social care, undermining his success at job applications”, and called on the panel to reduce the sanction to a conditions of practice order.

However, the panel ruled against him, and said he had still not shown enough insight into his failings to be deemed fit to practise. An employer dismissed him from an unqualified post during the suspension, which the panel said showed “he was not competent even within that lesser role”.

His employers shared concerns that he had been “misunderstood” by service users and that he had “put his agenda” on to other professionals. He denied the latter and argued colleagues had misunderstood him.

The panel concluded the social worker had not taken the necessary steps to remediate his practice, despite being suspended for a year and a half. It had “no confidence that the registrant is capable of resolving his failings” and ordered the social worker be struck from the social work register.