[redacted]

Ms. M. S. Collins,
Investigation Officer,
General Medical Council,
Manchester,
M1 6FQ

Ref: Dr. R. B. Skinner, 'Fitness to Practice' hearing of the General Medical Council.

Dear Ms. Collins,

I am forwarding this letter in support of Dr. Skinner, who I understand has been summoned by you to face 'fitness to practice' hearing.

I am not his patient but my wife, [redacted] is, and she has written to you in his support. However, as her full-time carer for past [redacted] years, I have a first-hand knowledge of her health problems, sufferings, and the difficulties she has continued to face in receiving correct diagnoses followed by appropriate treatment under NHS. At the end we were left with no option but to look for help outside NHS and this is how she approached to Dr. Skinner. My wife suffered serious health problems, for years, but NHS GPs are unwilling (or not allowed) to treat if the initial

tests are negative. The symptoms are not enough to diagnose or even try a treatment. I know this first-hand, when instead of treating my wife for [redacted] she was treated for [redacted] for over [redacted] - years

Unfortunately for past few years she again found herself in simmilar in a simmilar situation, where GPs refusing to treat an 'Under active Thyroid' even all symptoms where present but a blood-test was negative. At the end one GP advised her to seek an Alternative Medicine by finding a practitioner through Yellow Pages.

Fortunately we contacted Dr. Skinner (reffered by her G.P.) and following his thorough Consultation she is now receiving treatment for an Under Active Thyroid. At this early stage of treatment she can feel and I see the improvement in her health.

Dr. Skinner is extremly thorough in his consultation, monitoring and keeping her GP informed about the findings and seeking GPs support in treatment. We visited her GP [redacted] and she has now agreed to continue the Thyroid treatment recommended by Dr. Skinner.

I am shocked and upset that Dr. Skinner will have to face a General Medical Council 'fitness to practice' hearing because he is willing to treat patients who are in desparate need of treatment and have no where to go. I could understand the accusations if Dr. Skinner was carrying out the practice in secret but he is not. He informed our GP all his findings and the treatment only starts, as long as the GP has raised no objection. In fact our GP is far from being un-happy, proves by her action in continuing to prescribe the medication.

I sincerely hope that Dr. Skinner is not penalised for giving life back to many desparate patients like my Wife.

I trust you to conclude in his favour.

Yours Sincerely

[redacted]

Subj: **Dr Gordon Skinner**
Date: 25/06/2007 14:00:10 Jerusalem Standard Time
From: [redacted]
To: pcollins@gmc_uk.org

Re the hearing on 2nd July 2007, I write in Dr. Skinner's defence.
I was appalled to hear via Dr John Lowe in the USA, that Dr Skinner's fitness to practice is in question. He is the only sane voice in the madness of the NHS which seems to be deliberately keeping a lot of us ill when we could be well. I have known for [redacted] years that ME is caused by faulty endochrine system because [redacted]

Now we have all got access to research papers via the internet we don't need to be treated this way. Dr Skinner's treatment of us should be standard practice and all the other medics who refuse we sufferers access to appropriate medications in appropriate doses should be the ones in the dock for "fitness to practice". Most of us cannot even get access to T3 let alone proper doses of T4, or sustained release medications. It is quite scandalous to vilify a Doctor who is prepared to prescribe appropriately.

[redacted]

The email address for you appears to be incorrect and my emails are being returned

26/6/07

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer,
General Medical Council,
5th Floor,
St James's Buildings,
79 Oxford Street,
Manchester M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

Dr G Skinner, fitness to practice hearing 2nd July

I am concerned to hear that Dr Skinner is being asked to attend a fitness to practice hearing.

I have been a patient of Dr Skinner's for years, following an extended period of ill health. Dr Skinner spent significant time diagnosing my symptoms, using a full range of indicators, including reference to blood tests. I started my treatment on a gradually increasing dose of thyroxine and I have now returned to full health.

I have looked at the summary information on the GMC website, and also the duties of a GP, again shown on the website. I feel that Dr Skinner has acted in good faith with these duties and helped many patients, including myself return to full health.

I would be grateful if you would keep me informed of the outcome of the fitness to practice hearing.

Yours sincerely

Private + Confidential

M/s P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M1 6FQ

26 June 2007

Dear M/s Collins

I understand Dr Gordon Skinner is to attend a Fitness to Practise Hearing on 2 July 2007.

After many years of feeling unwell I was diagnosed [redacted] years ago, by my GP, as being hypothyroid. My TSH was extremely high and T4 at the bottom of the scale. However, despite being prescribed thyroxine by my GP, I still remained unwell. Upon referral to Dr Skinner, who treated my clinical symptoms, my health has been restored.

I am most grateful for Dr Skinner's treatment and trust you will take note of the above when reviewing Dr Skinner.

Yours sincerely

cc Dr G R B Skinner - 
Mr P Shiswan

26 June 2007

Ms P.Collins,
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M1 6FQ.

Dear Ms Collins

I have suffered for many years with a general malaise [redacted] *The four doctors that I have consulted over the elapsed time were puzzled to say the least, for after many tests could find nothing wrong in those tests, and virtually gave up on me saying in general that I would just have to put up with it.*
I have a regular chiropractor [redacted] *She advised me that there was some merit in a closer examination of thyroid deficiency, I pointed out that I had had all the tests and nothing untoward was found. However she loaned me a book written by Doctor Skinner who in his explanation of the problem, outlined symptoms which were uncannily similar to my own. I took this new information to my own GP , who after listening to my story agreed to refer me to a consultation with Doctor Skinner. I duly attended a private consultation and told my story to him. He was in possession of my recent blood tests and whilst on face value they were correct, there was an element within those tests which indicated a closer scrutiny was required. He advised a new test to which I agreed. His diagnosis was confirmed that there was indeed a problem which he felt a course of thyroxine would be helpful in regulating. He then prescribed the appropriate course of medication which I have followed.*

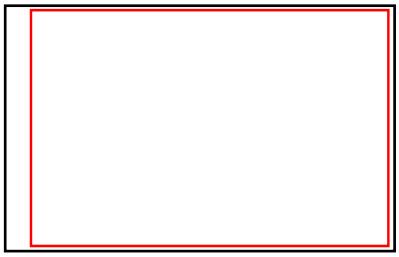
cont

I am delighted to report that at this early stage of treatment, there is an improvement in my condition so much so that I feel confident in writing to you that it would appear, albeit early days, that a new person is returning, [redacted] *and I feel altogether a new woman.*

I find it hard to believe that there should be a complaint concerning Dr Skinner. From the experience I have had of his treatment, which appeared to me to be perfectly appropriate considering the problems I, and I believe others have experienced. It may be that the conventional wisdom sometimes is out of step with patients problems and may I say after many years of suffering it is a welcome relief to find a physician who has apparently taken the extra step to help those who suffer from that which is so debilitating. I therefore have no problem at all with the treatment and care that I have received, nor do I decry my own Doctors, after all there is always small improvements in medication and procedures occurring almost daily, I sincerely believe that this one small help is helping me in a tangible and so far successful way.

Sincerely [redacted]

Ms P Collins
I.O.
G.M.C.
5th Floor
St James Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M1 6FQ.



27 JUNE 07

Dear Ms Collins,

I write in total support of Dr Skinner. Several specialists misdiagnosed my Thyroid illness. It seems all they could think of was the word "stress". However, I believe I am a normal balanced person and certainly was not and presently am not under any stress.

Fortunately, I heard about Dr Skinner and arranged a visit in year [redacted]. His consultation was different in that he had full discussion and took note of my symptoms.

Since then, I continue to consult Dr Skinner but have to get prescriptions from our local GP, which seems a ludicrous situation.

He is the only Doctor who has helped me maintain a balanced healthy life.

I cannot understand why the GMC are hounding a Doctor who actually cures people.

I ask the Council to fully reinstate and not further curtail Dr Skinner.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

22/6/07

Ms P. Collins
Investigation Officer. General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street Manchester M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins,

Re: Gordon R.B Skinner M.D (Hons) DSc FRCPath FRCOG
Fitness to Practise Hearing 2nd July

I am writing in support of Dr. Skinner. I have been a patient of Dr. Skinner for several years and can only say he has improved my life dramatically. From my own experience and talking to other people with a thyroid condition, it is clear that many doctors do not easily recognise an under active thyroid and thousands of patients are living miserable lives undiagnosed.

I was finally diagnosed at [redacted]. It took a long time for my doctor to reach this conclusion because young people are not supposed to suffer from this complaint! Even when a problem is recognised not enough is done to explore other treatments – thyroxine being the only drug used.

We need more doctors like Dr. Skinner who are prepared to take this illness seriously, because it really is very debilitating and can ruin a life.

Please take notice of all the support Dr. Skinner has from patients when you consider this matter. We are the ones who truely know what good work he does.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

27th June 2007

Dear Ms Collins,

Re; Fitness of Dr Skinner to practice 2nd July 2007.

In [redacted] having struggled with [redacted] I was finally advised to stop work by my doctor. [redacted] After three months [redacted] I was no different and asked for a thyroid function test. The TSH was at the high end of normal range. I asked for a referral to Dr Skinner because I knew of patients of mine who had been greatly helped by him. [redacted]

It was an enormous relief when I met Dr Skinner and he confirmed initially from examination findings and later with lab tests that I was hypothyroid. I was started on [redacted] mcg levothyroxine and had a steady increase over many months to a level which not only got rid of most of my symptoms but was supported by safe levels in a blood test. I found it difficult to stabilise from day to day and in the end I was prescribed Armour thyroid which has been fantastic. I am working full time again, [redacted] and other physical symptoms are improving and I feel well. [redacted] Every consultation that I have had with Dr Skinner [redacted] he has examined my pulse, blood pressure and has taken regular blood tests. At no point have I felt unsupported and my G.P has been informed at every stage along the way.

[redacted] There is a great deal to be said in support of lab test medicine but the clinical skill and art of medicine is lost if a practitioner cannot see pathology staring from the other side of the desk. Unfortunately many doctors who agree with the point of view held by Dr Skinner are too intimidated to put their heads over the parapet and prescribe adequately for fear of their careers being destroyed. Sadly this means that there are demoralised doctors whose symptomatic patients are inadequately treated and often made to believe that their symptoms lie in a sort of neurosis. This is a historically common response to lack of knowledge or perhaps courage. Prima non nocere has to be seen in the context of omission as well as commission.

Yours sincerely,

From: [redacted]
Sent: 28 Jun 2007 14:27
To: smanley@bma.org.uk; Info@Endocrinology.Org; mailbox@patients-association.com; Simon Haywood (020 7189 5120); Ralph Shipway; healthcom@parliament.uk
Cc: paicejet@parliament.uk
Subject: Treatment for low thyroid symptoms

Dear Sirs All,
I am a patient of Dr Gordon Skinner; he treats my hypothyroidism. He is summoned to a Fitness to Practice hearing by the GMC on 2/7/07 in Manchester. He has hurt no one, and helped thousands. We have had little or no help from the NHS, which requires diagnosis to be solely by blood test results, regardless of symptoms. We his patients do **not** want him removed from practice. He made us well again.

I am genuinely frightened, because

- I was ill with hypothyroid symptoms, untreated by the NHS, for [redacted] years until I found Dr Skinner, and fear the relapse that is inevitable without him.
- Before I got treatment, I was beginning to deteriorate alarmingly. My mother was the same, [redacted]. She was [redacted] years untreated.
- When ill my TSH test result was 4.0 (top end of 'normal'), and so the NHS refused to treat my symptoms.
- Under the guidelines it is controversial for Dr Skinner to treat me, i.e. use clinical judgement as well. Which brought him to the GMC
- If without treatment I settle back to a TSH within the 'normal' reference range, I am back where I started - treatment denied; that was a living hell.
- If I do demonstrate a high enough TSH to warrant treatment by my GP, it will be with synthetic Thyroxine, which didn't suit me, not Armour Thyroid on which I have thrived.
- If Dr Skinner is removed it would be career limiting behaviour for any other to follow his ideas, and
- My GP will feel confirmed in his belief that I should not be treated, despite my recovery. I show no symptoms of too mych thyroid!
- No one except me will care that I have demonstrated, by my recovery with thyroid replacement, that my symptoms *were* due to thyroid deficiency.
- It's like looking at a life sentence, or even a death sentence. I do not exaggerate.

I will be trapped within a cycle of twisted logic that says: "if the blood test says you're ok, you must be, regardless of your symptoms. In fact, I wonder what would be causing those symptoms, now we're so sure it's not a thyroid problem? Let's send you to the psychiatrist." How did this get turned on its head? If people have symptoms and the reference range says they're normal, change the range! The Americans have. And when those lucky enough to get treatment despite the tests actually get well, how can any logical person deny there is a problem with blood tests?

Blood tests ranges give tidy results, something doctors can feel safe with, rely on, but they do not represent everyone - rather they force individuals to conform to a population. We all know how dangerous statistics can be when misunderstood or slavishly applied. Symptoms were used to compile the ranges, and should not be forgotten when a so called 'normal' individual presents displaying them.

I want to know who will be responsible, morally and legally, for what will happen to the thousands of patients Dr Skinner and others like him, once we start to deteriorate again without thyroid replacement. That will be a certainty, and a travesty, and surely a breach

of guildlines in itself. We start to think about our right to health, our human rights. The Hippocratic oath is somewhat lost in modernity, but we should not be made to suffer when we know now what will keep us well, if only doctors would listen.

Please do what you can for us.
Thank you

Sincerely

[redacted]

26 June 2007

GMC
Manchester
FAO Ms P Collins

RE Dr GRB Skinner
Fitness to Practise Hearing

I am writing to support Dr Skinner to defend his case at the above hearing.

I was diagnosed with hypothyroidism [redacted] despite my GP and NHS blood tests suggesting otherwise.

I was prescribed T4 low dose medication with little improvement. Many visits to NHS specialists ensued but no changes to medication were forthcoming.

Eventually I met a Professor of Endocrinology at the [redacted] who was prepared to add T3 ([redacted]mcg only) to my medication. This addition provided a small improvement but my energy levels and general wellbeing were still in decline.

Having exhausted all NHS avenues with my GP I joined the THYROID UK organisation and met many people in a similar situation to me. This led to contact with Dr Skinner (with GP referral).

My first meting with Dr Skinner some [redacted] years ago became the turning point. He demonstrated a superior knowledge of my condition and over a period of time brought me back to full health.

Mt medication regime now includes T4, T3 and ARMOUR THYROID and is administered with the full knowledge of my GP.

I can safely say that without Dr Skinner's help I would not be able to work or lead a normal life. He is in my opinion 'very fit to practise' and should not need to answer allegations to the contrary.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

[redacted]

CC Dr Skinner
Mrs R Shipway

Adam Elliott
Interim Orders Panel
GMC
Regents Place
350 Euston Road
London
NW1 3JN

By fax: 020 7189 5178

28 June 2005

Dear Sirs

Re: Doctor Gordon Skinner
Public Hearing
29 June 2005

I refer to the above hearing and would be grateful if this letter could be placed in front of the Panel in support of Dr Skinner.

and I have been a patient of Dr Skinner for years. I was referred to Dr Skinner by my GP for a second opinion as I was concerned that my hypothyroidism, was not under control. I was still not able to function properly and was only able to work part time. My treating doctors at the time were relying solely on my blood test results being within the normal range.

When I saw Dr Skinner for a consultation he was very thorough. He went through a full history with me and gave me a proper clinical examination, something which I had not been given in the previous years. As a result of his carefully considering my clinical presentation, he wrote back to my doctor suggesting additional medication. This was

increased on a very gradual basis with consultation with my GP, Dr [redacted].

The result is that since [redacted] I have returned to full time employment and I am now able to fully function on all levels. My GP has commented that he is very impressed with the results of Dr Skinner's treatment.

I believe that the area of hypothyroidism is an evolving area of medicine and it has long been a tradition in medicine that as medicine is not an exact science and it is continually evolving, there is always room for more than one school of thought in the same area of medicine.

This is recognised in the English law (and this standard is adopted in most similar jurisdictions worldwide) that a practitioner is not necessarily negligent if he has acted in accordance with a practice accepted as proper by a responsible body of medical men skilled in that particular art, even though a body of adverse opinion also exists among medical experts. A doctor is therefore not negligent just because someone else of greater skill and knowledge would have prescribed different treatment or operated in a different way.

Dr Skinner has always acted in a professional and proper way. I would therefore urge you not to find against a doctor who has dedicated his life to improving the well being of his patients and, from my experience, has been very successful at it.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

cc: Dr G Skinner

[redacted]

29 June 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigating officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
MANCHESTER
M1 6FQ

Re: Gordon R B Skinner MD(Hons) Dsc FRCPath FRCOG

Dear Ms Collins

Following my health deteriorated; for approximately years I experienced what can only be described as a life of misery. Over those years many tests were carried out, and different drugs prescribed by my General Practitioner, yet nothing worked.

Finally, my GP arranged an appointment with Dr Skinner. The initial appointment proved to be challenging, in the sense that my husband and I had to answer extensive questions from Dr Skinner, some of which were very probing. After this a physical examination and blood tests were carried out. The result was Dr Skinner prescribed Thyroxin, which I have been using ever since.

Over the course of time Dr Skinner has not only closely monitored my health, but has always been available for further consultation, even over the telephone if necessary.

After every visit my GP records have obviously been kept up to date by Dr Skinner, as my GP discusses the visits with me.

As the result of my treatment from Dr Skinner, I now not only feel as if I have a life, but one that I really enjoy. Obviously, I would be extremely upset if Dr Skinner were unable to continue with my treatment and would have to question why you feel such an experienced professional unfit to practice, when many others have had a similar experience to myself.

I await the outcome of the hearing with interest.

Yours sincerely

(via e-mail and Royal Mail)

26 June 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James's Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

I am writing to you to express my absolute disgust at the proposed treatment of Dr Gordon Skinner. If more doctors had Dr Skinner's courage of his convictions there *would be less people draining public funds by claiming sickness benefit and disability* living allowance.

I have been in this group of people for the past years and can assure you that it has not been through choice. I have done the round of Specialists only to be told I had amongst other things. I saw an Endocrinologist approximately years ago who examined me, told me I was Hypothyroid, and then changed his mind when he got my blood test results. Had this ridiculous blood test not been available I would have had the correct treatment and hopefully been back at work years ago.

Having done a lot of research via the internet and reading books, I knew all my symptoms pointed towards Hypothyroidism but getting a Doctor to listen to me and not just go on the blood test results was impossible until I saw Dr Skinner. At last, I thought, a Doctor with some common sense who listened to his patients and looked at their symptoms, not just at a blood test result.

Prior to seeing the Endocrinologist I was prescribed Tertroxin by a private doctor and after a few months found a significant difference in my health.

This disease is so debilitating that everyday life can be horrendous. I have lost all my confidence, I do not like to leave the house unless it is absolutely essential and my social life is a no go area.

I know there are lots of people who would benefit from Dr Skinner's help who will probably never get to see him through circumstances but please do not take away the chance of a return to health of the fortunate ones who do manage to see him.

I have always maintained that I would never wish this illness on anyone but the only way you will grasp the reality of what I am saying would be if you developed the illness yourself. I am now fortunate to be under the care of Dr Skinner and strangely enough my GP sent me for a blood test before my appointment with him. The Thyroid Function Test stated Hypothyroidism suspected.

Hopefully, with the help of Dr Skinner, and now my GP I will eventually return to better health. It is unfortunately too late for me to return to my career [redacted] Please do not let other people be deprived of Dr Skinner's help through the narrow-mindedness of people who have no true understanding of this disease.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

Cc Dr Gordon Skinner
Mr R Shipway

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James's Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

26th June 2007

Dear Ms Collins,

I am writing to you as I have only just become aware of the disturbing news of Dr. Skinner's fitness to practice hearing before the General Medical Council.

I have been a patient of Dr. Skinner for many years. When I first consulted him I was very ill [redacted] My symptoms were very distressing and very painful. I was diagnosed with an overactive thyroid in [redacted] at the [redacted] in [redacted] and after nearly a period of [redacted] years was told my thyroid was now in the "NORMAL" range. If I felt a bit unwell when my treatment started I now felt at deaths door. Little did I know my [redacted] years of hell were just beginning! I will keep this letter short and will write to the General Medical Council at a later date to detail all of these symptoms and how appalling life was for me and my family during this time.

In the meantime I implore you to treat Dr. Skinner with the respect he deserves. I think brining him before the GMC is a disgrace, all because he has the foresight and courage to treat his patients well and try to return them to optimal health. I firmly believe that had I seen Dr. Skinner earlier, I would be fit and healthy today. As it is, I am grateful to at least have some kind of life, though, I now find myself living in fear as to what will happen if I can no longer rely on Dr. Skinner. Like all his patients, I trust and respect him implicitly and am very grateful for all the kind attention he has given me over the years.

As I mentioned, I will write to the GMC in the future as I am composing a letter to my MP to ask if he can get answers to some of my questions regarding the treatment, or lack thereof, for people in my position i.e. I do not fit the parameters set by the test although clearly displaying symptoms of hypothyroidism. I have to seek private medical treatment and purchase Armour Thyroid when I feel this should be available on the NHS as an informed choice and in consultation with my GP or endocrinologist.

As a final thought, if everyone was happy and indeed healthy with Thyroxine and fitting into the parameters set by the test, why is there so many people complaining and suffering still today in

2007? It seems to me that some doctors are intent on sabotaging what little health I have regained!

Yours sincerely

CC Dr. G Skinner
CC Mr R Shipway. Radcliffes Le Brasseur

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer,
General Medical Council,
5th Floor, St James's Buildings,
79 Oxford Street,
Manchester, M1 6FQ

25th June 2007

Dear Ms Collins,

On behalf of my husband I would like to thank Dr Skinner for his enormous efforts he made to help restore my husband's good health. The Homeopath who was treating my husband at the beginning of his illness was convinced that his thyroid was not functioning properly and duly wrote a letter to Professor at where my husband was a patient to tell him of her concerns. Professor then referred my husband to the Diabetic Department at Hospital where he was seen and deemed to be alright.

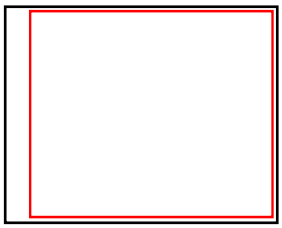
My husband continued to deteriorate,

We made an appointment with our G.P. Dr as we were not satisfied with the result from the hospital. We requested a second opinion and Dr wrote to Dr Skinner who agreed to see my husband. The outcome being after consultation with Hospital Dr Skinner immediately started my husband on treatment for an under active thyroid gland.
My husband's health improved as the result of the treatment from Dr Skinner.

Dr Skinner in consultation with my husbands G.P. is still treating my husband for an under active thyroid.
Dr Skinner is always ready to listen and help and we are indebted to him for his medical prowess and his constant concern for the patient and the family, we would most certainly put a member of our family with thyroid problems into his very capable hands, and recommend anyone with a thyroid problem to seek his help and advice.
Thank you Dr Skinner.

Yours sincerely,

Cc. Dr Skinner.
Cc. Mr R Shipway.



27 June 07

Dear Sirs/Madams,

Dr G.R.B.SKINNER

Both my Wife and Daughter suffer Thyroid problems. In the past we attended various specialists and achieved nothing.

By chance, in a health magazine, we saw an article by a lady who had been treated by Dr Skinner. This persuaded us to contact Dr Skinner. It also involves a [redacted] miles round trip to visit.

Since then, both my Wife and Daughter have been and continue to be looked after by Dr Skinner.

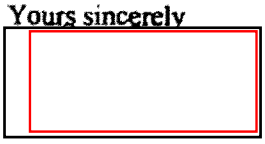
You have already limited the good this Doctor was achieving with patients. His approach may differ from the GMC dogma but it works. Patients are cured and/or their health problem eased.

Your hearing should be against the various specialists who misdiagnosed both Wife and Daughter and took money under false pretences.

We have only praise for and confidence in Dr Skinner and hope common sense will prevail at the hearing. I am presuming the GMC are interested in restoring people to health.

This Doctor should be the toast of GMC.

Yours sincerely



Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
GMC
5th Floor
St James Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

Re: Dr Gordon Skinner; Fitness to Practise Hearing July 07

I am writing a letter of support for Dr Skinner at the latest Fitness to Practise hearing. It saddens me deeply to have to be doing this again. Again I have no knowledge of the specific allegations made and can only comment in general terms based on my experience of past professional contact both directly and also through the experience as reported to me of those of my hypothyroid patients who have chosen to consult him. I can confirm that there are often discrepancies between laboratory results for patients where technically they could be deemed over-treated but clinically this is clearly not the case. They may feel significantly worse if the replacement doses are reduced or feel better on different mixes of T4 and T3 and yet others seem to be best on Armour Thyroid complex with which I have very limited experience. What I have had plenty of experience of is listening to what patients tell me about their medication and how grateful they are to doctors who actually listen to them and are prepared to support them. From my experience Gordon Skinner listens to the patients in his care and makes considered judgements about treatment. Opinion may differ as to what could be considered "optimal" treatment in hypothyroidism, but there will always be patients for whom standard approaches just do not seem to work. The profession has just as much a duty to support patients who otherwise will not receive the treatment they need as it does to protect them from dangerous doctors who are acting without integrity. It is my opinion that Dr Skinner does not fall into the latter category and I have had no cause to alter my views as set out in the transcript below from my previous letter of support.

For the record, I did not receive any acknowledgement that this last piece of correspondence sent by e-mail was ever received.

Dear Mr Elliott
I understand that Dr Gordon Skinner is due to appear at a Fitness to Practise hearing tomorrow. As a practising GP who has had professional contact with Dr Skinner relating to hypothyroid patients on our list, I was alarmed yesterday to discover that he was subject to a hearing. I would be most grateful if my comments would be presented to both Dr Skinner and the committee. I have no knowledge of the specific allegations in question but I should like to make it clear that despite some somewhat controversial views on treatment for hypothyroidism and initial reservations on my part, Dr Skinner's recommendations for treatment with Levothyroxine with or without the use of adjunct Liothyronine (often in high dose) have been particularly efficacious for several patients who attend this practice with at least one patient who had been unwell, undiagnosed on biochemical grounds and therefore untreated for years prior to his recommendations. Throughout this period Dr Skinner has corresponded with me and my partners. It has been my experience that he has the interests of the patient at heart and certainly none of the patients I have been monitoring personally have come to any harm as a result of his recommendations indeed the opposite has been true in, I think, every case I have come across. To me this represents a clinical shrewdness as to exactly what represents hypothyroidism and euthyroidism in subsequently treated patients of which I am somewhat jealous. I am quite sure that many would not have been courageous enough to take the correct decisions on clinical grounds and get these patients on effective doses.

Yours sincerely
Dr
Please acknowledge receipt of this correspondence.

Yours sincerely

20th June 2007

Ms P Collins,
Investigation Office,
General Medical Council,
5th Floor,
St James's Buildings,
79 Oxford Street,
Manchester.
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins,

Re: Dr. G R B Skinner - Fitness to Practise

I feel I must write and let you know what a great help Dr Skinner has been to me.

After nearly [redacted] years of feeling unwell, [redacted] and numerous other problems Dr Skinner has diagnosed me as having an under active thyroid having taken account of the symptoms I was suffering from and started me on medication which has without doubt improved the quality of my life.

I have found him to be extremely knowledgeable, kind, caring, sympathetic and a doctor who really listened to me. Dr Skinner has kept my GP fully informed of the treatments he has recommended.

Without the help of Dr Skinner I am absolutely certain that I would not be living with the quality of life I have now.

Yours sincerely,

29 June 2007

For the attention of Patricia Collins,
Investigation Officer, Fitness to Practice Directorate, GMC

I write in support of Dr G Skinner although I have never met him. However, I have read his book and the accolades of his patients and have always thought that there would be someone to consult when all other avenues had failed. To penalize a doctor in this way is doing an enormous disservice to thyroid patients.

I come from a family with numerous thyroid problems and have spent more than the trying to get a diagnosis for one or other of my sons.

As for blood tests – during my long history of taking medication I have at times upped and lowered the dosage without the hospital knowing and at all times the results have been 'normal'. Therefore how sensitive can these tests be? Likewise I have always been told to take my medication in the morning but after an internet link, have recently experimented with taking it at night and it has made a difference. Prescribing doctors cannot know how patients are affected unless there is flexibility of approach to both diagnosis and treatment.

Dr Skinner represents a beacon of hope to so many people. I feel dismayed that I live in a civilised society in 2007 and that this case can be brought at all. This caring doctor only has a role because of the complete failure of the NHS to take account of anything other than a 'one size fits all' blood test.

Elizabeth Hiley (0161 923 6314)

From: Patricia Collins (020 7189 5145)
Sent: 02 July 2007 14:46
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: Dr. Gordon Skinner

Dear Ms Nankivell

Thank you for your email regarding Dr Skinner. I will pass it on to his defence team who will decide how they may use it.

Yours sincerely
Patricia Collins

From: [redacted]
Sent: 28 Jun 2007 08:20
To: Patricia Collins (020 7189 5145)
Subject: Dr. Gordon Skinner

Hello,

I am an ex-patient of Dr. Gordon Skinner who is currently undergoing lengthy examination by the GMC regarding his fitness to [redacted]

However, please use my account, given below, as part of his defence, as I believe he not only saved me from debilitating ill health but also saved my marriage and restored my faith in a medical profession, which hitherto had let me down very badly.

I am now [redacted] years old but from the age of approximately [redacted] I had been suffering from a series of [redacted] problems, [redacted]. I was being seen by several different specialists for all these different symptoms. Some on the NHS and some (as we then had BUPA cover), on private medical insurance. My medical records all bear these symptoms out and, I am sure, testify to my constant visits to my doctor at the time Dr. [redacted] of the [redacted] practice. My ability to work was greatly impaired and my family life was falling apart. I had 2 young children at the time.

[redacted] My health continued to deteriorate [redacted] and, fortunately for me, a friend heard Dr. Skinner on radio 4 talking about his research into herpes in rugby players and a treatment he was working on with their co-operation. She called me to let me know and I rang to make an appointment with him to see if he could help me with the bad symptoms I was then suffering [redacted]

Dr. Skinner was so kind. He reassured me that he could help and was the first medical person I had had contact with who looked at me holistically. He literally saved my life. He did blood tests and started me on [redacted] mgs of thyroxine, gradually progressing over several months to [redacted] mgs, which I have been on ever since through my current doctor, [redacted] of [redacted]. I gradually regained my health [redacted] Also, as a consequence, I was able to work full time for [redacted]

I have so much to thank Dr. Skinner for. My husband could not believe that all the medical people I had seen up until that point had missed something which was so blindingly obvious to Dr. Skinner. He saved my life, my marriage and my family and I shall never understand why he is being treated in such a fashion by his peers. Dr. Skinner handed me back to my own doctor's surgery once I was on my way to recovery.

Due to my treatment (or lack of it by all those I had seen until Dr. Skinner) I have taken a keen interest in the way hypothyroidism is handled in this country. It is astonishing that so much reliance is placed on a blood test, the range for which is huge. The point that no-one is checked when they are well, to show what their actual readings are, so that if they should then deteriorate within the range, surely means that the test is invalid. All symptoms must be taken into account (as Dr.

Skinner demonstrated in his treatment of me).

It will be the gravest injustice if Dr. Skinner (whom I know has helped so many people) is no longer allowed to practice. We need more doctors like him in this country. He has mine, and my family's, full support.

I am only sorry that I cannot be at the tribunal to state my case personally.

20/09/2011

[redacted]

27.6.07

Dear Patricia Collins,

I am writing in support of Dr. Skinner. Many years ago now, I was very ill. I had seen many doctors none of whom could help me. My life was slipping away. [redacted]. My family was at a loss as to know how to help me. My life was a misery. Then I heard of Dr. Skinner, my G.P. at the time referred me. When I saw him I knew he understood why I was so ill. He did all the tests and ask loads of questions. The blood test didn't show up my underactive thyroid, so it went on being untreated for years. It was Dr Skinners knowledge and awareness that gave me back my life. He was patient and compassionate. My life is good now. Please read this letter out at the hearing.

Yours sincerely. [redacted]

27th June 2007

Ms P. Collins
Investigation Officer
Fitness to Practise Directorate
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St. James' Building
79 Oxford St.
Manchester
M1 6FQ.

Dear Ms Collins

I am writing to show my full support to my thyroid specialist, Dr. Gordon Skinner, who shall be appearing at a F.T.P. hearing on July 2nd 2007. I have been extremely unwell for the whole of my life, with countless visits to G.P's., who fobbed me off Finally, after being so weak

I demanded a referral to Dr. Skinner . At my first consultation he carried out a full assessment, with a physical examination and a referral to my recent blood test results and family history. A diagnosis of hypothyroidism was given, and he started me on thyroxine. After of gradually increasing my dose to mcg and still showing symptoms, he suggested I try Armour Thyroid. This combination has made a huge difference to my health, and at I can finally say that for the first time in my (relatively) short life I feel well!.

My GP now fully supports Dr. Skinner's diagnosis and prescriptions, and she admits that she would not have been able to give me such a 'high' dose of thryoxine under current NHS guidlines.I consider myself to be extremely fortunate to have been able to see Dr. Skinner - he has given me my life back, and if he were to be struck off by the GMC then thousands of patients would surely suffer at the hands of the NHS.

Yours sincerely

28 June 07

Dear Ms Collins,

I write in support of Dr G Skinner.

After several visits to other medical persons, who did not seem to know what my medical problem was, and could therefore not offer treatment, I visited Dr Skinner.

Dr Skinner was more thorough in his consultations and examinations then the previous specialists. He diagnosed a thyroid deficiency and prescribed medicine.

With his help and expertise, during the last years I have been much healthier and virtually symptom free.

The Council should support him for his work.

Yours sincerely

Ms Collins
GMC
St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester

Re. Dr Gordon Skinner

I sought help from Dr Skinner for my thyroid condition which my GMP was unwilling to treat.

In my opinion his history taking, examination, treatment planning, treatment and aftercare have all been carried out with an impressive level of skill, based on his experience and extensive knowledge of the Thyroid.

In my case it would be fatuous to suggest that he has an impaired fitness to practice.

I would welcome any questions to me about his excellent treatment.

28/6/2007

27th June 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigation officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins,

Re: Dr G R B Skinner MD (Hons) DSc FRCPath FRCOG
Fitness to Practice hearing.

I write to express my support for Dr Skinner.

I have seen Dr Skinner for the first time this month after being referred to him by my GP.

After months of my GP being so sure I had an underactive thyroid because of my symptoms, became almost disinterested when blood tests kept reading "Normal" some of my symptoms go back years. After years and various other tests I was told it may be and that I would just have to live with it.

At the point of giving up hope two people told me about Dr Skinner and how he had made there lives worth living after years of ill health.

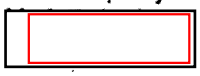
I found Dr Skinner a breath of fresh air, ready to listen and discuss my symptoms and blood test in great detail, more than has been done in the past. He diagnosis was that I have an underactive thyroid. I have just

started a course of Thiroxine perscribed by my GP. I am very confident in the ability of Dr Skinner and sincerely hope that he is allowed to continue in his practise and carry on his good works.

Yours faithfully

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

CC: Dr G Skinner
Mr R Shipway



June 27, 2007

Dear Ms Collins

Re: 'Fitness to Practice' hearing of Dr Gordon SKINNER
Reference Number: 0726922

I wish to register my support of Dr G Skinner in advance of the hearing on 17 July 2007. I strongly believe that letters received in defence of Dr Skinner should form a vital part of his defence, in the interests of a fair, democratic hearing. I trust that this will be the case.

In order to defend Dr Skinner's competence, integrity and immense talent and skill at restoring his patients to good health, it is necessary for me to divulge my own personal medical history and experiences. This is not an ideal situation, and begs the questions whether client confidentiality is a priority for the General Medical Council, when clients feel that they are forced to discuss these details in order to keep Dr Skinner in practice.

As you are aware, Dr Skinner is accused of failure to take an adequate case history, inadequate examination, and failure to refer appropriately. He is also accused of inappropriate prescribing to the patients and placing patients at risk.

As a patient of Dr Skinner, I strongly and wholeheartedly disagree with these allegations. On my first visit to Dr Skinner, he took a thorough and very complete case history lasting over an hour. Each time I have visited he has also given the *appropriate and very adequate examination, including blood pressure, digital* examination of the thyroid gland, temperature etc.

Prior to being referred to Dr Skinner I visited many GPs and a virologist regarding my suspected hypothyroidism. Despite bringing along a thorough list of symptoms at each visit, none of the doctors were interested in looking at this list, and none took a full case history or performed a thorough examination. Compared with these doctors, Dr Skinner was much more thorough and accurate in his examination and subsequent diagnosis. Furthermore, he took the time to listen to me, rather than relying upon my blood tests results alone to form a diagnosis, which was my previous experience.

I believe that the system of diagnosis by blood test is the crux of the problem in the treatment of thyroidism in the UK, with the so-called 'normal' range a point of debate and variation between different PCTs, different medical practices and different doctors. In fact, despite being initially told by two GPs that I was not hypothyroid, I have since been told by a third GP that I was "always borderline hypothyroid." With this apparent confusion and variation across the medical profession, surely a skilled

doctor such as Dr Skinner who offers a combined approach to diagnosis (i.e. looking at blood test results; case history and examining the client) and also has a thorough understanding of the diverse symptoms of this debilitating condition should be greatly valued and respected amongst the medical profession? Instead, it appears that he is vilified and attacked for his approach and that hundreds of his patients' good health is now in jeopardy if they can no longer receive treatment from him.

I am truly appalled that the only member of the medical profession who was able to recognise and treat my hypothyroidism is in danger of being struck off by the GMC. Before taking thyroxine, I suffered from [redacted] amongst many other symptoms and I was unable to lead a normal life. [redacted] The progression of my career was also at stake. Since taking thyroxine which was carefully prescribed and monitored by Dr Skinner, I [redacted] can lead a normal life once more.

Please drop your inaccurate and incorrect allegations against Dr Skinner and enable him to continue his vital work in this area.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

[redacted]

25 June 2007.

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins,

I write regarding the Fitness to Practice hearing concerning Dr Gordon Skinner to be held on 2 July 2007.

I strongly refute that Dr Skinner prescribes inappropriately and would suggest that a day spent in the waiting room of his clinic would give you ample proof and testimonials to the high regard his patients have for this dedicated and wholly professional doctor.

At every appointment with Dr Skinner I fall into conversation with other patients and we all marvel at how our lives have been changed by this one person who was prepared to diagnose and prescribe on symptoms alone - that on most occasions had been ignored or overlooked by other professionals.

My own experience is typical – my GP and several endocrinologists all agreed that my symptoms were 'classic hypothyroidism' but my blood tests suggested otherwise. Eventually my wise GP prescribed armour thyroid and finally, after years of ill health, I began to feel well again.

About [redacted] years ago a friend suggested that I should take my son [redacted] to see Dr Skinner. [redacted] has [redacted] and [redacted] The friend sent me a book, and when I started reading it, not only did [redacted] tick most of the symptom boxes but so did I and also my daughter [redacted]. My GP referred us, and we all became patients of Dr Skinner.

[redacted]'s health improved tremendously, as did that of [redacted] & myself. I have no doubt that this is a result of being diagnosed and treated by Dr Skinner.

We have since moved to [redacted] and our new GP was sceptical of Dr Skinner and his methods of diagnosing and treating hypothyroidism. She insists on regular blood tests, which have sometimes been on the high side of normal for myself, but have recently been within the normal range. I am grateful that she keeps an open mind on our treatment and takes an active interest in it.

I apologise for writing at length but feel you should have as much detail as possible to show that my support is genuine and heartfelt.

I would add that both my mother [redacted] this year) and sister [redacted] both have hypothyroidism. My sisters' symptoms started at the same age as mine and there is no doubt that we both suffered a great deal before Dr Skinner intervened. My sister did the same round of doctors & endocrinologists that I did. I can't tell you how depressing this can be, to know that you are simply not well but to be told repeatedly that 'it's just your age'. Doctors are too frightened of the risk of being sued to sometimes follow their instincts and diagnose accordingly despite what a set of blood tests might show.

I still see Dr Skinner on a yearly basis. [redacted] is happy to be seen by our GP as he finds travelling tiring. He is [redacted] now and [redacted] is greatly improved since taking thyroxin & armour thyroid. [redacted] will see Dr Skinner this summer – [redacted] so will have blood tests at our local surgery on her return and then discuss them with Dr Skinner who will advise on her medication.

Dr Skinner has, at all times, been totally professional, courteous & kind. Consultations are never hurried and he takes time to listen. He is happy to talk things over on the telephone if there is a worry or problem.

Repeat prescriptions are only granted upon receipt of a detailed request form that requires dates of blood tests and GP visits.

It is my opinion that this Fitness to Practice hearing should not take place. I sincerely hope that sense prevails and the witch hunt be called off.

Yours sincerely,

Diana Fell

[redacted]

cc Dr G Skinner
Mr R Shipway

25th June 2007

Ms Patricia Collins
Investigation Officer
Fitness to Practice Directorate
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

Re: Dr R B Skinner MD (Hons) DSc FRCPath FRCOG

I am writing as a general practitioner to express my thoughts at the continued interim order imposed on Dr Skinner by the GMC and his forthcoming Fitness to Practice hearing. There is an overwhelming sense of dismay by the general public which cannot understand the failure of the GMC to appreciate and balance the extraordinary contribution Dr Skinner has made to thousands of hypothyroid patients. The patients who have turned to him for help have done so because their own registered doctors and 'experts' have failed to address their very genuine symptoms and continued ill health. I am not alone amongst general practitioners in believing that the diagnosis in many patients is being missed and many are untreated or under-treated despite having every conceivable sign and symptom of hypothyroidism because of a 'normal' TSH laboratory range

Like all doctors I was trained to make diagnoses on the basis of clinical signs and symptoms together with laboratory diagnostic tests. Guidelines now advise that a laboratory test alone, frequently reported by a scientist who has never and will most likely never even see a patient with thyroid disease is sufficient criterion on which to establish a diagnosis. I, like many other GPs have given carefully monitored trials of thyroxine to clinically hypothyroid patients with sustained and convincing symptoms of hypothyroidism with a laboratory result in the 'normal' range, only to find the same laboratory reporting 'adequate replacement of thyroxine' in the same patient who has become well on thyroxine within six months of treatment. These trials are based on the uncertainty over the optimum reference range for TSH, which is conceived by many to be limited in its interpretation, and the widespread acceptance that 'reference' ranges are not 'normal' ranges. They have been conducted with the knowledge of a local endocrinologist who stated clearly to me that he would prefer GPs to conduct such trials in individuals with overwhelming clinical evidence in support of a diagnosis of hypothyroidism.

The trend to treat a laboratory result rather than an individual patient has led to the downgrading of clinical skills in favour of a laboratory 'diagnosis', unmatched in any other medical condition. It has produced clinicians unable to illicit clinical symptoms and signs in patients with thyroid disease and has resulted in the serious neglect of our duty as doctors to help these patients. The use of oversimplified and standardized

guidelines creates an inability to see the patient as an individual and encourages the trend in current established clinical endocrinology practice for little, if any evidence gathering regarding the treatment of hypothyroidism. We practise evidence-based medicine but risk being too short sighted to accept that we do not yet have all the evidence. This raises the concern that what has become the basis for clinical guidelines might in fact be flawed.

I quote from the Int J Cardiology, 2007 April 13, Dept of medicine, Chicago medical school, USA. *Conclusion: - The present meta-analysis indicates that sub-clinical* ***hypothyroidism*** *is associated with both, a significant risk of CHD at baseline and at follow-up. In addition, mortality from cardiovascular causes is significantly higher at follow-up. Sub-clinical* ***Hyper****thyroidism is not associated with CHD or mortality from cardiovascular causes.*

Many GPs who are after all at the sharp end and see and treat the vast spectrum of presentation of thyroid disease, feel dismayed at the view the GMC has taken in their disciplining of Dr Skinner despite the overwhelming support given him by patients, GPs, the general public and patient organisations. The public will perceive the failure of the GMC to take a balanced view as a witch-hunt by the very body which sets out the 'duties of a doctor' to care for them. This action will also give a negative message to those dutiful doctors who care for and listen to their hypothyroid patients, who believe that their patients have a view and have a legitimate right to receive treatment for clinical symptoms which restores them to full health after years of extreme debilitating illness.

I urge the GMC to consider the public interest in the case of Dr Skinner. The public who so vocally support him recognise him as a practitioner who has been prepared to listen and treat those who have been condemned to years of neglect and debilitating ill health. This is not a small minority, the incidence of undertreated and untreated thyroid disease is high and is increasing. Dr Skinner has served his hypothyroid patients faithfully treating over 5,000 successfully, preventing years of debilitating illness and eventual cardiovascular complications. The two spurious complaints that have been the basis for his current interim order hold no bearing in comparison. If the GMC do not clear him of all charges then the public will perceive them as a public institution that no longer deals equitably with its members to the detriment of those they serve.

Yours sincerely

Cc: Mr Ralph Shipway: Radcliffe Le Brasseurs
Dr Mark Dudley: The Medical Protection Society
Prof Graeme Catto

[redacted]

27.06.07

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Re: Fitness to Practise Hearing - Dr. G Skinner

Dear Ms Collins

I am writing to express my concern over the inadequate quality of treatment that I have received over the past [redacted] years for a thyroid problem.

I was diagnosed as being hypothyroid [redacted] years ago and treatment induced [redacted] I am a young professional person and this was the most terrible situation but I was told that I had to live with it.

I was referred to a teaching hospital who gradually increased the dose and I found that [redacted] became less and less, along with the other symptoms. However, then they said that I was now on too much Thyroxine and was out of a reference range and so I had to decrease my dose. When I did this the [redacted] I returned to the higher dose and the consultant agreed that I should do so, but that I had to remain on that dose. He also said that he had [redacted] other patients in situations similar to mine and that he couldn't help any of them. So I was now signed off after [redacted] of consultations with them in a semi invalid state with no hope of getting back to normal.

Now, [redacted] I have eventually seen Dr. Skinner who, looking at my symptoms, has upped my dose slightly, and the [redacted] and other more typical hypothyroid symptoms are decreasing.

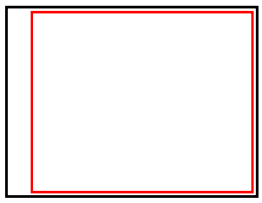
As you can see, this has come about after seeing a lot of medical specialists, all of whom advised me to decrease the dose, which had disastrous results. I really had no other options left to me, but now I am steadily improving.

A most important point I would like to make is that all of the consultants I have seen have been very dismissive of my symptoms and have only looked at the laboratory print out of the blood test and have solely based their treatment on this figure. I am aware that doctors' guidelines are to take both factors into account but I am afraid that has not been the case in my experience.

Your Sincerely

[redacted]

Cc. Dr. G Skinner
Mr. R Shipway



29th June, 2007

Dear Sirs,

After many years, and seeing different doctors, and they telling me according to my blood test I did not have an under active thyroid, it was decided that I did indeed have an under active thyroid. I was placed on a very low dosage of Thyroxin, even though the symptoms persisted and my life was miserable because of these symptoms. My doctors said blood tests showed everything was normal.

My husband, in desperation for a normal life for me, paid for me to see Dr Skinner. As a private patient for consultation only, (my medication still obtained through my GP), not only did he look at my blood tests, he also looked at my skin, hair, hands and nails. He took my pulse, [redacted] he also listened to what I was saying and how I felt.

To tell you the truth I thought I was going mad. He increased my medication, and within weeks I began to feel like a human being with a life again. I have seen Dr Skinner once a year for the last [redacted] years. My GP says my blood tests show that I am over prescribed, but I have none of the symptoms of being over prescribed. I know if my medication was reduced, I would become really ill again. There is surely more to a diagnosis than what a blood test tells you.

My husband and I have the highest regard for Dr Skinner, and feel if he is struck off as unfit to practice, you would be doing a great injustice, to not only me, but all the men and women Dr Skinner has helped, and continues to help. The first time I saw him after he had increased my medication; I told him he had given me my life back. If you decide he is unfit to practice, there will be nobody who cares. GP's are very good, but they do not always know what is best.

My husband thinks this action against Dr Skinner is budget motivated. We both have worked all our lives and paid into the National Insurance Scheme. We do not take much out of the system, and we think that medication should be provided, as prescribed by Dr Skinner.

We both support Dr Skinner; please do not strike him off.

Yours sincerely [redacted]

COPIES; Dr Skinner
Mr R Shipway

26th June 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

I first went to see Dr Skinner in . My mum had under-active thyroid and explained that it can be hereditary. I'd been feeling very unwell for about . After a lengthy consultation and lots of tests, he diagnosed me with the same condition and put me on thyroxine.

Over many months Dr Skinner took great care to monitor and get me on the correct dosage and his treatment continued over the years. He offered support when local GPs did not, and explained all about hypothyroidism and how the treatment worked. I'd never felt better and continue to lead a normal life.

Dr Skinner is a brilliant doctor and has taken the controversial steps to do in-depth testing of the thyroid gland which most doctors only do in part. I, for one, hope he continues to practice as I really appreciate what he has done for me.

Yours sincerely

cc. Dr Skinner
Mr R Shipway

[redacted]

Dear Ms Collins, 27.6.07

I understand that Dr. Skinner of [redacted] is to attend a hearing re. his fitness to practice.

I have only recently [redacted] attended his clinic, but he has given me hope of being well after getting nowhere with my own doctor for years. I have not been able to work for the past [redacted] years I [redacted] was told there is no cure

for it. I would be a great pity if I could not continue with my treatment with him

Yours sincerely

25/06/07

Dear Ms Collins

I understand that Dr Gordon R B Skinner has been asked to attend a Fitness to Practice Hearing on 02/07/07. I am amazed!

Quite simply, Dr Skinner saved my life and has been of enormous benefit to me and countless numbers of other people, most of whom, like me, had given up on ever feeling well again, resigning themselves, at the very best, to a miserable, befuddled existence.

When I met Dr Skinner I had reached the point where life did not seem worth living. Every day was a misery, I could go on, but suffice it to say my GP would not/could not help, as the blood tests came back showing what is conventionally perceived to be normal thyroid function. He was not prepared to believe the evidence in front of him – me, his very obviously ill patient - the test results were everything and conclusive. There was nothing wrong with me. I had become just another fat woman moaning! Nothing could be done. Go away, diet and get some exercise! Hopeless!

Dr Skinner recognised my right to feel well. It was absolutely clear to him that I was hypothyroid, never mind what the tests said. He painstakingly noted down each and every symptom and problem I had before making his diagnosis. He examined my hair, my skin, my tongue, my thyroid , my breathing, my blood pressure etc. He bothered. I cried. There was hope.

Here I am, years later. I am fit. I function well. I can do The Times crossword again. I have become a fully paid up member of society again.

And how did this happen? Dr Skinner treated me as an individual. It was obvious to him that, whatever the test results showed, I was clearly hypothyroid and in need of medication. He started me on a very low dose – I felt the benefits within days, not much to begin with, but every little improvement gave me such hope. It took a long time for me to get fit, with Dr Skinner monitoring my progress every step of the way. And it takes a high daily dose of Thyroxin to keep me where I am today – my own GP

is adamant that no-one needs such a high dose, but even he has to admit that I am NOT suffering any of the awful effects that he told me I would - I just feel so well!

Dr Skinner is a wonderful doctor who puts his patient's well being above all else. It is such a shame that there aren't more like him. He should be applauded for what he does - not vilified. Far from putting his patients at risk, Dr Skinner is making them healthy again, which is surely what the Hippocratic oath is all about!

To take away Dr Skinners right to practice will be denying thousands of people their right to be well. This must not be allowed to happen!

Yours most sincerely,

Recorded Delivery

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor St James Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

26th June 2007

Dear Ms Collins,

I write again to you regarding Dr Gordon Skinner who I understand is to attend a 'Fitness to Practice Hearing' on 2nd July 2007. As you will see from my previous correspondence to you, my son was seriously ill until he was treated by Dr Skinner.

My son is now well, [redacted] We (his family, friends and staff at his school) are in no doubt whatsoever that this has only been made possible as a direct result of the care and treatment he has received under Dr Skinner.

My understanding of the situation is that despite ticking almost every box in the long list of signs and symptoms of Hypothyroidism (and as a consequence suffering years of pain and misery) my son's blood tests showed him to be 'Euthyroid' which resulted in him not being treated. About [redacted] into his period of serious illness, when he was unable to function and could not attend school, his Free T4 was [redacted] in a reference range of 9.4 - 24.0.

It is clear to me that the blood tests are at fault and thus making fools of the Doctors who place complete reliance upon them.

Is it really the case that Doctors should be IGNORING all the clinical evidence?

I fear it is the wrong Doctor 'on trial'. I have a list of Doctors who surely should be appearing at a 'Fitness to Practice Hearing'. They are all the GP's and Consultants in whom we placed our trust who failed to recognise the true cause of my son's illness and prolonged his suffering.

It is unthinkable that Dr Skinner's brilliant work should be curtailed in any way, he literally gave my son back his life.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

[redacted]

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

June 30th 2007

Dear Ms Collins

Dr Gordon R B Skinner – GMC Fitness to Practice Hearing

Dr Gordon R B Skinner is the doctor who with his expertise and understanding has made me well again.
It is some of the NHS General Practitioners and hospital Endocrinologist Consultants practising in the [redacted] area that should be before this panel that were unable/unwilling to treat my conditions which were investigated singularly only.

I was fortunate to find Dr Gordon R B Skinner in [redacted]; he looked collectively at my symptoms, including a huge tongue, diagnosing Hypothyroidism after taking blood tests for T3, T4 and TSH. Initially, medication of [redacted] micrograms Levothyroxin tablets was prescribed.

I have since found that the NHS hospitals on the [redacted] only process blood samples for the TSH (Thyroid Stimulating Hormone) when a thyroid problem is suspected, and if it shows in the 'normal' range no other blood tests are carried out - to save on costs. In my case 'normal' TSH results was not a hard and fast rule for diagnosis.

It has taken [redacted] long years to regain my health with the help of Thyroxin together with Armour Thyroid, which suits me better that has restored me back to optimum health, [redacted] In fact feeling very ill indeed. Unable to earn a living [redacted] No help was forthcoming from the multiple GP practice I was registered with to obtain any sickness benefit.
I feel I was totally let down by the system

I now reside in the area and have an understanding GP. Where I have *quarterly blood tests taken for, T3, T4 and TSH, which it appears, is standard practice* in this area. Which are forwarded to Dr G Skinner. However, I was firstly referred to an Endocrinologist Consultant at a hospital who regarded my medical history **before** Dr G Skinner as "a horror story". Therefore, prescribing Thyroxin for *life on the NHS as previously supplied privately by Dr Skinner. He could not* comprehend why my GP was reluctant to supply the same without his intervention.

Without Dr Gordon R B Skinner's treatment I would possibly not be here to write this letter today.
I fear if his ability to practice is impaired by a ruling, and without the prescribed treatment of Armour Thyroid (this was the usual treatment for hypothyroidism before the synthetic thyroxin drug became available) my health will deteriorate and my standard of life will again be in jeopardy.
I consider Dr Gordon Skinner my Saviour.

Yours sincerely

Copies sent to

Mr R Shipway
Radcliffes Le Brasseur
5 Great College Street
Westminster
London
SW1P 3SJ

Dr G R B Skinner

To: Ms. P Collins
Investigations Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M1 6FQ

CC: Dr Skinner, Dr. Harris, and Mr. R Shipway

June 18th, 2007
Dear Ms. Collins,

I am writing to you to support the case of Dr. Skinner. In my opinion there is no "fitter" doctor to practice than he. I have been a patient of his since [redacted]

Dr Skinner is an Old-School style of practioner, and that provides a better service of care to his patients.
He observes his patients. He listens to his patients.
He takes blood pressure and monitors the situation carefully.

These are important practices in doctor/patient care, especially when dealing with illnesses that have such a drastic affect on a patient's quality of life and even life itself.

I tested positive for Hypothroidism in [redacted]. But had been hypothryoid for at least [redacted] prior to that. Being untreated an Hypothroid had a huge impact on my second pregnancy and over-all health. [redacted]

Once my throidism was diagnosed, I was put onto Thyroxine and the level was altered with most blood tests. That first diagnosis saved my life!
My level was worked up to [redacted] mg for many months, and then it was lowered to [redacted] mg. Within [redacted]

In a desperate attempt to help me, my husband researched and discovered Dr. Skinner. My GP, Dr. [redacted] had been very supportive of my condition, but hadn't been able to help me. She agreed to recommend me to Dr. Skinner and I thank her for that.

Dr Skinner observed and concluded that I was still very hypothyroid, and that I needed to get more medicine into my bloodstream. When I went home I immediately upped my doseage from [redacted] That increase stopped the mental confusion almost immediately!

The first diagnosis may have saved my life, but the second diagnosis (by Dr. Skinner) saved my sanity, my marriage and my family life! If I was still suffering this mental confusion, I would not be able to function or to hang onto my job, family and life.

Thank you Doctor Skinner!
I sincerely hope that you allow Dr. Skinner to continue his work and his care for patients who so desperately need his help.

Kind Regards,
[redacted]

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical council
5th Floor
St. James's Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

27 June 2007

Re: Support for Dr. Gordon R B Skinner

Dear Ms Collins

I wish to express my support for Dr. Skinner and the work he does helping and supporting patients who are suffering from hypothyroidism.

I have been a patient of Dr. Skinners since when I first began as his patient at his clinic. My symptoms began in and were extreme. y. My G.P. could not diagnose my problems and offered no treatment to help me; therefore my life and work were severely affected.

Dr. Skinner has, from my very first consultation with him, been extremely thorough in all of my examinations. He always takes my pulse, temperature and blood pressure. He takes a thorough history of my state of health and discusses all of my symptoms. My consultations with him last for at least 30 minutes and are always conducted professionally with consideration for my well–being and current state of health.

Dr. Skinner commenced my medication on a very small dosage of thyroxine and initially monitored me at monthly intervals. I slowly began to improve after about six months, but Dr. Skinner continued to monitor me on a regular basis. He now adjusts my medication according to my health and symptoms, always with small changes of either a higher or lower dosage. He contacts my G.P. after each visit. Between appointments I have always been encouraged to contact him by telephone or letter if any aspect of my health or treatment concerned me.

I consider Dr. Skinner's treatment and care to be of the highest standard and quality. He is thorough, extremely professional and vigilant in his work. He never prescribes for more that monthly periods and I continue to visit him on regular intervals.

Yours sincerely

cc Dr. Skinner and Mr. R. Shipway

29/6/07

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James' Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Re Dr G. R. B. Skinner
ALLEGATIONS of impaired fitness to Practice.

Dear Ms. Collins,

I am astonished to learn that Dr Skinner is to be the subject of a GMC Hearing, planned to occur on 2/7/07. I cannot think of anything more inappropriate.

Unfortunately my ill health has forced me in to retirement, but one silver lining to this is that I am in a unique position to comment on Dr Skinner's situation, plus I have the time to adequately consider the issues.

Dr Skinner has always been polite and runs his Clinic on time.

Dr Skinner has always had sufficient time to deal thoroughly with my case; 60 minutes are allocated for new patients and 30 minutes for follow up appointments.

Dr Skinner has always gone through the consultation process comprehensively; covering history of the condition, current issues, performing appropriate examination, and deriving relevant conclusions upon which to plan ongoing treatment.

I can bear witness to the fact that at the end of each consultation Dr Skinner sets time aside to write to my General Practitioner.

I have had the misfortune to consult with a number of other Doctors over the [redacted] in particular, and I state for the record that Dr Skinner is the only one to take note of other aspects of my health.

Dr Skinner takes the holistic approach to medicine, so often vaunted by Professional & Political Bodies, to a level I have not witnessed in any other Doctor that I have consulted.

Because I opted to take the single thyroid replacement treatment, Armour Thyroxine, (rather than taking both T3 and T4 preparations) Dr Skinner has to provide me with the required prescriptions. I have found this process to be efficient and properly monitored, both clinically and with the back up paperwork and written information.

Dr Skinner's Premises are simple, but adequate for purpose. The Premises are clean and comfortable and do not emanate the odours of latent infections that I have witnessed in NHS buildings of late.

[redacted]

I have reviewed my records, and looking back at all my consultations with Dr Skinner, I cannot find anything to criticise [redacted]

Dr Skinner has always explained his findings at a level appropriate to my understanding and I have always left the consultation feeling valued and properly treated in every respect.

I will repeat the word "respect" as consulting with Dr Skinner is the best example I have ever come across of two way respect in Medicine.

I understand that some Patients may be obtaining different forms of thyroxine replacement over the internet. It may also be that a General Practitioner has wrongly concluded that Dr Skinner would suggest such access, or that simply mentioning T3 or Armour Thyroxine in the consultation is somehow subversive.
Any such inference is in my opinion inaccurate and can only be based on misunderstanding.
There is an equivalent medication in the availability sense in widespread use. Sildenafil (Viagra). This drug is probably mentioned in 90% of Urology outpatient consultations, and also in Diabetes outpatient clinics. Viagra may or may not be prescribed or recommended by the Clinic.
I do not hear of any Doctors concerned in the Viagra field being accused or blamed if their Patients opt to obtain Viagra over the internet. Such an accusation would be ludicrous and any such equivalent criticism of Dr Skinner around the prescribing of Armour Thyroxine, wildly inappropriate.

When Dr Skinner does have to prescribe a product unavailable through the NHS, he has a Professional System in place for filling the prescriptions. As it happens the

Pharmacy concerned is in [redacted] near to where I live, and so I have obtained my prescriptions using their postal system and by attending in person. Both Dr Skinner and the Pharmacy provide full explanatory documentation, and from personal experience the systems in place are professional and thorough.

Political Viewpoint.

Over recent years the UK, lead by Government, has introduced a Target Culture in to may aspects of our life and Public Services. Medicine, Teaching, Policing to name but three Professions have been affected.
In recent months however serious questions have been asked about the dis-benefits of applying systems of measurement to areas that in fact cannot be measured in such a simplistic way.
The Art of Medicine and Patient Care is one such Speciality that quite simply cannot be measured apart from gauging Patient Satisfaction and well being; always presuming no Law is broken.
I have no reason to believe that Dr Skinner has broken any Law.

[redacted]

I understand that in straightforward cases of Hypothyroidism Dr Skinner, after assessment, refers these Patients back to their General Practitioner with a plan.
It is in more complex cases, who may not have responded to usual replacement regimens and who are still feeling unwell despite blood tests suggesting adequate supplementation, that Dr Skinner may well have to continue seeing a particular Patient.

Making treatment suggestions additional to what a particular Patient is already taking would be a natural and expected step; if a particular Patient still feels unwell before additional treatment suggested by Dr Skinner, and subsequent to this treatment starts to feel better, should not everyone feel pleased? Patient, Patient's relatives and friends, Dr Skinner and the General Practitioner.
What a relief it should be to actually make a Patient feel better!
Sorting out a Hypothyroid Patient is about as close as it gets to curing a Patient with a chronic disease.

I must return to the heading of "Targets" in this section.
I am not up to speed on the minutiae of the current General Practitioner Contract, but I am aware that a lot of General Practitioner income is now derived from achieving "Targets". I have already explained that the Art of Medicine does not lend itself to measurement by "Targets". In fact "Targets" may become a hindrance to medical care in the event they lag behind Best Practice.
One example that is developing is the use of Cervical Smears to detect the early changes in a ladies cervix that may later develop in to cancer of the cervix.
I believe General practitioners are paid a maximum Target Payment fro ensuring 80% of their female Patients in a defined age group have a three yearly cervical smear.

This payment is fine tuned by the proportion of the 80+% that are carried out in General Practice as opposed to say in a Hospital Clinic.
It is now known that the presence of Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) in the cervical area is the real indicator of propensity to develop cancer of the cervix and that the cervical smear changes are secondary.
My point is if a Gynaecologist decided to carry out HPV tests on her / his Patients, and if these Patients having been given the all clear declined to have cervical smear tests, would that Gynaecologist be called up in front of the GMC?
The Gynaecologist would be following Best Practice but as a knock on effect the General Practitioner might lose out financially.

In the final analysis Best Practice is the only route to follow.
I believe Dr Skinner follows Best Practice and there will be Patients who as a result have blood tests outside the usual normal ranges.

I do not know whether there is a Target Payment made to General Practitioners based around Hypothyroid Patients' blood test results, but I would ask this be clarified and considered in the GMC's considerations.

Conclusion.

Over the years that I have consulted with Dr Skinner I have spoken to numerous fellow Patients in the Waiting Room.
People travel from far and wide to consult with Dr Skinner, often arriving early to sit in his Waiting Room and catch an early glimpse of or pick up a pithy quip from their beloved Physician.
There is a devotion from Dr Skinner's Patients that I have never witnessed before, and I cannot believe for one minute that the proposed GMC Hearing was triggered by a Patient's Complaint.
I have to conclude that a colleague has started the GMC Process, almost certainly because of a misunderstanding.

I am saddened to think that today's society, target led in so many of its aspects, cannot accommodate someone who truly practices the Art of Medicine.

We should be cherishing Dr Skinner and his ability to make Patients feel better where others have failed.

Praise not Pillory should be the outcome of the GMC's deliberations.

Yours sincerely,

29 6.07

Ms P. Collins,
Investigation Officer,
GMC.
5th Floor,
St James's Buildings,
79 Oxford Street,
Manchester M1 6FQ

Dear Ms. Collins,

I would to support the practice of Gordon Skinner MD of [redacted].

Dr. Skinner has helped me a great deal by prescribing Levothyroxine & Tetroxin when my G.P. refused to do so.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Dear Ms Collins,

I am writing a letter in support of dr. Skinner, i don't know what i would have done without him, my problems started after [redacted] and I am currently still housebound but a lot better and still attending the [redacted] in [redacted] with adrenal problems but the doctor there agrees I have an under-active thyroid.

I am now with a new G.P that also says that if I had been his patient at the time he would have given me thyroxine.

it is about time that doctors have a look about where they are going wrong and not to look at everything in black and white as you can see from the photographs I have sent you it is obvious that I have a thyroid problem

[redacted]

[redacted] that's when somebody
told me about dr. Skinner I got a family
member to take me to see him and
the only regret I had was why I hadn't
done it sooner.
after a long appointment to discuss
everything dr. Skinner started me on
[redacted] mcg of thyroxine and was always
at the end of a phone if I needed him
[redacted] back [redacted]

[redacted]

I know of a lot of women in [redacted]
that has been helped by dr. Skinner
and are now back to good health
and I am also on my way back to
getting my health back but only
because of dr. Skinner.

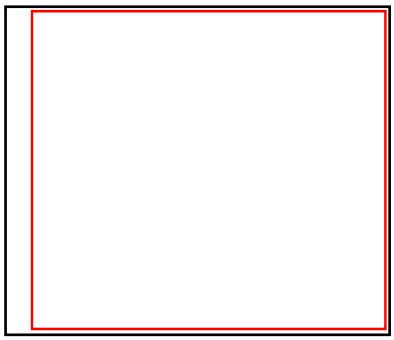
(4)

my boys are finally getting their mum back and hopefully it won't be too long now until I'm back on my feet and out enjoying my life again which I should be doing and think if I had been diagnosed earlier I wouldn't have been as bad as I am.

anyway I think dr. Skinner is invaluable at what he does and its good to actually have a doctor who listen's to you and also takes symptoms into account.

I hope you excuse the writing as its such a long time that I haven't worked for and my handwriting is a mess now.

thankyou.



28 June 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigating officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
MANCHESTER
M1 6FQ

Re: Gordon R B Skinner MD(Hons) Dsc FRCPath FRCOG

Dear Ms Collins

I believe you are involved in a Hearing as to whether Dr Skinner is fit to practice. I would like to place on record my opinion and experience of his abilities.

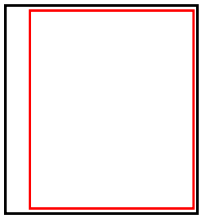
After several years of my General Practitioner being unable to improve my standard of life, citing stress and then my age [redacted], I was referred to Dr Skinner. Upon meeting him it was obvious he is quite a character, perhaps even an acquired taste, however, his intentions shine out like a beacon. He took extensive blood tests, carried out a thorough physical and verbal examination, after which he diagnosed Hypothyroidism. His treatment has made a vast improvement in my life and I feel I owe him a lot.

It was my GP who made the referral and he has been kept up to date with all developments as they occurred. Not only did Dr Skinner send blood test results to him, but he copied me also, something I have to push my GP practice to do.

I trust that in these days of patient power that the GMC will listen to those who daily benefit from this mans' wealth of experience and allow him to share it with others, to their benefit.

I eagerly await the acquittal of Dr Skinner, and would appreciate a synopsis of the hearing when available, could you please send them to the above address?

Yours sincerely



(via e-mail and Royal Mail)

28th June 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Ref:Dr Gordon R B SkinnerMD(hons)DSc FRCPath FRCOG

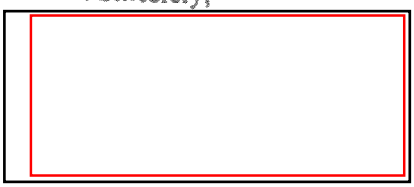
Dear Ms Collins,

I am writing to you concerning the 'fitness to practice' hearing which is taking place next week against Dr Skinner. I cannot believe that this talented, caring, brilliant doctor should be considered, by the GMA, to have to face such a hearing.

I have been treated by Dr Skinner for many years and he is the only doctor who has managed to control my under-active thyroid and get me back to good health again. I had seen many doctors who could of would not help me. I had many of the problems associated with this condition. to put it in a nutshell I have my normal life back.

It would be a crime to stop Dr Skinner practising as he helps so many people, myself included. I do not understand how a society of professional medical persons could consider depriving patients of a doctor who has helped them to a normal life.

Yours Sincerely,



To: Ms P Collins
Investigating Officer
General Medical Council
Manchester M1 6FQ

From:

30thJune 2007
Dear Ms Collins

Dr Gordon Skinner MD(Hons) DSc FRCPath FRCOG
Fitness to Practice Hearing - 2nd July 2007

I was amazed and dismayed this week to learn that the GMC is accusing Dr Skinner of misconduct and deficient professional performance.

, I am very familiar with his excellent work with patients with thyroid dysfunction, both on a personal basis and through feedback who have returned to full health despite their GPs declining to treat them with thyroid supplementation.

Case history evidence demonstrates that many CFS/ME patients go on to develop hypothyroidism as well as ME after several years of illness.

As approximately 90% of symptoms for hypothyroidism and CFS/ME overlap we also find that some patients have been misdiagnosed by their GPs as having CFS/ME, when in fact subsequent treatment with thyroid supplements has returned them to optimum health.

Regrettably some clinicians are over reliant on the accuracy of blood tests for thyroid function despite the tests only being statistically valid for 95% of the population (there usually being **no** evidence for the Doctor to confirm which **part** of the 'Normal Range' is appropriate for that patient to be in optimum health.)

Having experienced the improvement in my own health by Dr Skinner's thyroid supplementation (even though I was in 'Normal Range') and witnessed the achievement of full recovery by a wheelchair bound patient, whose GP refused to acknowledge she was hypothyroid (despite displaying a wide range of symptoms), I firmly believe the GMC should be looking to address the manifest shortfall in diagnosis and management of patients with hypothyroidism by so many GPs rather than questioning the fitness to practice of Dr Skinner, who treats the patient and their symptoms rather than relying solely on a clearly inadequate blood test regime.

Regarding Dr Skinner's assessment of patients - feedback from our members points to his lengthy and thorough history taking and examination of patients and the appropriate and carefully monitored prescribing of thyroid supplements.

To withdraw Dr Skinners licence to practice would be a travesty of justice and prevent the recovery to full health of many suffering from hypothyroidism.

Should you require further information please do contact me.

Yours sincerely

28 June 2007.

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins,

I am writing to offer my support for Dr Skinner with regard to the allegations that he has impaired fitness to practise.

I understand that there is to be a hearing on 2 July and I am concerned that this is a travesty – Dr Skinner is not only exceptionally well qualified to practise with years of experience behind him, but I believe he only ever acts with the benefit of his patients in mind.

I have been seeing Dr Skinner now for almost years and my health has improved immeasurably in this time. My GP was – and is still – unable to see beyond the results of my blood tests and could not offer the support and medication that I have received from Dr Skinner.

I hope that the intended hearing will not take place and that Dr Skinner will still be allowed to practise - for the benefit of the many many people he has helped.

Yours sincerely,

cc Dr G Skinner
Mr R Shipway

27. 6. 07

Dear Ms. Collins,

I am aware of Dr. Skinners predicament and wish to advise you that Dr. Skinner has helped me greatly. He gave me back my health and my life. I have nothing but gratitude for him. I suffered for many years with Hypothyrodism visiting my G.P. also the Endocrine Dept. of our local hospital, all to no avail; they couldn't get the dosage right, which left me feeling very unwell. In a desperate last attempt I found Dr. Skinner and today my quality of life is excellent which is all thanks to his care and prescribing the correct dosage of thyroid hormone for me. He really gave me back my life. Pity more Drs. don't have his expertise re: Thyroid Problems I was so grateful specialist Drs. like Dr. Skinner exist.

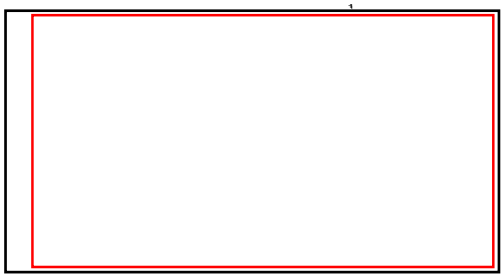
I now take Th + T3 (Perfect Combination for me). I would never have been prescribed T3 without Dr. Skinners help. Therefore, I have nothing but praise for this man, and strongly believe we need more Drs. like Dr. Skinner.

Yours faithfully

30 June 07

URGENT!

Via Recorded Delivery



Ms P. Collins
Investigating Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor St. James's Building
79, Oxford St.
Manchester M1 6FQ

Dear Madam,

Re: Gordon R.B. Skinner (MD) (Hons) DSc FRCPath FRCOG.

I am sending this letter to you via Recorded Delivery, to ensure you receive it - although I heard the "Fitness to Practice" Hearing is on 2nd July 07. - but I only learned of this today.

I am [redacted] yrs old, and for at least [redacted] years I had undiagnosed Thyroid problems. Had I not taken my healthcare into my own hands, and gone to see Dr Skinner, I probably would not be alive. Under Dr Skinner's care, I am now well, and feeling pretty good for [redacted].

Will the G.M.C. please stop persecuting Dr. Skinner! You are out-of-date stupid organisation - which should be disbanded, - The G.M.C. were formed in 1859. = and still think it's 1859.

P.T.O.

Dr. Skinner has helped thousands of people get better. What has the G.M.C. done?

from

[redacted]

P/Copies x 3

Adam Elliott Esq.,
Interim Orders Panel,
GMC, Regent's Place,
350 Euston Road,
London, NW1 3JN

July 2nd 2007

Dear Mr. Elliott,

This is the third time I have had to come to support Dr. Skinner in what is now clearly a witch hunt. Rather than re-iterate my earlier comments about him, please refer to my two previous letters on this. My support and gratitude for his helping me when the NHS failed me remains unwavering.

I also challenge the whole basis of these 'charges' against him. Dr. Skinner is treating us as used to happen in the NHS: I have a retired endocrinologist friend, who is appalled at what is happening now; none of the checks , tests or indeed treatment she used to use are given now. Only one blood test, as fallible as the old iodine test, is used. Other complications, the extremely painful I suffer for example, are simply dismissed and like others I am needlessly left in great pain.

You are now going backwards, and leaving people to suffer although help is available and not even expensive. I am told it could be prevented now, but not if I am ignored, brusquely dismissed by the local inadequate Prof. simply because problems do not show up on his simple blood test.

I do not understand why Dr. Skinner is now being hounded, when he is doing what you, the GMC, and the Dept of Health instruct a doctor should do: use blood tests among other indicators, signs, symptoms, tests, before making a diagnosis and deciding on treatment. Although he is not working in the NHS, he is doing exactly that, as did my retired endo friend, .

But what you are doing now simply brings the GMC into further disrepute and confirms our scepticism; you also increase our anger. You will not do anything to help us, yet we pay for you, pay for the NHS, pay huge sums to Tony Weetman while he flouts your rules and urges others to ignore us and let us fade away in great pain, completely unnecessarily, to save the few pennies thyroxine costs - perhaps £2 a month, while hounding somebody who does a decent job. This is not what you or the NHS are for.

Yours sincerely,

01 July 2007

Ms Patricia Collins
Investigation Officer
Fitness to Practise Directorate
The General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James's Buildings
79, Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

Dr Gordon Skinner's Fitness to Practise Hearing, Manchester, 02 July 2007

I hope to attend the above hearing and wish to remind you of two letters which I have previously sent to the GMC in support of Dr. Skinner. Copies are attached. I hope that my letters will form part of the evidence put before the FTP Panel in Dr Skinner's case.

I am particularly concerned that the patients who are making progress under Dr Skinner's care should not find themselves, through any decision of the GMC, unable to access the medications which have been prescribed for them.

Yours faithfully

Cc Mr R.R. Shipway (RadcliffeLeBrasseur),
Dr Mark Dudley, Medical Protection Society

1st July, 2007

Ms P Collins,
Investigation Officer,
General Medical Council,
5th Floor, St James's Buildings,
79 Oxford Street,
Manchester,M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins,

I first visited Dr. Gordon Skinner in [redacted] after reading his book 'Diagnosis and Management of Hypothyroidism'. My health at that time was not good even though I had been on an average amount of Levothyroxine for about [redacted] years. Through reading this book I began to realize that a lot of my symptoms could still be due to hypothyroidism.

From my first visit to Dr. Skinner's clinic I was prescribed Armour Thyroid along with Levothyroxine. Gradually over the following [redacted] my many symptoms declined. [redacted] I believe this was all due to my taking the Armour Thyroid which has all the hormones of the thyroid in it. For the past few months I have been [redacted] but I put this down to having reduced the Armour Thyroid slightly a few months ago which I am now rectifying. I am very grateful to Dr. Skinner for his concern for hypothyroid patients and his knowledge, and also for his very enlightening book. I am also very grateful for the natural preparation i.e. Armour Thyroid. I dread to think of what my health would have been like by now without it.

Yours sincerely,

22·6·07

Re Dr G Skinner fitness to practise hearing

To whom it may concern

I am writing to appeal that Dr Skinner should be allowed to continue to do his work, the only thing he is guilty of is talking to the patient and listening with tact, empathy and understanding. He is so experienced that he can identify physical symptoms through his thorough examination /assessment and written questionnaire. He takes time to discuss patient concerns and options for treatment. He always asks permission to liase with your GP and writes to them with his findings and treatment plan.
Strange that nobody has attempted to discredit my Gps whose comments in the past have included : Oh and what about the GP that failed to notice that my blood tests for hypothyroid were in fact abnormal!! After repeating the tests the results were borderline so I continued to suffer. Would they listen, look at me, NO? They continued to prescribe a cocktail of drugs. Nothing worked.
The amount of time and resources wasted visiting GPs, physios, gynaecologists etc.
The pain has virtually vanished since my treatment under care of Dr Skinner. I am more positive despite my socio economic circumstances remaining the same. The improvement has been fantastic
I have got nothing but the utmost praise for Dr Skinner and would like to take this opportunity to thank him most sincerely for helping me on the road to recovery, getting my life back. Please let him continue to do what he does extremely well helping his patients. I'm sure he does much other work in the field of research etc that I am unaware of so I can only speak as I find!

patient

30 June 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St. James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

Support for Dr. Gordon R.B. Skinner

Although I have only been a patient of Dr. Skinner for a short time it is without hesitation that I formally proffer my support.

I have been struggling to get my hypothyroidism under control and treated satisfactorily. After around years of being treated in a dismissive manner, made to feel I was wasting Drs' time, told my blood tests were normal **(all my other symptoms totally ignored and irrelevant!)** and therefore it was and/or many other ill-advised diagnosis from **doctors and consultants in the National Health Service.**

FINALLY, I got my referral to Dr. Skinner. What a difference. Dr. Skinner did want all my blood test results I had had over the past years BUT also he listened to my symptoms/condition and respected my interest and clearly and sincerely appreciated my situation which I believe is the way forward.

As all the Panel will know, there are six principal 'duties of a doctor' which are the GMC's core guidance. I will give the Panel credit for knowing what these are and will not insult them by listing them here. I will, however, state categorically that Dr. Skinner not only meets these requirements but excels in each and every one.

Dr. Skinner is a truly conscientious, dedicated and knowledgeable Doctor who possesses all 'the qualities' in abundance; professionalism, trustworthiness and honesty ranking highly among these. Indeed he commanded the respect of myself and other patients I have met and spoken to.

It is very hard for me to comprehend that Dr. Skinner finds himself in this position which must have caused distress to him, and his family over a prolonged period of time. Injustice is always the worst of all crosses to bear!

Dr. Skinner should not be robbed of his right to practice, nor should his patients, past, present and future be deprived of his knowledge, expertise and medical care.

As you see I cannot speak highly enough of Dr. Skinner and most sincerely hope the GMC will recognise his qualities and professionalism and support him 100% in the astonishing and unjust situation he now finds himself.

Yours sincerely

++

Copy to :

a) Dr. Skinner
b) Mr R. Shipway, RadcliffesLe Brasseur,
5 Great College Street, Westminster, London SW1P 3SJ.

[redacted]

[redacted]

3 July 2007.

Miss P. Collins,
GMC, Manchester.

Dear Ms Collins,

Dr. Skinner

1. I am a patient of Dr Skinner's and have been since [redacted]

2. I was at that date quite ill and had been for [redacted] years. Visits to several GPs and hospital consultant failed to establish any cause of illness and I remained untreated and ill, forcing early retirement.

3. Investigations elsewhere and self-diagnosis led to Dr. Skinner who confirmed hypothyroidism. This he has treated with Armour Thyroid and I am as a result [redacted] years on substantially better.

4. The strength of Dr. Skinner's

approach his, in my view, in his willingness to consider clinical evidence as well as blood test data. Seemingly, the slavish adherence to this last by the NHS doctors led to their failure to diagnose &/or treat.

5. I am stable on the dose of Armour I take with blood tests FT3 and FT4 within the reference range. This dose was achieved incrementally with careful monitoring by Dr. Skinner between dose increases.

6. Dr. Skinner has been scrupulous in liaising with my GP.

7. It seems to me that Dr. Skinner has done substantial good in improving the health of patients failed by the NHS. It really is this last aspect and in particular the blind and unintelligent adherence to blood test data which by their nature cannot be foolproof that should be investigated.

8. Please do consider the plight of Dr. Skinner's patients should you find against him.

9. I strongly urge you to find in Dr. Skinner's favour and dismiss the allegations against him.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

3/7/07.

Ms P. Collins,
Investigation Officer,
GMC,
5th Floor,
St James's Buildings,
79 Oxford St,
Manchester, M1 6FQ.

Dear Madam,

Please may I draw your attention to a copy of an email I sent to you today (in case of postal strike!) in Defence of Dr Skinner.

Thank-you,

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

(his patient).

Dear Madam, Please read this email in Dr Skinner,s defence at his hearing. I have been his patient since [redacted] and I am on Armour thyroid plus thyroxine. My GP regularly monitors my blood test results and general health. I was on thyroxine alone for [redacted] years and was still very ill. I must have had hypothyroidism for many years before I was diagnosed. Armour thyroid changed my life, I have been able to carry on as a mother, a wife and partake in our business. I am dependent on Dr Skinner for my medication, without which my health will be seriously threatened. Health is my human right! Why return people to the seriously debilitating symptoms which they suffered before they were on Armour thyroid?Please listen to me. Yours sincerely, [redacted]

I sent this email today to Ms P Collins , Investigations Officer at the GMC.This is in defence of Dr Skinner's fitness to practice. I hope it will help his case. Dr Skinner has had the courage to help the plight of hypothyroidism sufferers by questioning present medical practices. If so many of us are saying the same thing, we must have a valid point!

[redacted] *a patient*

26th June 2007

Dear Ms. Collins,

Re: Dr. Gordon Skinner

I am writing to you in support of Dr. Gordon Skinner, who has treated me for severe hypothyroidism for the last two and a half years, and has, I believe not only saved my life but also my sanity.

Until I first visited Dr. Skinner in [redacted] I knew that I was seriously ill, but had no idea what the problem was, and neither did my GP. I, and many others like me, would be absolutely lost without the completely dedicated, caring and professional advice and support of Dr. Skinner. In general I have found, as have other people I know, that GPs "run scared" of treating thyroid problems and I am still incensed that a whole year of my life was wasted because my blood test results fell within 0.3 of the range for FT4 and therefore my thyroid function was declared normal when it certainly wasn't. [redacted]

In short, if we, as patients, lose Dr. Skinner, we have no one to turn to, no expert in this field who is prepared to listen and diagnose correctly in order for us to return to good health and a normal life. I think it is testimony to his skill and caring that I, like many others, am prepared to travel all the way to [redacted] just to receive his expert opinion on what is a very "under-rated" but terrible medical condition. [redacted]

I hope that you have read the book "Tears Behind Closed Doors" by Diana Holmes, because if you haven't, you should – and then you might understand why Dr. Skinner is so very important. Dr. Skinner listens to his patients, he does not just go by the numbers, the "range" - he studies how a patient is FEELING, he is sympathetic and understanding when everyone else (including my family) believes one is making it up.

Yours sincerely

5th July 2007

Dear Ms Collins,

I have been a patient of Dr Gordon Skinner since [redacted] Prior to his treatment I had suffered [redacted] had been diagnosed with [redacted] and had been offered no form of treatment or support. In [redacted] I was shown to have a TSH level of [redacted], marginally within 'normal range' set down by the NHS and was denied treatment or further testing of T3 and T4 levels which could have proved hypothyroidism. When I finally attended Dr Skinner's clinic I was so ill [redacted] Dr Skinner recognised that I showed nearly every symptom of hypothyroidism and began treatment with Armour Thyroid that began to relieve symptoms within just a few days.

It took me a number of months to recover fully but, with Dr Skinner's care, I have been well and able to work in an active job [redacted] Dr Skinner succeeded in getting the NHS to pay for my treatment for [redacted] years before they abruptly stopped doing so, with a GP admitting this was due to the cost of treatment. I have never responded well to the cheaper synthetic thyroxine routinely prescribed by the NHS. Hospital records going back to my childhood show that I had low thyroid function even then and I have no doubt that the long failure to recognise and treat this has resulted in my inability to convert and utilise T4 efficiently.

I rely on Dr Skinner to prescribe my medication and therefore the actions of the GMC threaten my future health and livelihood. [redacted] Over the number of years I have known Dr Skinner he has shown himself to me to be entirely professional and above all kind, honest and sensible. I am appalled that a man who has helped so many people who have been badly let down by the current NHS system can be treated in such a shoddy, derogatory manner. It surprises me that the GMC would involve itself in thinly veiled medical allegations based on financial loss and gain.

Yours Sincerley

[redacted]

4th July

Ms. P. Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins,

Dr. R. B. Skinner

I have been a patient of Dr. Skinners since .

During my consultations with Dr Skinner I have found him to be completely professional and have never felt at risk from inappropriate prescribing. At each consultation he has examined me, asked many probing questions about my condition, made notes and given me detailed information about my treatment. He has also arranged for blood tests when necessary.

I have been ill since and over the years have consulted several doctors. I have had many experiences and have learnt a lot about doctors during that time, although with hindsight I realise that some of these doctors had put me at risk. At no time has Dr Skinner given me cause for the least concern over any medication he has prescribed.

Because of my experiences I feel I am in a position to state that Dr Skinner is an excellent practitioner, component and compassionate, who would never knowingly put any patient at risk.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

1. July 07

Dear MS P Collins,

I am writing this letter in support of Dr Skinner, whom without his knowledge and expertise my quality of life would be very poor.

I was first referred to Dr Skinner in [redacted], after being treated under the local NHS for [redacted] years with a distressing, painful medical condition with no improvement. Feeling so low and felt that there was no help available, the Consultant decided to refer me to Dr Skinner.

I have once been under his care, whilst he liaises with my GP keeping her informed of any changes or recommendations in my care, she, in turn, monitors my treatment taking yearly blood tests. After many years of taking a regime of medication my medical condition is under control and my health has greatly improved.

I have always been treated professionally and have found Dr Skinner to be knowledgeable and approachable. He is always available to answer any concerns or worries that I have had. Without his help I would have not returned to good health, for which I am grateful.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

Elizabeth Hiley (0161 923 6314)

From: [redacted]
Sent: 08 July 2007 09:23
To: Patricia Collins (020 7189 5145)
Subject: Support for Dr. Skinner

Sirs,

Please accept this email as my unequivocal support for Dr. Gordon Skinner in the way he diagnoses and treats thyroid patients.

If it were not for Dr. Skinner I have no doubt that my daughter would be dead along with my husband who died from undiagnosed and untreated hypothyroidism in [redacted]. He was the first doctor to acknowledge my daughter's hypothyroid problem, to treat her and begin the restoration of her quality of life.

It is a travesty that because of the outdated methods used in thyroid diagnosis and treatment in this country Dr. Skinner has been deemed to have fallen foul of the GMC. He has chosen to think of his patients first which sadly is not the case with those in the establishment who adhere to unproven and unvalidated methods for diagnosis and treatment.

Please add this email to your list of letters of support for Dr. Skinner.

[redacted]

6th July 2007

Ms P Collins,
Investigation Officer,
General Medical Council,
5th Floor,
St James's Buildings,
79 Oxford Street,
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms P Collins,

I understand that you have asked Dr Skinner to a Fitness to Practise hearing. I would very much like to add my testimonial in support of Dr. Skinner.

It is only years ago in , when I was that I met Dr. Skinner. I had a list of symptoms for hypothyroidism, but when my blood was taken, it was still 'within normal limits' although at the low end of the range. I therefore did not qualify for assistance from my G.P.,

, a friend at the school gate persuaded me to get permission to see Dr. Skinner. Her sister had been prescribed HRT by her G.P. which nearly proved fatal due to a lack of thyroxin being present and she felt Dr. Skinner had saved her sister's life. It was who persuaded me to go to Dr. Skinner's clinic and accompanied me to my first appointment.

Dr. Skinner was extremely thorough. I was a registered nurse at the time and well aware of the time constraints on the medical profession. I was given a one hour appointment and was thoroughly quizzed and examined. This included having some more bloods taken.

Dr. Skinner felt that I was suffering from hypothyroidism and I was given a low dose of grain Amour Thyroid to start with. Within - it was as if someone had turned a light on at the end of the very long tunnel that had been my life!

I have had a life in the last years.

This has been due to a miracle, furthermore I believe this has only been possible due to Dr Skinner being willing to treat me for hypothyroidism. I have tried to go over to the synthetic thyroxin (under Dr. Skinner and my G.P's supervision) which the NHS provides, but my thyroid was unable

to process it. The medicine remained in the blood and I felt extremely unwell, I couldn't cope and felt immediately 'shut-in' again. My health and well-being are tied in to being able to receive the armour thyroid and maintaining the excellent co-operation between my GP and Dr Skinner. My GP has organised that my annual blood results are checked by Dr. Skinner so that they can be sure I am on the correct dose.

I can only say a big thank you to Dr Skinner and his team for their close monitoring, support and care over the years. I just wish the other 10 million people in this country, that are estimated to be where I was years ago could have the same chance I've had - a dedicated, professional Dr who understands, cares and is willing to put himself out for all his patients. Dr Skinner should be given an award. I don't know of any other doctor who would have worked quite so unstintingly for his patients as Dr. Skinner has done.

I would have no hesitation recommending doctor Skinner to others suffering in the same way and have done so on many occassions.

I hope this will help you to recognise the legitimacy of Dr Skinner's work, his professionalism and dedication.

Yours sincerely,

9th July 2007

Ms Patricia Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James's Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

Re. **Dr R B Skinner - Fitness to Practise Hearing 2nd July 2007**

I am a patient of Dr Skinner's and very concerned that he is having to undergo a Fitness for Practise Hearing. I have found him to be most careful and thorough in his care of my health, and he has kept in touch with my GP throughout. Without him my health and quality of life would be very poor.

I have been a patient of Dr Skinner's since 1[redacted]. I had been unwell since [redacted], although I was taking [redacted]mcgs of sodium thyroxine a day. GP's and specialists concluded I was [redacted], certainly not hypothyroid.

I heard about Dr Skinner's work through the Thyroid Society. I wrote to him with a list of symptoms and a brief medical history, including blood test results. He then asked for copies of my medical notes relating to my thyroid condition, and GP's clinical notes.

It was a great relief for me to meet Dr Skinner. He did not patronise me as others had done, but listened carefully to my symptoms, as well as checking my blood pressure, pulse etc. He said, in view of my symptoms, and medical history, I was hypothyroid, and probably had been for some time. He wrote to my GP, advising her he considered my medication was too low, and he also sent copy letters to me.

With my GP's approval, my dose of sodium thyroxin was gradually increased, and my blood checked regularly. Over time, Dr Skinner adjusted the dose, and suggested my trying the natural desiccated thyroxin, Armour Thyroid. I now take [redacted] mcgs of sodium thyroxine, and [redacted] grains of Armour Thyroid a day, much higher doses than is considered the norm. This has made a big improvement to my health. [redacted] I doubt very much I could have achieved this without Dr Skinner's help.

My GP arranges for me to have regular blood tests, and I send the results to Dr Skinner. On the most recent lab report provided by my GP was printed "Results suggest that the dose of thyroxine is correct". So, is in spite of the high doses of medication I take, the lab results show the dose to be correct.

I now see Dr Skinner once a year for a check up.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

cc Dr Skinner
Mr R Shipway

Ms P Collins, Investigation Officer, GMC
Letter of Support Regrading
Gordon R.B. Skinner M.D.(Hons.)
DSc. FRCPath FRCOG

Dear Ms Collins,

I first saw Dr. Skinner approximately years ago, after reading an article in the M.E. Society magazine about Diana Holmes. This publication having an excellent reputation, and my subsequently reading Diana Holmes' book, prompted me to contact Dr. Skinner. I had for sometime been unhappy with my supposed diagnosis by my G.P.
Dr. Skinner agreed to see not only myself, but my daughter and mother as well. The consultations consisted of a full assessment, both verbal and visual, followed by blood tests. The test results confirmed a diagnosis of 'Hypothyroid' in all cases.
Historically, up to the point of meeting with Dr. Skinner, Medical matters for my daughter and me had been very difficult and distressing:

1. My doctors had, and in many cases, still do, dismiss me as being either neurotic, or a hypochondriac, but I suppose that the first G.P. to enter this into my records prior to my seeing Dr, Skinner, has supplied others with a 'Quick Fix' reason to write me off without appropriate consideration or investigation. G.P's of both sexes have been dismissive and unhelpful, although some have been nicer about it than others. I have been told categorically, without any tests, that I do not have a 'Hypothyroid'; I have been told that there is nothing wrong with me, and in one instance, shouted at, in front of my daughter, ***No*** other Doctor has ever suggested any form of blood tests.
2. My daughter, who in early years, was diagnosed as having was years old when we first saw Dr. Skinner, and I wonder if her thyroid problem was diagnosed in her early years, she may not now carry such a label. What price a child's life?
3.

Our present, excellent G.P. is aware that we have been seeing Dr. Skinner, and has done blood tests which confirm that we are on the low end of low thyroid function. He was so pleased to see the improvement in my daughter on the medication prescribed by Dr. Skinner; he declared that "It was the closest thing to a miracle that he had ever seen".

My Mother, although diagnosed at the same time, unfortunately, continues to suffer, having been unable to gain any support from either her G.P. or Psychiatrist.

I was under the impression that the Hippocratic Oath was taken by doctors to confirm their commitment to helping their patients
Dr. Skinner has given us hope, help and some improvement to our health. He does his utmost to restore his patients to optimum health.
In my humble opinion, there are other members of the Medical Profession as referred to in this testament, who should rightly be put forward for investigation by the G.M.C. - and most certainly, ***not*** Dr. Skinner.
What more can I say? Other than: *Thank God we me Dr. Skinner!*

Yours faithfully,

R R H Shipway

14th July 2007

To whom it may concern

I have been a patient of Dr Skinner for a few years now. This is how I came to be treated by him and the results of that treatment.

Over years ago I was very unwell and after a few weeks was given a diagnosis of It was a very debilitating disease and when I was suffering from it
It took a long time to recover from it but I felt for years that I was never completely well again. Over the next few years I would turn up, from time to time, in the GPs surgery with what must have appeared to the doctor as a series of minor complaints but if you put them all together they made me feel generally unwell:-

These were the main problems and in the end I stopped complaining because one day when I listed a few of the worst symptoms the GP almost fell asleep as I read them out and certainly did not make eye contact with me. Years later a friend of the family who was a doctor heard me talking about the problem he examined my neck and said he was almost sure I may have a thyroid dysfunction.
Eventually we moved to our present home and I consulted my present GP and he took some blood tests and said the results were not that abnormal that he wanted to treat me. Shortly after this I read about Dr Skinner and asked my doctor to refer me privately and he did.

Dr Skinner spent a long time with me on that first appointment, thoroughly checking my symptoms and history. He prescribed pills for my under-active thyroid. and over the months that followed he increased the dosage a little at a time and eventually all the other symptoms either eased or disappeared altogether. Dr Skinner keeps my GP informed of my appointments and my GP has been prescribing for me. At first I saw Dr Skinner every months, then and now as my condition stabilised.

I do not know for sure whether the illness I had when I was younger had an effect on the working of the thyroid but feel that after years of going from GP to GP without any help with my problems there is a huge difference in me now and I regret the lost years. As the mother

and carer of a [redacted] I wish that I could have met Dr Skinner years ago. My husband feels that I am so much better now and believes, as do I, that this is all because of the excellent care and dedication of Dr Gordon Skinner.
I often wonder how many people are left untreated because of the number of GPs who could be ignoring the symptoms.

[redacted]

14th June 2007

[redacted]

8 July 2007

Dear Sirs

Ref: Dr. G. R. B. Skinner

I have been away for a while and have returned to find a letter indicating that Dr Skinner's fitness to practise is under investigation. I would therefore like to submit this letter in support of him and hope that it is not too late to be useful.

I suffered [redacted] years ago [redacted] From that time my health deteriorated gradually and I was treated occasionally for [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]. My GP looked at me and said that I looked as if I had [redacted] and that she was sure that I had underactive thyroid. My blood tests came back at the very lowest limit on the NHS scale but her senior colleague would not allow her to give me thyroxine as I was 'borderline' and if it was prescribed, all my prescriptions would be free from then on.

[redacted]

I checked CFS on the internet and found that I had some of the symptoms of the illness but many more of hypothyroidism. There was a link to a thyroid website and that is where I discovered Dr. Skinner's expertise in this field.

On speaking to my GP, she agreed to write to him on my behalf and [redacted] it was worth a trial appointment.

Speaking for myself, and my husband [redacted], it was the best decision I have ever made in my life.

Dr. Skinner's manner and professionalism could not be faulted. I felt as though someone was at last realising what a serious effect this illness was having on our day-to-day lives.

I was given armour thyroxine and after a few weeks began to notice a marked improvement [redacted]. I continued to improve and Dr. Skinner was a great support, taking telephone calls if I had any concerns as it was difficult for me to attend his clinics.

After a while on the armour thyroid, Dr. Skinner felt I should try the levothyroxine (synthetic thyroid) as I would not have to pay for it and my GP could now possibly prescribe it. I tried this for a few months but found that it gave me a lot of side effects and did not give me the same relief as the armour, which I tolerated well. I still rely on prescriptions from Dr Skinner and I have check-ups with my GP.

I am completely dumbfounded as to why the Dr's integrity or fitness to practise should be under scrutiny of this kind and would wholeheartedly like to offer our sincere and absolute support to someone who, in a very quiet circumstance, changed the lives of myself, my husband, my daughter and my small grandson, by accurately diagnosing and treating me.

I got back to work and was able to pursue hobbies and enjoy time with my grandchild and perform household tasks which had gradually gotten beyond me. [redacted] In my opinion, no-one is more fit to practise and when the Dr. is no longer there it will be a sad loss to the medical profession and to those of us who were helped by him when there was no other help.

This man has dedicated his life and his time to helping people with debilitating illness and does not deserve to be penalised in any way for doing so. He is a credit to his profession and a reminder of how doctors used to care profoundly for their patients, which is sorrowfully lacking in the new generation of the profession today. It would surely be a tragedy for all of us and a travesty of justice if he were to be anything but exonerated of all accusations.

I hope that my testimony will go some way, along with others, to assist you in coming to the proper conclusion of his case.

If you require any further information regarding my personal case, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

June 2007

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR MR. SKINNER

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Written below is an excerpt from a letter I wrote to Mr. Skinner a few months ago. He has been treating me for hypothyroidism for many years.

Dear Mr Skinner,

Let me tell you the good news. As you can see from the letter heading,

This is due in no small part to being successfully treated by you, with Armour thyroid. If you remember correctly, during my first consultation with you, I felt so bad that I feared that I would have to give up

I was not treated for hypothyroidism for years. When the NHS **DID** treat me, I was prescribed synthetic thyroid by my local doctor. **THIS DID NOT WORK** and I became increasingly ill.

I feared that I would be forced to resign my post as I could no longer function properly. My symptoms included:

Fortunately I still had the wherewithal to research other methods of treatment and contacted Mr. Skinner.

I have always found him to be nothing but professional and conscientious. He conducts a thorough examination during our consultations, contacts my G.P regularly and insists on regular blood tests before prescribing Armour Thyroid medication, monitoring my symptoms and bloods and prescribing accordingly

I would be devastated if Mr. Skinner was no longer able to practice medicine as he has literally saved my life and many others.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

17th July 2007

Mr R. Shipway,
RadcliffesLeBrasseur,
5 Great College Street,
SW1P 3SJ

Ms. P. Collins,
GMC.

KN/2005/0701/01

Dear ~~Sir~~, Madam,

I sent an email to the GMC on 3 July 2007, in support of Dr Gordon Skinner and I believe you have a copy. I wish to write a further testimonial in his support.

I believe I suffered from hypothyroidism for many years before diagnosis in [redacted] I began treatment with thyroxin. By [redacted] I was still most unwell, [redacted] I was also a Mum and trying to run a house! We were all struggling. The young doctor at [redacted] suggested it was all in my head and discharged me, as he said I had to be better on thyroxin. A friend urged me to see Dr Skinner and he changed my life! A T3 test revealed that I was not converting T4 as the result was on the baseline. Dr Skinner prescribed Armour thyroid as well as thyroxin. I found him so understanding and all those years of symptoms became clear to me. Dr Skinner wrote to my GP every step of the way and she monitors me very regularly with blood tests. After some months my health improved so much. A re-referral back to [redacted] to clarify my situation took me to see the endocrinologist who agreed that I should be on synthetic T3, but I told him I preferred to stay on Armour. He was unfamiliar with Armour but did not stop me from taking it and even asked me to send him more info about it.

I feel that Dr Skinner's approach is right. He listens to all the symptoms very carefully and notes the patient's appearance and tongue. The TSH test alone surely cannot be enough. I think every patient is different and needs different amounts of medication according to their individual needs. I think the treatment of hypothyroidism in this country is hit and miss and there needs to be so much more research into it, especially sub clinical hypothyroidism. Dr Skinner has studied hypothyroidism in such depth and realises that hypothyroidism destroys lives. He has given his patients hope!!!

I believe a lot of people suffer for years and years with debilitating symptoms which can vary from person to person. They can be given anti-depressants for years (this happened to my cousin) or they can be given unnecessary hysterectomies [redacted]. My own late father was diagnosed with profound hypothyroidism [redacted] These examples are just

within one family.

Dr skinner is trying to bring a lot more understanding to the treatment and diagnosis of thyroid conditions. If doing everything possible to restore a patient's health means being a good doctor, then Dr Skinner is certainly one of the best! As for treatment with Armour thyroid- well it has been around for a century! If I had to come off it I would be so ill again and I could not face that again! I am shocked to see Dr Skinner in front of a Fitness To Practise tribunal as I feel he is saving so many lives. I know I am only one of many people with similar stories to tell and if we are all saying the same thing there must be truth in it. I hope that as result of this tribunal Dr Skinner's good work will be taken more seriously and more money will be given for him and other doctors to do much more research into the field of hypothyroidism and chronic fatigue syndrome. Ultimately I believe that a lot of money will be saved with correct diagnosis and treatment rather than money being wasted on unnecessary medication and operations as a result of incorrect diagnosis.

I hope that this demonstrates the high regard I have for Dr Skinner.

Yours Sincerely

I have sent a copy of this to Mr. Shipway.
Please excuse print quality.

Ms. Patricia Collins
Investigations Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor St. James's Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

20-07-2007

Dear Ms Collins

I am writing to express my support for Dr. Gordon Skinner and his practice, with particular reference to the management of the condition of Hypothyroidism. I wish this letter to be noticed by all those involved in his 'Fitness to Practice' hearing.

We have the utmost respect for Dr. Skinner's professionalism as my daughter has recently benefitted from his clinical diagnosis.

My family have a strong history of Hashimoto's Thyroiditis but despite this evidence, it has been a long anxious struggle to get our doctors practice to recognise the deteriorating condition of my daughter. I was put in a position of watching her develop the same insidious symptoms and signs that I suffered needlessly.

For the past years I have taken thyroid hormone replacement and understand all it implies.

she was given no reassurance, medication or investigations such as a Ferritin Test which I believe is for a thinning hair condition.

Thanks to Dr. Skinner, is now on thyroid replacement treatment and her symptoms are improving.

I shall be always extremely grateful to Dr. Skinner's specialized expertise in the management of thyroid diseases and I sincerely hope that he will be allowed to continue offering his support to the many sufferers and their families.

Yours sincerely

2nd August '07

General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James's Building
79 Oxford St.
Manchester M1 6FQ.
FAO Ms P. Collins

Dear Ms Collins,

Re: Dr Skinner.

This is a letter of support for Dr Skinner and would require my personal objection to his fitness to practice hearing. He is probably one of the finest Hypnotist Doctors in the UK if not the world.

He is bold and slightly unconventional but he is dedicated to making his patients well. Dr Skinner really cares about his work and his patients well being. If your review Board could be a fly on

Contd/2

the wall of his surgery then if so would realise this.

My personal experience of Dr Skinner is that he closely follows blood results and clinical status. He always liases with my GP and asks for input. He is far from cavalier but he is brave unlike most Doctors when it becomes too difficult retreat into a shell and fob back with the patient.

I wonder how fit the Fitness to Practice Board is to sit in judgement on Dr Skinner. It must be difficult to find 'experts' who understand more about the thyroid.

I also wonder where the complaints are happy patients or jealous colleagues?.

When the GMC behaves like this, as it did with [redacted] another example of a dying breed of Doctor, it is acting like the closed shop bully boy organisation it is. Jealousy of fellow practitioners brings about unworthy witch Hunts

Contd/3

There is one thing you can guarantee about the majority of the Medical profession and that is they are like sheep. Regardless of its success practitioners will persist for years with one particular protocol until one day that treatment is discredited and then they all follow the next protocol until that is proven wrong.

They follow each new protocol as if it were just as ~~infallible~~ infallible as the last. Doctors are never brought to bear on this.

If any Doctor such as Dr Skinner or [redacted] Drift slightly from the Flock he is subject to trial. The pioneers are punished in the Medical profession. I feel sorry for the thousands of patients in future years as there is no evidence of pioneering thyroid Doctors coming through.

Relying on Blood tests is out of hand and with most Doctors the patient doesn't really need to visit the surgery. Whatever the blood tests say will given treatment

Contd/4

regardless of the patients symptoms. An eminent specialist diagnosed me as both 'Hypo' and 'Hyper' within few weeks with exactly the same symptoms and fiddling with the dose as a result.

Why can't the GMC just accept the success of people like Dr Skinner and leave them to do what they are good at; i.e. Making sick, depressed and desperate people well.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

14th August 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
Fitness to Practise Directorate
General Medical Centre
5th Floor, St James Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

It was with great sadness I read recently of the investigation against Dr Skinner.

I am writing to report that without Dr Skinner's help and support I believe I would not still be in practice and holding down a job. Without the prescription of Thyroxine, my health I believe, would have deteriorated further and I am sure I may have given up the will to live. Now years on I am very fit and healthy

In following my health deteriorated, The list goes on, but my GP at that time accused me of exaggerating my symptoms, begrudgingly gave me an off work certificate for my insurance cover when I told him I could no longer function safely and when I asked for some investigations and asked whether it could possibly be hypothyroidism lost his temper with me and told me that he would label me as having I then found my way to Dr Skinner and slowly began the road to recovery.

Medicine does not have all the answers but Dr Skinner has helped many people with the prescription of Thyroxine who would otherwise be 'couch potatoes'. He has been supportive, kind and caring and has rescued many people who otherwise would have no life at all.

I trust you will use this statement of fact at the hearing regarding Dr Skinner to provide evidence to state that he is a proficient and competent medical practitioner.

Yours sincerely

Copy to : Dr G Skinner

Mr R Shipway
Dr M Dudley

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 17 August 2007 11:03
To: [redacted]
Cc: 'ralph.shipway@rib-law.com'; [redacted]

Subject: FTP - Dr Skinner

Dear [redacted]

[redacted] I am neither a patient nor do I have any medical knowledge. I have, however, developed an interest and indeed sympathy for those patients in whom there has been a failure to diagnose hypothyroidism.

I am baffled that the GMC has brought this case and I am concerned that the Panel has not been presented with a balanced view. Dr Skinner has over 2,000 patients out of whom only one complaint, namely Patient A, has arisen. How many GP's can boast such a record? During the Hearing it was accepted that although this patient's treatment was started by Dr. Skinner, it was continued by both Professor Franklin, a senior endocrinologist and the patient's family practitioner. Why did they not stop it?

The impression [redacted] at the Hearing was that family practitioners in general are complaining about Dr. Skinner and are not happy with his treatment; yet only two of several thousand have complained. Every patient is now referred by that patient's GP and the treatment is continued in conjunction with the GP. As against two complaints there are letters of support from GP's many of whom obviously agree or are willing to consider Dr Skinner's method of diagnosis and treatment. A petition in favour of Dr. Skinner's approach has been signed by over 3,000 patients. These points should not be dismissed as irrelevant to the four cases in question and put forward only in mitigation. By that time it is too late.

There is surely a disturbing possibility that the Panel will be in a difficult situation if following a ruling of impairment they are then overwhelmed with evidence which might suggest impairment to be inappropriate. It is a salutary experience to sit in a waiting room day after day with patients all of whom believe their symptoms; it is an insult to their intelligence to assert that they are experiencing a placebo effect.

Not only is the livelihood, career and reputation of a doctor at stake, but also the future health of so many patients. If the voice of patients is not to be heard before mitigation, it is essential that the Panel is made aware of the broader picture before they come to a decision. It is surely a nonsense to suggest that this broader picture is not relevant to the case.

There is concern that the GMC may not be ensuring an environment which encourages academic debate unfettered by possible career detriment. Many believe that it is impossible to challenge 'the science' in the UK as the medical establishment simply closes ranks and adopts an entirely defensive position with even fatuous suggestion that a practitioner be invited to revalidation.

I urge you to ensure that the Panel is made aware of the above issues before they reach a decision.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

Your Ref: JM/2005/0701/01

15th August, 2007

Ms Patricia Collins
Investigation Officer
Fitness to Practise Directorate
GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL
5th Floor, St James's Bldgs
79 Oxford Street
MANCHESTER
M1 6FQ

Dear Madam,

RE DOCTOR GORDON SKINNER

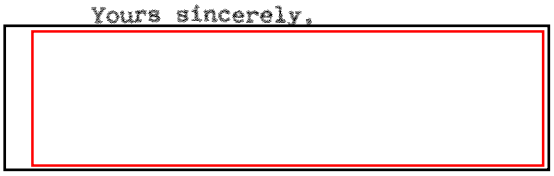
Thankyou for your letter of the 18th July, 2007.

In reply to your invitation to write a further testimonial to Dr Skinner, I and other patients are very worried that Dr Skinner may not be allowed to treat us if the hearing goes against him. I know I speak for all his patients when I say that we are appalled at the prospect of not being looked after by him; he alone has helped us to regain our full health after being abandoned by the hospitals and GPs.

Have you any idea what it feels like to be turned away and made to feel our illness is imaginary, and the distress and anxiety of our families?

There has got to be a more accurate basis for diagnosis than exists at present for those of us who fall outside the thyroid reference guide, which is all that is applied at the moment.

Yours sincerely,



cc Radcliffes Le Brasseur
Dr Gordon Skinner

Thursday, 16 August 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

I have seen Mr Skinner times in the past about my Hypothyroidism to which I have received excellent care and attention.

When I come to see him I was feeling very unwell with all the symptoms of Hypothyroidism and he took the time to listen to me before making any decision on treatment.

I have started treatment and I am feeling a lot better and able to carry on with the duties that I had found impossible to deal with before I first came to him.

I find Mr Skinner's treatment invaluable to patients who would not normally be able to get this from their ordinary GP's.

I urge you The General Medical Council to keep Mr Skinner practising and helping all these patients to a better quality of life.

Yours sincerely

Copies to: Dr Skinner, Mr R Shipway

Ms Patricia Collins
General Medical Council
5th Floor St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M1 6FQ

18th August 2007

Dear Ms Collins

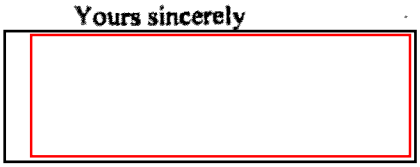
FTP – Dr G. Skinner

I am enclosing for your information a copy of an E Mail I have forwarded to Mr Jenkins following my attendance at the above Hearing.

As a member of the public I am mystified as to why the GMC has brought this case. The patients are telling me that the treatment Dr Skinner has prescribed has changed their lives. When challenged that there may be long term side effects they dismiss this as unproven. More importantly, they say they will happily run that risk rather than return to the quality of life they previously endured. Yet the GMC are seeking to strike off the doctor who is responsible for this turnaround in their health! It beggars belief.

There seem to be so many patients who believe they have been misdiagnosed that the stance adopted by the GMC cannot be sustained in the long term and will be exposed for what it is by 'patient power'. For how long do you believe the GMC can continue to ignore the voice of patients?

Yours sincerely



Ralph Shipway

21st August 2007.

Dear

One common ground both with Liberty and DOH and GMC is complete misinformation about Armourthyroid and it's stability. Also British Thyroid Foundation have bandied it around which stems from long ago before the invention of synthetic Thyroxine and the Pharmaceutical giants putting it about.

Clearly MHRA refer to Armourthyroid being kosher with Standardization to United States Pharmacopiea (USP) that the Forest brand is. This had been around for over 100 years where Levothyroxine has only been invented since the 1970's and is synthetic to boot.

DOH points out Person Centred Patient Choice in their treatments- where is this I had not noticed this being adhered to.

Also it would be best if anyone thinking of challenging this took great care to write first to Medical Records at hospitals and Managers at GP Practices under the Data Protection Act to get copies of all records and not to trust the spoken word of any doctor even over the phone or in person. Before any legal contact otherwise some records may disappear.

It would be worrying with NHS lawyers whom I believe can be vicious with any patient daring to challenge the systems and anything they can drag up to further embarrass and malign the patients character they will.

I can think of numerous NHS doctors who have been irresponsible and uncaring and giving out inadequate treatment protocols. But to report any puts the patient at great risk.

My son has had nothing but trouble with his health from NHS GP with the sudden withdrawal of Armourthyroid at the inception of Dr Skinner being called before the GMC and that my son had been prescribed for years- so many excuses abounded when challenged one of which is in writing as I wrote after putting in a Complaints procedure, not for the faint hearted to the GP to ask her to confirm in writing the reason behind it.

Thankfully it was not for the reason of cost. Fact remains my son was healthier on Armourthyroid than he has been since it's removal even with Levothyroxine and T3

through an Endocrinologist who on last visit told my son after previously verbally that if this did not work he might have to recommend his former treatment back but this last time he back tracked and lamely said I can't give it to you [redacted] and for my son to be told you can buy it on the Internet is not what Medical Care is supposed to be about. My son cannot afford it. He was quite rightly angry about it and he [redacted]

Dr Gordon Skinner correctly Clinically diagnosed both of us after many years of NHS incompetence with diagnosis and much serious ill health and very kindly coordinated my son's Armourthyroid treatment within NHS and now they have ruined [redacted] years of successful treatment. He had suggested at the time that we get further tests and told me about Diana Holmes book that I duly got hold of and after alternative diagnosis I had difficulty believing a new diagnosis but Dr Skinner noticed physical things that I had previously had to tell doctors in NS about and had some rude negating comments back. I did test from a Private laboratory and bingo my TSH was [redacted] and my son's a year later was [redacted] and we had chronic ill health and I was near dying. Armourthyroid works.

I look forward to hearing from you if you have any further questions.

Yours Sincerely,

[redacted]

CC
*Liberty London
*Ralph Shipway, Radcliffe Brasseur Solicitors, London
[redacted]

15 August 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

Fitness to Practise hearing: Dr G R B Skinner

I was dismayed to learn recently that the fitness to practise hearing process had been initiated and I'm writing to you to express my support for Dr Skinner, whose patient I have been for the past years.

Although I probably haven't been the easiest patient to treat, Dr Skinner has been extremely patient and generous with his time in trying to help me return to full health. I first came to Dr Skinner in , following diagnosis of Hashimoto's thyroiditis. I sought out Dr Skinner as I was desperate for help with chronic symptoms of hypothyroidism, which were not responding well to treatment with Thyroxine alone, despite thyroid function test results within the reference range. This meant that I had accumulated a huge pile of medical records as a result of attendance at numerous different outpatient departments for problems regarded as unrelated to the thyroid, had not been well enough to work full-time for ten years, I don't look like the textbook definition of a hypothyroid patient, which seemed to prevent doctors in other specialties with minimal knowledge of thyroid disease considering that my hypothyroidism might be behind the presenting symptoms that had led me to their doors. Over the years this resulted in many tests, investigations – some invasive, and several surgical procedures with mostly negative results and no improvement in symptoms.

At my first appointment with Dr Skinner he very quickly established that under-treated hypothyroidism was behind most of the debilitating symptoms I was continuing to experience. This he did by taking my pulse ny and taking a detailed history in a consultation lasting about an hour and a half. Dr Skinner agreed to a retrial of Liothyronine, which I had been hoping for,

After this first appointment with Dr Skinner I went home and cried with relief that at last here was someone who would be able to help.

Although I believe that almost every doctor I had previously seen across the various specialties did their best to help, Dr Skinner was the first person who really seemed to have an in-depth knowledge of hypothyroidism, its more subtle manifestations and more importantly a deep understanding of how devastating and insidious a condition it can be when inadequately managed.

Although we are still working towards finding the most suitable dosage/combination of medications for my particular set of symptoms, the T_3 has provided reliable and consistent relief

I am a very cautious person by nature and do not take decisions about health lightly, but the longer I have lived with the devastating effects of this horrible and grossly misunderstood illness, the more I have become convinced that Thyroxine alone is a very poor substitute for a healthy thyroid and the reference range an obstacle in the path to optimal health. It has been very hard for me to go against the establishment and stand up for what I need and I worry that there must be countless patients less able to do this than myself. I know how the system works and have seen how it can fail; I have been able with considerable effort, to challenge it. Most patients do not have this advantage – without champions like Dr Skinner, what hope do they have of regaining health when it is a struggle to get up from day to day, let alone challenge the very people who are supposed to be paid to help them?

This may seem a somewhat rambling and nebulous account of parts of one person's medical history, but the point behind it is that I firmly believe that without those of Dr Skinner's calibre, insight and determination to help, the future for thyroid patients will be very bleak. It seems certain that there will be no significant progress in treatment, with the consequent waste of possibly thousands of lives of patients effectively condemned to suffer very poor health, being shunted between outpatient departments with no relief for their symptoms (not to mention the cost to the NHS). It would be a disaster for hypothyroid patients for whom Thyroxine alone has failed to restore optimal health if doctors knowledgeable about Armour and Liothyronine and brave enough to treat with them, are prevented from doing so. If treating outside the confines of the reference range is an issue, isn't it possible for clinical symptoms to be monitored closely by patients themselves? I'm thinking of perhaps daily monitoring of body temperature, pulse and blood pressure, which I understand give more accurate indications of thyroid status than biochemistry results in chronic hypothyroidism. This would enable patients to act quickly to adjust their medication or seek early advice if they are not confident in doing this themselves. If there are patients who only feel well when their results are outside the reference range, wouldn't it be acceptable for them to sign an acknowledgement of informed consent accepting responsibility for treatment if some form of monitoring other than biochemistry results can be agreed upon? It seems important that patients should take some responsibility for involvement in their treatment, in decision making, progress monitoring and reporting back.

Since the first time I met Dr Skinner I have lived in fear of hearing that he might retire, having come to regard him as a lifeline to future health. Whatever the issue behind the hearing, I hope you will be able to arrive at a solution that enables Dr Skinner and any like-minded colleagues to continue to practise with a broader range of medication and a more flexible approach to evaluation of progress that doesn't merely rely on biochemistry results. Moreover, I hope that this more enlightened approach to the management of hypothyroidism will become the standard by which all GPs are taught and the sooner this happens the better.

In conclusion, it seems to me nothing short of a scandal that so many patients are left to suffer as a result of poor dissemination of information about the range of medication available to treat hypothyroidism and the dangers of the current reference range based approach to treatment. GPs need much more in-depth training in the complexities of thyroid disease and Endocrinologists should be encouraged to listen to their patients rather than being slaves to the reference range. In considering Dr Skinner's case, please bear in mind that the established approach to the management of hypothyroidism is failing patients daily. We are as deserving of good health as anyone else, but many of us are too ill or too defeated to keep pushing for the help we need. It shouldn't be the case that those who help us regain our health via unconventional means have to risk jeopardising their medical careers in the process, when in so doing they are not only giving us back our lives but also relieving the NHS of a considerable burden of ongoing care.

Yours sincerely

cc: Dr GRB Skinner
Mr R Shipway

[redacted]

17th August, 2007

Dear Ms Collins,

Your Ref: KN/2005/0701/01 Re: Dr Gordon Skinner

Thank your for your letter dated 3rd August in response to mine of 5th June. Since my original letter I have actually had an initial consultation with Dr Gordon Skinner (having finally, after [redacted] years of dismal treatment of my hypothyroidism, abandoned all hope of the NHS ever doing anything that might help restore my health)

[redacted]

What a difference then to be seen by Dr Skinner and to discover that, as I suspected, I am not a mad, delusional woman who just thinks there's something wrong with her. How did Dr Skinner conclude this? Well, he asked me lots of questions about my medical history, my symptoms and how these affected me. He listened to me and he looked at me (rather than at the computer screen that GPs always seem to find endlessly fascinating – how are they supposed to notice their patient is not looking well?) He also carried out some minor physical examinations, including temperature which, although it can be a good indicator of hypothyroidism, no one in the NHS, not even the specialist Diabetes and Endocrinology Dept, has done before.

Although Dr Skinner was interested in my blood test results, this was not, as is the case with the NHS, the only area of concern. What, after all, is the use of so-called 'normal range' blood test results if the patient continues to feel unwell? I have always felt during NHS consultations, with its singular emphasis on the blood test result, that there was actually no need for me, the person, the individual, to be present. They might as well just cast an eye over the blood test result and then write to me.

Dr Skinner is providing an invaluable service for all those patients with undiagnosed, misdiagnosed or incorrectly treated hypothyroidism that the NHS, for reasons best known to itself, refuses to (although the transcripts from the hearing in July do give some clues!) i.e. treating them, not their blood test results.

I only saw Dr Skinner [redacted], so at this stage cannot say what effect the recommended treatment will have. What I do feel at the moment is validated and hopeful. Validated that this illness is real and hopeful that, at last, it can be treated adequately enough to give me back some quality of life. All the NHS has managed over the past [redacted] years is to sustain my ill health, which subsequently led to the loss of my career, and give me negative labels.

It is disgraceful that Dr Skinner, and other Doctors like him, are being targeted and hounded for, God forbid, treating patients with respect and helping them to get well. From my own viewpoint, there is absolutely no comparison between the treatment I have received from the NHS and from Dr Skinner and if there is any fitness to practice to be called into question it is certainly not Dr Skinner.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

ccs. Mr. R. Shipway, Radcliffe le Brasseur, 5 Great College St. Westminster, London, SW1P 3SJ.

Dr. G. Skinner, [redacted]

[redacted]

27/08/07

Ms. Patricia Collins
Fitness to Practice Committee
General Medical Council
350 Euston Rd
London NW1 3JN

Dear Ms Patricia Collins,

I write in support of Dr Gordon Skinner MD DSc FRCOPath FRCOG, who has treated me for Hypothyroidism for the last [redacted] years.
I am overwhelmed with sadness that such a dedicated and professional person of his calibre is being subjected to allegations of impaired fitness to practise to the point of putting patients at risk. On the contrary, it is evident that the person put most at 'risk' in pursuing his quest to help fellow man is himself, as he frontlines the battle against the apathetic attitude of other medical practitioners.
When I first approached Dr. Skinner in [redacted] I was almost on my knees with debilitation following [redacted] Despite my repeatedly expressing anxiety to the doctor that all my other symptoms pointed to me being Hypothyroid, I was 'reassured' that my blood results were 'normal'. [redacted]
I believe I had a case to be answered on that occasion should I have approached the GMC. Instead I made an appointment with the very highly regarded Dr. Skinner, and through careful and professional consultation I was soon on the road to recovery. My family testify to this remarkable improvement in my health, and my mother who has since passed on often said that she thought that I was dying before treatment.

I can only imagine that for every one person who would 'allege' that they have been put 'at risk' for whatever reason through Dr. Skinner, there are thousands of others who should be taking the decision to complain to the GMC and bring to light NHS neglect and mispractice in the dangerous treatments/ non-treatments received while suffering the clinical symptoms of Hypothyroidism.

I am such a patient, and perhaps I am responsible in some way for allowing the status quo to continue by accepting the neglect. I rested in my laurels after Dr. Skinner appropriately diagnosed and treated my condition. I am one of thousands who depend on his expertise and willingness to offer a unique service where every patient is known personally. Every patient matters. I value the fact that I am not just an 'illness', but a person who has the right to optimum health. That is how Dr. Skinner thinks, and serves, as he carries out his duty to his patients.

I cannot accept that this exceptionally gifted person could be struck off, and I register my concern now in the hope that justice will be done. I can only pray that there will be a move to commend rather than condemn this man.

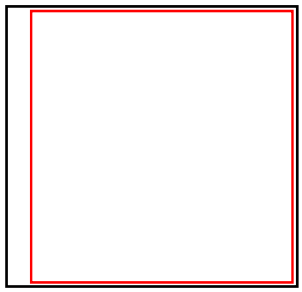
The GMC have a responsibility to consider, that perhaps professional jealousy plays no small part here. It is apparent at even GP level. Following referral to an NHS Consultant Endocrinologist I learned this sad fact. I didn't ask to be referred, and felt in good health, however, with the promise of 'sensitivity' of my 'plight' in not having the same rights as other NHS Hypothyroid patients I agreed to attend. My experience opened my eyes to the way the Medical profession 'Hoodwink' patients, in my case into making a case against Dr. Skinner. I have been approached by meddlesome medics who quite clearly want to make a name for themselves at the expense of my health. I am disgusted at such interference, [redacted] I am perfectly aware of the dirty tactical efforts employed by these people. They had their chance to diagnose my illness.

I trust Dr. Skinner one hundred percent and know without doubt that his heart is to see people well. I have yet to meet another like him.

I will finish now, and thank you in anticipation that you will consider the above testimony based on truth. My husband and I would be fully prepared to be questioned on oath if this would be of any help.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]



Patricia Collins
Investigation Officer
Fitness to Practise Directorate
GMC 5th Floor
St James Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

August 28th 2007

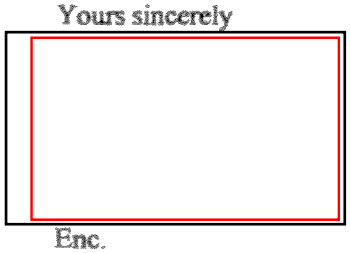
Dear Patricia Collins

Please find the enclosed copy of a testimonial letter sent to the GMC dated June 30th 2007.

I am perturbed that evidence of testimonials sent in favour of Dr G Skinner's practising methods is not being heard at the fitness to practise hearing in his defence. I can only speak for myself but I was so ill before I was fortunate to find this private doctor who was able to cure my debilitating illness, which he found to be an under active thyroid, when no other NHS doctor could, even after extensive NHS medical investigations.
People with an illness like myself have not got a somastoform disorder as Prof A Weetman states i.e. mental illness, just the will to live and get well again, which is not a cheap option when having to obtain help in the private sector. However. The fees paid for the return of good health by Dr G Skinner has been worth every £££££.

Dr Skinner's methods should be used by the doctors and consultants serving the NHS, as there must be a lot of sick people out there who cannot find such a doctor or haven't the finance to fund private treatment. If Dr Skinner medication prescribing is stopped there will be a lot of ill children and adults, yet again. Therefore.
Testimonials written in Dr G Skinner's favour have to be heard at the GMC Fitness to Practice hearing, to be fair to the man who has *not* failed his Hippocratic oath.

Yours sincerely



Enc.

29th August 2007

Dear Investigation Officer

Please find enclosed letter and attachments as sent to Dr [redacted] Consultant in Diabetes and Endocrinology and his reply.
At his suggestion I am also sending copies to Mr R Shipway of Radcliffes Le Brasseur and to Dr GRB Skinner

Yours truly

[redacted]

Encs

Dear

Thank you very much for your letter. It is obvious that Dr Skinner has made a huge improvement, for the better, in your life. I think it would be far more powerful if you were to send your very good letter to the GMC directly and also to Dr Skinner.

Given that I last saw you in I am not sure it would be entirely appropriate for me to write to the GMC as it has been quite a while since I saw you. I hope you understand this.

Yours sincerely

DR
CONSULTANT DIABETOLOGIST

Copy

1st September 2007

Mr. Alan Jenkins,
c/o Mr. Ralph Shipway,
Radcliffe Le Brasseur,
5 Great College Street,
Westminster,
London SW1P 3SJ

Dear Sir,

Dr. Gordon Skinner re G.M.C. Fitness to Practice

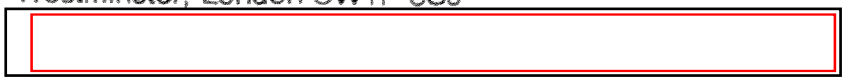
I once again feel it necessary to write in support of Dr. Skinner. Dr. Skinner has brought me back to health and my great anxiety and fear is that left to N.H.S. treatment I will once again regress back to the dreadful state I was in prior to Dr. Skinner's treatment. I can not stress this enough and without Dr. Skinner I am in great fear of relying on the accepted treatment by the N..H.S. of undertreatment resulting in my slow deterioration, leading to total disability, stroke or heart attack. Dr. Skinner has saved me from these conditions so far and until the general medical profession understands and realises the treatment we are given is of little use, the future for most sufferers of hypothyroidism will be very dismal and lead to much unnecessary suffering and early death.

I do not think it is uderstood by the medical profession how many patients will be affected and how big a problem this is.

Yours faithfully,

Copies to:-

Dr. Mark Dudley, 33 Cavendish Sq., London W1G OPS
Mr.Ralph Shipway, RadcliffeLeBrasseur, 5 Great College St.
Westminster, London SW1P 3SJ



[redacted]

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

30th August 2007

Dear Ms Collins

Dr. G R B Skinner MD(Hons) DSc FRCPath FRCOG
Fitness to Practice Hearing

I understand that the Fitness to Practice hearing involving Dr G R B Skinner is to resume on 3rd September.

I wish to add my voice to those of Dr Skinner's patients who have already expressed their support for him, and who would not enjoy good health without his successful treatment for hypothyroidism.

[redacted] By [redacted] I was hardly any better and I asked my GP for a blood test, and the result showed "borderline hypothyroidism" according to the NHS biochemist's/GP's readings. I was told I would not be treated for this and the thought was that I had [redacted] and I was referred to a consultant at the [redacted] Hospital. At our meeting, he told me I had [redacted] before any discussion happened, and referred me to one of his team for [redacted]

When I was first told about the "borderline hypothyroidism", I looked up information about the condition, and was amazed to find that I had had many of the symptoms for a period of about [redacted] years. [redacted] and GP's about various symptoms, which had always been treated quite separately. My GP would not discuss my symptoms, and would only go by the blood test results, and would not prescribe thyroxine.

I heard about Dr Skinner, and asked my GP if she would refer me to him, which she duly did in [redacted]. Dr. Skinner considered my blood test results and my symptoms, and prescribed thyroxine at a low level, subsequently building up as he monitored my condition. What I have to report

is that from then onwards my energy levels picked up and I enjoyed improvements of other symptoms, and over several months of treatment I knew I could consider returning to my job.

I absolutely believe that Dr Skinner's treatment for hypothyroidism has enabled me to return to a full and demanding life – something I could not have contemplated back in when I was told I had

As the senior partners of my local surgery advise my GP not to prescribe me thyroxine because of the difference of academic opinion and an unwillingness to acknowledge Dr Skinner's repeated success in treating hypothyroidism – then, if Dr Skinner were found "not fit to practice", I am greatly concerned that I should no longer be able to obtain a prescription for the thyroid replacement medication I need, and my health will be impaired.

Dr Skinner has always monitored my progress and written to my GP after each consultation. I know he has undertaken research, and I have read his book. I considered very carefully all aspects of the situation before agreeing to his treatment, but I believe that without his treatment I would not enjoy my current good state of health.

The outcome of this hearing is of huge importance and great consequence to me – and many, many people like me.

Yours sincerely

Copies to:
Mr R Shipway, RadcliffesLeBrasseur, 5 Great College Street, Westminster, London SW1P 3SJ;
Dr G R B Skinner MD(Hons) DSc FRCPath FRCOG,

31 August 2007

Ms Patricia Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St. James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
MANCHESTER
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

Ref: Dr. Gordon R B Skinner, MD(Hons), DSc, FRCPath, FRCOG

I write in support of the work of Dr Skinner with patients with thyroid disorders, in particular those who are hypothyroid. I understand he is under scrutiny by the GMC and central to the concerns are his procedures in respect of inappropriate prescribing in the treatment of hypothyroidism. I wish also to draw attention to the ineffectiveness of the tests currently in use which, in many cases, fail to show up the existence of thyroid underactivity. I had such tests years ago and the condition was excluded. I wish my then GP had had the courage of Dr. Skinner to look more broadly at other indicators and not be led solely by laboratory results. I might then have been spared the years of the misery of living life 'through glass', as it has been described, and received appropriate treatment.

I believed in the NHS and it is a matter of dismay that when in I really needed the help of NHS Doctors I found none who could help me. I went the rounds of specialists and even complementary practitioners for a diagnosis of my distressing symptoms, but to no avail. It is a lonely place to be – feeling ill and not knowing what is wrong. Thus, not only is the condition itself difficult to live with, it also puts a strain on relationships and can lead to reclusiveness.

It was by pure chance that I saw a checklist of symptoms indicating hypothyroidism. This was from a colleague who had been to see Dr because she was concerned about a possibly underactive thyroid, despite blood tests apparently showing otherwise. There in the check list were all fifteen of my symptoms, including

I then saw Dr myself, privately of course, and he had no hesitation diagnosing the disorder basing his findings on my symptoms, reflexes and temperature – especially first thing in the morning. He also took account of physical features This was very much along the same lines as the procedure employed by Dr Skinner. Dr previously also under scrutiny by the GMC, understandably retired and I, like many of his patients, was left high and dry and in despair.

I was fortunate to discover Dr Skinner through Thyroid UK and transferred to him. Initially I was treated successfully with Thyroxin, as it was then called. The Thyroxine on its own became less effective and Armour Thyroid was combined with Thyroxine. At present I am on a combination of Armour Thyroid and Tertroxine. Overall I am about 95% normal and I am grateful for that, although over the years I have come to understand that even with overall improvement there can be setbacks, especially in response to any onslaught on the system – in my case, so far, a severe bout of flu and an anaesthetic.

Now that I understand the situation nationally I am full of admiration for Dr Skinner's courage in questioning the narrow rigidity of many of his colleagues in being guided solely by blood test results that indicate normal thyroid activity, despite the patient clearly being ill. The failure to look at the broader overall picture and be bound purely by blood test results is *one of the biggest scandals* of the medical profession. My heart goes out to those people who have not been as fortunate as me in finding two doctors who have been brave enough to put their patients' needs first and thus risk the wrath of the medical establishment.

In closing I would request that, whatever the outcome, Dr Skinner's patients are not left high and dry. I recall the desperation I felt when Dr gave up. Where on earth was I supposed to go? My thyroid test results show 'high' and I have no doubt my GP would not even prescribe Levothyroxine through the NHS, because of that. In my dealings with Dr Skinner I have always found him to be professional and caring. I have total confidence in him and I am sure you will understand that I am terrified of returning to living my life 'through glass', should I be unable to continue treatment.

I feel that this action against Dr Skinner is completely unjustified and, frankly, disgraceful. The whole issue of hypothyroidism and the lack of availability of appropriate treatment within the NHS need unprejudiced investigation – not the pillorying of an individual doctor.

I should be pleased to give any further information you may require should you, or anyone else connected with this issue, care to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Cc: Dr G R B Skinner
Mr R Shipway, Radcliffes Le Brasseur

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James's Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

4th September 2007

Re; Gordon R B Skinner

Dear Ms Collins

I would like to write to you showing my support for the work Dr Skinner does in the diagnosis and management of hypothyroidism.

I suffered with hypothyroidism for many years and every time I had a blood test my GP keep saying the results were normal. This I could not understand because I have a family history, both maternal and paternal, of thyroid problems and realised I was showing the characteristic family traits regarding this illness.

Finally I became so ill I could barely function when an informed college told me of Dr. Skinner and the work he did.

That was in and I have been under his caring, careful guidance, along with my own doctors blessing, ever since and have returned to full health.

My twin sons have inherited hypothyroidism and they also have gained from Dr Skinners work.

It would be unfortunate if note wasn't taken of the many people Dr Skinner has helped in this way and his findings not given the recognition it deserves.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Hiley (0161 923 6314)

From: Patricia Collins (020 7189 5145)
Sent: 07 September 2007 16:54
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: Dr Skinner

Dear [redacted]

Thank you for your email in support of Dr Skinner. I have forwarded it on to Dr Skinner's solicitors as it will be their decision, in discussion with Dr Skinner, whether they wish to present it to the Fitness to Practise Panel as part of Dr Skinner's defence.

Yours sincerely
Patricia Collins

From: [redacted]
Sent: 29 Aug 2007 12:15
To: Patricia Collins (020 7189 5145)
Subject: Dr Skinner

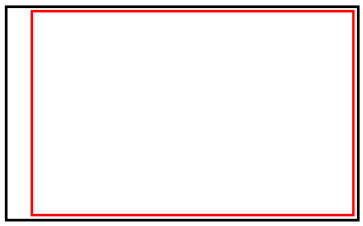
Dear Patricia Collins I have recently heard of the hearing against Dr G Skinner and hope that this e-mail will not be too late to be read out at the hearing.

Like many others, Dr Skinner has been responsible for my return to health after a diagnosis of [redacted]. and the loss of my job and career. Without his care and wonderful ability to listen, I would still be ill. A small dose of thyroxine has kept me well. Dr Skinner always been advised to work with my GP, which I do now; but for years, my GP practice refused to listen. I now have a wonderful new career and cannot thank him enough.

I request that this letter be read at the hearing.

Many thanks, [redacted]

Ms.P.Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FG



9th September 2007

Dear Ms.Collins,

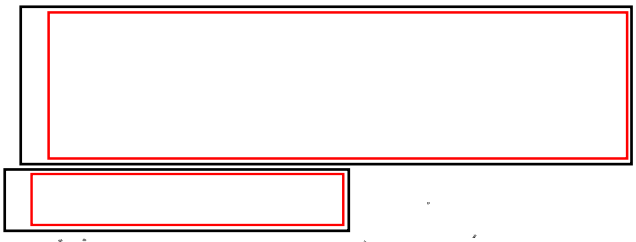
Firstly, my apologies for the delay in writing to you about Dr. Skinner, re: Fitness to Practise Hearing that commenced on the 2nd July 2007.

Secondly, and because of Dr. Skinner, I have a life. I could write at length at the difference in my life, before and after being prescribed thyroxine by him. But my statement says it all; I now have a normal life.

Dr. Skinner has at all times been professional and informed my GP of test results. I also have regular monitoring with my GP.

I am and will always be extremely grateful to Dr. Skinner for his courage and perception.

Yours sincerely,



5th September 2007

Dear Ms Collins

Re the diagnosis and treatment of clinically hypothyroid but bio-chemically euthyroid patients

As you are aware Dr Skinner is before the GMC, because he has dared to use his expertise and intelligence, rather than follow BTA guidelines which are out of date, at best misleading, if not completely erroneous. I am concerned that the GMC are in the process of 'shooting the messenger', bowing to the establishment rather than standing up for patients who at present are denied diagnosis and therefore denied treatment and support.

I enclose copies of letters, one was sent to Liberty, the Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Dr Skinner, and to Mr Shipway of RadcliffesLeBrasseur. **The other is a reply from the *Minister for Health* who clearly states in her letter that it is considered good medical practice to rely on clinical history and examination, in addition to blood tests, in the diagnosis and management of hypothyroidism.** I will be forwarding a copy of this letter to Mr Shipway and to Dr Skinner.

The BTA may want to inform their practitioners of this good practice. At present, practioners feel quite wrongly that they can only diagnose by blood test alone. It does rather negate the complaints made about Dr Skinner by the two GPs and the pharmacist.

I will be correcting the Minister for Health in her beliefs re Armour Thyroid (see information in letter to Liberty). It just demonstrates the difficulties we as patients face when false information is printed by the establishment who hold the power.

Yours sincerely

28th August 2007

Dear Sir or Madam

Request for help to fight for the human rights to diagnosis and treatment for bio-chemically euthyroid but clinically hypothyroid people in UK

There is a major problem with endocrinology in this country for the sufferers of hypothyroidism (frequently erroneously diagnosed as ME), particularly for those who are unable to use the thyroid hormone they make, but also for those who do not produce enough. In the past, patients were diagnosed by clinical picture, signs and symptoms, and family history. Then a blood serum test was introduced. It was never intended to be the sole diagnostic criteria, or the gold standard by which people were assessed. It has become just that, and ignores the fact that every individual person has their own reference range. In addition, the blood test only assesses the inactive T4 within the blood. An assumption is then made that the active T3 is 1) being converted from it and 2) the receptor cells are present and can receive them. This assumption is made even if the person is suffering from an overwhelming clinical picture of hypothyroidism. There is a urine test which can measure cellular activity, but this is not available in the UK.

To make matters worse the blood test reference range in the UK is the widest in the world. In the USA it was halved some years ago and as a result millions of people were diagnosed and released from a life of invalidism. In the UK the British Thyroid Association are looked to by GPs and endocrinologists for their guidelines to good practice. Their guidelines are out of date, erroneous and misleading, and certainly not in line with the latest research. They are however, aggressive in maintaining the status quo, so much so that a culture of fear has developed within the medical profession, and GPs dare not trial clearly sick people with thyroid supplement, for fear of being hauled before the GMC.

I am the mother of two sons, wrongly diagnosed [redacted] as a result of the British Thyroid Association (BTA) guidelines, and left to a life of unnecessary invalidism. My eldest son [redacted], became ill following [redacted] from which he simply did not recover. He was seriously ill for [redacted] years, [redacted]

[redacted] years later, we found a private doctor, Dr Skinner, a virologist, who has been treating and bringing people back to optimum health, using thyroid supplementation. He diagnoses people using the blood serum test, but crucially, also the patient's clinical picture and family history. Within [redacted] years of treatment with Armour Thyroid, a natural porcine extract, [redacted] is in good health. [redacted]

With such a good outcome you may wonder why I am writing to you. There are two doctors and one pharmacist who have complained to the GMC, concerned that Dr Skinner is endangering lives, because Dr Skinner has suggested treatment of patients who fall within the UK blood test reference range, but who have a clinical picture of hypothyroidism (referred to as clinically hypothyroid but bio-chemically euthyroid).

As referred to above, the blood test reference range, the sole diagnostic criteria in the UK, is the widest in the world, up to 5mU/l. In the USA it was halved to 2.5mU/l, in Canada 3.0U/l. There is research that suggests that pathological processes in the body start at 2.5mU/l. In UK even if you are beyond 5mU/l, there is a reluctance to treat until you are 8mU/l or 10mU/l. These are the guidelines of the British Thyroid Association, and GPs are fearful of losing their licence to practice, if they treat clinically hypothyroid but bio-chemically euthyroid patients. In the USA or Canada, many of these patients would of course be treated and not left so sick that they cannot function.

If Dr Skinner is prevented from prescribing as a result of the GMC hearing, my son not only loses clinical monitoring but also his private prescription, provided by Dr Skinner. The NHS in this area refused to prescribe Armour Thyroid on the NHS, because it is not licensed in the UK

This demonstrates more misleading information. Armour thyroid is licensed in the USA to USP standards by the FDA, levels of hormone are monitored batch to batch, and in Britain it was given 'grandfather' status i.e. in the 1960's when all medicines were assessed to tighten up control, those medicines that had not shown any side effects were allowed 'grandfather status' and did not require a licence. Armour thyroid was used extensively for over 30 years with no reported side effects so was grandfathered in.

The synthetic T4 and T3 used exclusively by the NHS had demonstrated side affects so had to be licensed. Some people need Armour thyroid, they do not tolerate synthetic T4, and may also need the additional hormones present in the natural product. **Research states that it takes only three weeks without medication for my son to return to the pitiful state he was in before treatment.** If the GMC rule against Dr Skinner this amounts to returning my son to a malevolent state of ill health and I wonder if it amounts legally to criminal damage.

I have heard that some GPs have refused to prescribe synthetic T4 as a result of Dr Skinner's appearance before the GMC. These people are now without medication.

Unless Dr Skinner is exonerated no other GP in the land will dare to treat us. It will put back change in the world of endocrinology, and I can't help but wonder if this is the purpose of the BTA, rather than patient welfare.

I have tried writing to my MP [redacted] (see enclosed letter). He kindly has written in the past to the Minister for Health, who merely referred us back to the British Thyroid Association. Their website is full of erroneous advice, outdated information, and takes no account of the up to date research, readily available which contradicts their position. For some reason, they hold the power, and when patients ask for help, those people then turn to the BTA, an organisation made up largely of diabetologists, not thyroidologists.

At present, there are many, many people, who are denied diagnosis and treatment. Patients are trying to raise an EDM in the House of Commons [redacted] Would you know of anyone in your area that would be prepared to send one to their MP, or could you help us with this process?

I also feel that this cause needs to be understood by the public at large. No-one knows that my son when just [redacted], having been ill by then for [redacted] years, day and night, and who knew by then that the doctors weren't going to help, looked at me with big blue eyes and said "You can't save me mummy, can you?" It took another [redacted] years of extreme suffering before we found Dr Skinner.

My husband (despite working 12 hour days) is trying to collate the research which shows without doubt that the BTA guidelines are failing patients. I am trying to put together a database of endocrinologists and we intend to send them the research in the hope of stimulating debate, and will request that they put their own house in order. My youngest son [redacted] now suffers from this illness (hypothyroidism is a genetic condition), we have now been caring for our children for over [redacted] years, and are exhausted, yet have this additional burden of having to fight for treatment.

There is so much more that I could tell you. I write to you because I feel that being trapped unnecessarily in a sick body when a tablet a day will cure you is not so dissimilar to being enslaved in chains. This is an issue of freedom and human rights. Not only are the BTA preventing NHS GPs from diagnosing and prescribing treatment even if there is a clear clinical picture, (the result of out of date *BTA guidelines), they are also going after every private doctor who dares to return us to optimum* health.

Dr Weetman, President of the BTA, sat in the GMC courtroom and listened to expert witness Dr Hertoghe give his evidence based research. He can turn his head the other way but he can never again say he does not know that the BTA guidelines given to endocrinologists and GPs is faulty and out of date.

Would Liberty help bio-chemically euthyroid but clinically hypothyroid patients in our fight for the human right to diagnosis and treatment in the UK? It would end so much needless suffering.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

[redacted]

Cc Gordon Brown MP
Dr Gordon Skinner MD (Hons) FRCPath., F.R.C.O.G., D.Sc.
Mr Shipway RadcliffesLeBrasseur

Copy for your info.

11 Sept 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
79 Oxford St
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dr Ms Collins

RE: Dr R B Skinner MD (Hons) DSc FRCPath FRCOG

I am a patient of Dr Skinner and was shocked to hear recently that he is under investigation by the GMC for alleged impaired fitness to practise, prescribing inappropriately and putting patients at risk. As I am not a medical practitioner, I will not attempt to dispute these allegations on clinical grounds. And neither do I know the person/s who have made these allegations, but what I can do is to make you aware of my story, in relation to Dr Skinner, and to inform you of the excellent treatment and support I continue to receive.

Approximately years ago, I became unwell with symptoms including

As I had always been a very healthy and active person, I could not understand what was happening…and so began years of regular visits to my (then) GP. However, I usually left the surgery feeling dissatisfied with the diagnosis and often in tears of despair. I received a variety of unnecessary and unsuccessful treatments,

My initial consultation with Dr Skinner proved to be a hugely significant turning point in the subsequent improvement of my health. For the first time in many years someone listened and understood how I felt – the relief was enormous! Since then, my health has gone from strength to strength, in particular, when he recognised that I was not converting from T4 to T3 and prescribed Tertroxine.
Although this caused another struggle with my GP, I now take a steady course of medication and feel I've been given a new life, which includes a new GP! And although I do feel resentful and angry for the many years I have suffered, unnecessarily, due to misdiagnosis and in some cases, refusal of medical practitioners to diagnose my hypothyroidism, I also feel incredibly grateful and thankful to Dr Skinner for helping me to return to functioning properly again and enabling me to take advantage of all that life has to offer.

I appreciate that you have a job to do and recognise the importance of having an organisation that monitors medical practitioners, but I would ask you to consider the enormous health improvements I have experienced, as a direct result of being treated by Dr Skinner, while carrying out your investigation.

I feel the medical profession would do better to acknowledge and reward Dr Skinner (and others) for their amazing achievements in the specialist field of diagnosing and treating hypothyroidism and spend more time monitoring the poor performance of some general practitioners.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer,
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James' Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

29th July 2007

Dear Ms Collins,

I am writing in support of Dr Gordon Skinner, who has been treating me since [redacted] with success.

When I first visited Dr Skinner, I had been suffering from many of the accepted symptoms associated with hypothyroidism for a number of years ([redacted] but with blood test results for TSH four times above the average for healthy patients and just within the distribution of TSH values. Consequently I was having little success within the UK medical profession for helping me to alleviate these debilitating symptoms and was being told to reconcile myself to accepting that this was how life would be for me. This was difficult to hear from my GP as I was [redacted] years of age at the time!

With a sibling suffering from Hypothyroidism and a daughter with [redacted] I was determined to find some help in order to improve the quality of life, which for me as a single parent is of the utmost importance to me and my dependents.

I have been greatly heartened by the support and marked improvement in my health and daily living as a result of Dr Skinner's provision of treatment. I regularly attended his clinic ie every [redacted] months and wish to continue to do so. Time is taken to discuss any changes or concerns I may have and for me to answer relevant questions . I provide blood tests regularly and have seen a gradual return to health.

Given that there is some debate about the norms of reference for Hypothyroidism within the medical fraternity both here and abroad, I can only strongly indicate my belief for the General Medical Council to view Dr Skinner as a concerned professional who has the best interests of his patients at the

core of his work and who respects the right of each individual to achieve optimum health whenever possible. It would be wrong therefore to arrive at any other conclusion.

I support Dr Gordon Skinner in his work.

Yours sincerely

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James' Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins,

re: Dr G R B Skinner, Birmingham

I visited Dr Skinner for a consultation and was concerned to hear of investigations into his competence. I write in support of him, based on my own experience.

I first contacted Dr Skinner in having been given his details by my GP who was at his wits end as to what to do with me.

I continually complained to my GP of a variety of symptoms which had plagued my all my life in varying degrees but which were worsening as I aged. Essentially I have been tired all my life, lacking energy or physical stamina. There is nothing wrong with my intelligence

I made notes in [redacted] of some of my symptoms in an attempt to elicit help from my long-suffering GP. That list for a bad day reads:

[redacted]

[redacted]

Then I was referred to Dr Skinner. he saw me and listened, he was very pleasant. He added comments about my [redacted]. He began to treat me with Thyroxine Sodium and I began to improve. He didn't actually promise anything but thought the trial worth doing. I began on [redacted] micro grams and now take [redacted] daily. [redacted]

It would be stretching the truth to say I have been reborn, but only slightly. I still get tired and am going through a bad patch at present [redacted] Apart from these two matters the other symptoms I listed above are essentially absent and I am coping in a way which I could not have begun to do in [redacted]. His treatment has worked.

I have, of course, been accused of it all being in my mind (and having been on the receiving end 'accused' is the right word) but it is not so. Were it simply hypochondria, symptoms would have reasserted themselves or been replaced by others. I seldom see my doctor now. I am not in the habit of calling or seeing Dr Skinner other than as necessary for checkups. He has worked wonders for me and I shall always be grateful to him.

I am aware that various authorities warn of dire consequences of taking this drug unnecessarily. By over stimulating the system it can kill you. [redacted] I am not burning up or manic. I am fairly well.

I seems to be a commonplace among medical people that anecdotal evidence proves nothing, and I can understand this to some extent as extraordinary coincidences can happen. But I am convinced that his treatment has helped me. If I stop taking the drug or reduce the dose I notice within days that I am less well. I have made this test on several occasions. If a good number of others give similar testimony our evidence has to count as increasingly valid.

I am happy to communicate further with you or your representative on this matter if I can be of any further help to you.

If my communication is a little long, I apologize, but it simply reflects my real concern in this matter. Dr Skinner asked for my help by general letter and will receive a copy of this, but was in no way coercive nor constructive of its contents which are true and accurate.

Yours most sincerely,

Copies:
Dr Skinner
Mr R Shipway

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James's Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

25th September 2007

Re; Gordon R B Skinner
22 Alcester Road
Moseley
Birmingham
B13 8BE

Dear Ms Collins

I am writing to you showing my support for the work Dr Skinner does in the diagnosis and management of hypothyroidism.

I have a family history of hypothyroidism and when I became ill with the classic symptoms of this debilitating illness I went to my GP to ask for a thyroid test. I was very surprise when the results came back as normal.

My health continued to deteriorate with further thyroid test still showing normal.

In I heard about Dr. Skinner and his work relating to hypothyroidism.

Since then he has been treating me and I have regained my full health and my life is back to normal.

Without his care I don't know how long I would have struggled on trying hard to live my life under very difficult circumstances.

Yours sincerely

3rd October 2007

RE: SUPPORT FOR DR G.R.B. SKINNER MD (Hons) DSc, FRCPath FRCOG

Dear Ms P Collins – GMC- Investigation Officer

I was very disappointed to learn that the GMC has decided to arrange a 'Fitness to Practise' hearing for Dr Skinner.

I am a hypothyroid patient of Dr Skinner's (Clinic since I have made continually excellent progress under his care. Dr Skinner has kept regular and detailed communication with my G.P and myself throughout, to discuss results and treatment. I have every confidence in Dr Skinner's practise and his motivation to not only make his patients better, but to return them back to full health.

It is important for you to consider why and how I came to be a patient in Dr Skinner's clinic. For many years I have had poor health as a result of an untreated, under active thyroid. Despite the typical clinical features I presented with (plus a familial link to the disease – Mother and Aunt), all the G.Ps who I consulted with were either unable, unwilling, or without enough education to look beyond my TSH result. Only when my TSH hit the 'abnormal' level, was I entitled to treatment.

Upon taking T4 treatment of various doses, I discovered that it had made no positive effect on my condition. Once again I was rebuked by G.Ps and one consultant endocrinologist for giving my feedback. During this time, I went back home

and registered at the same surgery as my Mother and saw her G.P. After hearing my difficulties to get effective treatment, he suggested that I go to see Dr Skinner.

This was the turning point in my treatment, because I finally met a specialist who took great effort to carefully investigate my general health and my thyroid. After trying another course of T4 and T4/T3, without good clinical response, we decided to try Armour thyroid replacement. I felt a significant improvement in my health, which has continued ever since. It left me wondering why I had not been given the diagnosis and treatment years ago?

My experience of struggling to get the correct diagnosis and treatment has made me aware of serious problems which the GMC should investigate:

1. The relevance and weighting of laboratory tests used to currently diagnose hypothyroidism, (specifically T4 and TSH) and the normal and abnormal ranges used.
2. Interpretation of laboratory results without consideration of the clinical features of the patient, by some doctors.
3. The limited treatment choice offered to patients, specifically Armour Thyroid.
4. The lack of understanding of the devastating effects of undiagnosed, misdiagnosed and incorrectly treated patients, by some doctors.
5. Out of date knowledge and understanding of the thyroid in general. More money is required for research and clinical studies.

I trust that you will think carefully about what action you take with Dr Skinner, and the direct consequences it will have on all of his patients. We need more doctors like Gordon Skinner, not less!

Yours sincerely

6th October 2007

Mr Shipway
Radcliffes
5 Great College Street
WESTMINSTER
London SW1P 3SJ

Dear Mr Shipway

I write to you in order to relay the circumstances relating to my daughter [redacted]'s illness and subsequent recovery.

[redacted] became ill in [redacted] age [redacted]. [redacted]

In [redacted] we took [redacted] to see Dr Skinner. We wheeled her into his surgery in a wheelchair where she sat slumped over. Dr Skinner asked for her blood test results. It appeared each time her blood was taken her TSH levels had gone up. His opinion was that [redacted] was severely hypothyroid. [redacted] began on a low level of thyroxine (T4) which was gradually increased. Dr Skinner was constantly on the phone to us as he was so concerned regarding her condition. He felt she should be in hospital and couldn't understand why she hadn't been admitted by the doctors.

The first sign of Chantelle's recovery was when [redacted]

Everyone who knows her is astounded as to how she has recovered. People have said to me she is like a walking miracle!

I know that miracle is thyroxine. [redacted] has seven Aunties on her Father's side all taking thyroxine. Her two half sisters also have to take it. The family history is very strong.

[redacted] says Dr Skinner saved her life. She says she cannot bear to think how she would be if she had not been given thyroxine.

I for one cannot thank Dr Skinner enough. He is an extremely caring person. He only wants to make his patients lives better.

[redacted] has also written to you herself saying how she felt and how thyroxine has

helped her.

I have enclosed two photographs - [redacted]

[redacted] has been receiving a magazine (AYME) which is for young people with ME/Chronic Fatigue. The stories in there are absolutely heart breaking. There are children who have had the condition for many years. They are at their wits end. How I wish Dr Skinner could try and help some of these children. Maybe not all need thyroxine, but I feel many would benefit from taking it.

I was told about Dr Skinner from someone whose son had ME for ten years. Like [redacted] he now leads a normal life.

Please let Dr Skinner continue doing this good work and hopefully his knowledge will be passed onto other specialists in this field.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

Enc

Dear Mr Shipway

I'd like to write how thankful I am to Doctor Skinner. Without him I seriously don't know where I would be right now..
Probably in my room.. In bed.
I can't explain how horrible and frightening my experience with was.
Sometimes when I think back when I was really ill .. I feel a feeling of panic.
Its so good to be better.. Doing normal everyday things.
Everything the opposite to what I was doing when I was ill.

When I started taking thyroxine I was on a low dose so the affects weren't very noticeable. However when the dose started to be put up I could feel little but significant changes.

It was a slow process but for most children and adults this can take years. So when after a few months I had dramatically changed not only in my physical health but my mental health it was obvious that the thyroxine was what made my recovery. The fact it was so fast and that for the rest of the year had made no improvement. It must of been a pretty huge coincidence that I started to feel better each and every day.

I have done so much stuff that normal recoverers don't start doing until years later.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

15th October 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M16FQ

Dear Ms Collins,
Re. Dr Gordon Skinner
I understand you are the investigating officer in Dr Gordon Skinners case and as such I am writing to you to pass on to the Fitness to Practise Panel that if they suspend or strike off Dr Skinner and I can no longer get my prescriptions for my thyroid medications from him and I return to my previous ill health [redacted] then it is my intention to seek legal advice and I will also be contacting Liberty to see whether my human rights to medical intervention are being denied by the GMC.
I spent almost [redacted] years going through the NHS system and was left totally frustrated and despaired of ever leading a normal life again but thanks to Dr Skinners refusal to bend to the current thinking on thyroid disease and the rigid adherence to the blood tests for thyroid function he diagnosed my hypothyroidism and prescribed me thyroid meds which have allowed me to return to work full time.My family and friends have all noticed a tremendous difference in my overall health and well being.
No one can comprehend the depths of utter despair that people with thyroid problems plummet to and if you take away the lifeline which Dr Skinner provides then you are condemning a lot of people to an existence not a life.It is hard enough coping with a chronic condition which most in the medical profession think is easily diagnosed and treated (which is not the experience of those who actually have it!!!),without having to start fighting again.
I could potentially find myself back to being unable to work again,feeling lousy everyday etc and be told that my thyroid bloodtests are within the "normal" range and sorry but the blood tests don't lie so you'll just have to accept this is the way you are going to be from now on...how ludicrous is that!
It is my sincere hope that the GMC will start to address the issues of people like myself who have classic thyroid symptoms but "normal" thyroid blood work and that instead of conducting witch hunts against doctors like Dr Skinner they will encourage wider research.
Yours Sincerely

[redacted]

Cc Dr Gordon Skinner [redacted]

Mr R Shipway Radcliffes Le Brasseur Great College Street London

16TH OCTOBER 2007.

Ms P Collins
Investigating Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James Building
79, Oxford Street.
Manchester.
M16FQ

RE, Gordon R B Skinner

Dear Ms Collins.

I am writing to you to show my support for the work Dr Skinner does in the diagnosis, and management of hypothyroidism.
I can say that under his care, I have felt so much better.
It would be most unfortunate if a note was not taken, of the many people Dr Skinner has helped and his findings, not given the recognition it deserves.

Yours Sincerely

[redacted]

21st October, 2007.

Ms. Patricia Collins,
Investigation Officer,
Fitness to Practice Directorate,
General Medical Council,
5th Floor,
St. James Buildings,
79 Oxford St.,
Manchester, M1 6FQ.

Dear Madam,

Fitness to Practice – Dr. GORDON SKINNER

I am writing in strong support of Dr. Skinner who has treated me for an underactive thyroid in an excellent and very professional manner.

Five of my close female relatives have suffered from thyroid problems and, although I had borderline blood test results, I was showing serious symptoms all connected with hyperthyroidism.

I can honestly say that my life has been transformed from someone [redacted] to someone who feels fit, happy and alive for the first time in years. Perhaps the effect this sympathetic treatment can have on people's lives and the complete transformation it can perform should be given your very serious consideration.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

c.c. Dr. G.B.R. Skinner
Rt. Hon. Paul Keetch.

[redacted]

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street,
Manchester,
M1 6FQ

24th October 2007

Dear Ms Collins

Re: Gordon R B Skinner, [redacted]

I would just to like to say that I support Dr Skinner. He has been a real help to me and without his support I would not be as well as I am now.

I think it's unfair that the way you feel is not taken into consideration when a diagnosis is made. A blood test surely should help to confirm a Doctor's diagnosis but I do not think the whole diagnosis should be based upon the blood test.

My symptoms have improved dramatically since I was diagnosed by Dr Skinner as having a low thyroid function. He has adjusted the dose of Thyroxin and Tertroxin over the years taking into consideration my physical symptoms and the results of my blood tests.

This I feel gives a more complete picture of my physical health.

Please allow him to continue in his worthwhile work.

Thank you very much.

[redacted]

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Copies: Dr Skinner and Mr R Shipway

Ms P Collins, Investigation Officer
General Medical Council,
5th Floor, St James's Buildings,
79 Oxford Street, MANCHESTER
M1 6FQ

28th October 2007

Dear Ms Collins

Gordon R B Skinner MD (Hons) DSc FRCPath FRCOG

I refer to the attached letter, dated 18th May, when I made you aware of how wonderful it feels to have my under-active thyroid under control; all credit to Doctor Skinner's thorough diagnosis and ongoing support.

I couldn't believe that someone like Doctor Skinner could be called to a fitness to practise hearing.

I've been struggling to understand how you can be taking such a talented doctor through such a process and thought it might bring a bit of perspective if I gave you some of my experiences of the real world of medicine.

What I'm trying to say is that GPs, Specialists, Surgeons and all other medical staff are doing the best they can in busy work situations – not to mention with the backdrop of what's happening in their own private lives. Doctors are human. What they need is our understanding and support – not to be penalised for an oversight. We also need one standard that applies across the whole of the NHS. If there was a consistent application of standards, how many hearings would there be a week, and how many doctors would still be practicing? Would the NHS still be operating?

I'm concerned about the outcome of the fitness to practise hearing on us, Doctor Skinner's patients; at the mercy of practitioners that neither provide his level/method of support nor have his extensive expertise. I think the brilliance of Doctor Skinner's approach is to be applauded and replicated. We need to encourage more doctors to be like Doctor Skinner. I think he's in the minority - don't single him out because of that.

Yours sincerely,

29 October 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St Jame's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

It is a complete travesty that Dr Gordon Skinner should be under investigation by the GMC.

Indeed it appears to me, and no doubt to all his other patients, that he is being punished for making us better.

I have so far wasted of my life so far battling with . Well-meaning but over cautious treatment by my GP has left me months at a time scarcely able to carry out normal daily functions, let alone participate fully in my work and family life. I had given up hope of ever getting back to health despite every effort on my own part to help myself with diet, exercise and complimentary therapies.

Thanks, to Gordon Skinner, I am now on the road to recovery and can look forward to getting my life back – both for my sake and the sake of my family.

Dr Skinner's approach to the treatment of hypothyroidism is not trailblazing – it is a common-sense approach. Far from the common patient experience of "tick box" medicine, his approach is steeped in his genuine desire to help his patients back to full health, based on his knowledge that, for most, this is an entirely reasonable and attainable goal.

This is all now changing and there is light at the end of the tunnel.

I passionately resent the implication of the GMC investigation that Dr Skinner is putting his patients at risk. Talk to us. We're the ones that count. Put doctors like Gordon out of business and you set thousands of people like me adrift and cheat us of a normal, productive, healthy, happy life. How can that be right?

Yours sincerely

29 October 2007

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James Buildings
79 Oxford Street
MANCHESTER M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

I am writing in support of Dr Gordon Skinner. Dr Skinner has helped my daughter [redacted] return to full health. [redacted] However, she became ill [redacted] and never seemed to recover. She steadily declined: [redacted] After research we discovered Dr Skinner and read about his work.

On reading about his patients and their symptoms, they could have been describing my daughter. [redacted] has been taking thyroxin for some months now and she is back to her usual self. [redacted] All thanks to Dr Skinner.

Her brother, [redacted], was almost a carbon copy. [redacted] My GP referred him to Dr Skinner in [redacted] and he is now taking thyroxin. He's starting to see an improvement. [redacted]

My youngest child, [redacted] is [redacted] years old. [redacted] He is now taking thyroxin and the change is remarkable. [redacted] There is no way [redacted] could keep up this regime if he were not on thyroxin.

I was diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue [redacted] years ago. I have suspected that I was hypothyroid from the beginning. However, even though my GP (throughout these years) agreed that my symptoms were consistent with this, my (many) blood tests showed me as "normal". I have slowly declined over the years. [redacted] My GP referred me to Dr Skinner in [redacted]. I am now taking thyroxin. My progress is slower that my

children but I do feel a change. Everyone tells me how much brighter I look and

My husband and I are trying to get the NHS to take over our treatment but we are being met with resistance. This insistence on using the blood test as a diagnosis rather than a diagnostic tool is condemning thousands of people to ill health. We have seen the change in our children and there is no way that we will accept that they have to go back to being ill. Me and my children need thyroxin and how dare the GMC try to prevent us from receiving it. It was my understanding that the GMC is supposed to protect patients' rights. This is not the case here; we are being condemned to ill health and a very poor quality of life by them. If Dr Skinner is suspended, where do my children and me get our medication? Our only option will be to seek legal advice and if that means take things further then so be it. We refuse to have our children's lives blighted by people who seem to have a very blinkered view on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Cc Dr Skinner,

Mr Shipway, RadcliffeLeBrasseur, 5 Great College Street, Westminster, London. SW1P 3SJ

1.

1st November 2007

Mr Shipway & Mr Jenkins,
Radcliffesle Brasseur
5 Great College Street'
SW1P 3SJ

Dear Sirs,

I have already written to you in support of Dr Gordon Skinner. I have been his patient since and I am seriously very concerned for myself and his other patients who he has so successfully treated, because if he is considered 'unfit to practice', what will become of us?

As I said before , it took years and years for myself to be diagnosed with Hypothyroidism, also my late father. No doctor during any of this time for both of us was admonished in any way for failure to diagnose our suffering, and I nearly underwent a total hysterectomy while I was so very ill, which would have been unnecessary. How many women have undergone this operation when hypothyroidism was the real culprit and they needed thyroxin? Was my father's tachycardia due to undiagnosed hypothyroidism? Again no doctor was held unfit to practice for their failure to diagnose him.

I did not get better on thyroxin and was told it was "all in my head" and it was Dr Skinner who put me on Armour thyroid which I could not live without as it changed my life.

The GMC has now surely had such a lot of letters like mine in support of Dr Skinner. Are they listening? Has Dr Skinner actually endangered the health of any of his patients? I think not. He is trying to make us well and he is succeeding, but his methods are different and this seems to be his transgression. Science has always moved on like this with pioneering work, differences of opinion, often denounced at first by the old school, then slowly accepted until it becomes mainstream.

The diagnosis and treatment of hypothyroidism has got to leave the Dark Ages! Far too many people are suffering and I mean whole families!!! My Mum and my husband would go along with that! Much more research has to take place. All these people need to be listened to. Why get rid of Dr Skinner when he is trying to help us all. Other doctors even endocrinologists also

follow his therapeutic strategy and happily endorse it -will they be got rid of too? When I told my endocrinologist at [redacted] hospital that I had seen Dr Skinner and was now on Armour thyroid, he showed an interest and certainly did not try to stop me from taking it. In fact I sent him some information about it.

This brings me to the GMC tribunal itself.

1. Why are non-experts in hypothyroidism comprising the Panel and advocating medical guidance? Why an Ophthalmologist and three lay members? Why is their no doctor who endorses Dr Skinner's therapeutic strategy?
2. Discourtesy during tribunal to Dr Skinner by not allowing him to ask questions, also not recording this in transcript.
3. Suppressing evidence and information relevant to the case and not allowing relevant witnesses to speak including Dr Lowe, an expert in the field . Patient B was not allowed to speak on her own behalf. Shameful!
4. Inaccurate and misleading information was supplied to the High Court of Justice, by the GMC.
5. GMC have made inappropriate requests for consent to obtain medical records from patients.
6 GMC's use of an 'expert witness', Professor AP Weetman who is a co-opted member of the GMC's own Education Committee and the current President of the BTA from whom several of the unfounded allegations have come. He is NOT impartial.
7. Yet the medical research presented by Dr Hertogue and others which was highly favorable to Dr Skinner and pertinent to the four cases in question, well it was dismissed!!! How fair is that!

I am asking, is this conduct by the GMC throughout the hearings fair? I personally am very worried indeed that it is not. I plead with the GMC to listen to Dr skinner's patients, many of which have spent much of their lives suffering both physically and mentally, underachieving in careers, and living with ruined relationships as other people are unable to cope with the depression and other psychiatric symptoms experienced by people with this disease. Does the GMC realise that there is mounting medical evidence demonstrating the many long-term dangers of not treating or under-treating Hypothyroidism.? If Dr Skinner is declared unfit to practice and "struck off", what will his patients do? apart from chain themselves to railings in protest!! If our treatment is withdrawn we will be ill again and in great despair, it is as simple as that!

If Dr Skinner loses his case it will be very unjust. Dare I suggest it may

have something to do with money? Didn't a doctor say that he would not want to support a woman all her life on thyroxin as it would cost too much? Might patients lobby for Armour thyroid to be available on the NHS instead of them paying for it themselves? Or is that another contentious matter?

Let us stick to the point and save Dr Skinner!!! I speak from my heart along with all those who know me and have seen my despair over the years, when I was so ill.

Yours sincerely,

2nd November 2007

Dear Mr Shipway

I am a patient of Dr Gordon Skinner. I remain convinced of his good judgement in treating me with thyroid hormone, despite the efforts of the GMC. I am so much better than before, and no other doctor has done anything except condemn me to a life of fatigue, shout at me and groan inwardly when I summoned up the courage to try again to get help. For nearly years I had to endure that, until Dr Skinner saved me.

Why is he vilified and torn down for making us well? What is the object of the exercise if not to make us well? I am now convinced it is professional jealously and plain obduracy on the part of others who do not now want to be proved wrong, but of course that sort of argument won't help, so I will now criticise the manner of the proceedings, because they have not been conducted fairly.

There are no grounds to criticise Dr Skinner for ignoring the guidelines when the guidelines themselves say the doctor "must make the management plan for an individual patient", and that "they are not definitive rules or regulations and should not be treated as such" (July 2006 UK Guidelines). The patient information leaflet for my thyroxine agreed, saying that dosage levels would be arrived at by considering blood chemistry or symptoms. If it even said "and symptoms" that is still fair enough. Dr Skinner does that.

I believe the Bolam Ruling is of relevance here. Dr Skinner has surveyed and found many endocrinologists have treated patients inside the 95% reference range and returned them to health. Many wanted to remain anonymous. That too is interesting. The GMC hearing refused to let this be heard or documented, suspicious, as it made a nonsense of the case against Dr Skinner. Add to these specialists the referring GPs who both send their patients to Dr Skinner, and continue his treatment afterwards, returning their patients to health. I believe there are about 4500 patients on Dr Skinner's list. That's a lot of GPs. Add also those who the GMC now wish to threaten by punishing Dr Skinner "as an example to others". That implies they are out there, *and* that the GMC is going to apply extra punishment to Dr Skinner. Since there are other reasonably minded and suitably skilled individuals holding Dr Skinner's opinion in this matter, the Bolam test is proved and the case against Dr Skinner cannot stand in law.

It is also a travesty, and brings the GMC process into disrepute, that several witnesses on Dr Skinner's behalf were not heard, whether by straight omission or the unavailability of video equipment at the right moment. This amounts to suppressing evidence. Note too that the expert witness brought on behalf of the GMC, Professor Weetman, can't be relied on to be impartial, being co-opted from the GMC's own Education Committee, and as the President of the BTA, the source of unfounded allegations against Dr Skinner. He also seems to fly in the face of his own opinion as previously published. As the impartiality and competence of expert witnesses has been a hot topic of late, I would have thought this is important where public confidence in this process is concerned. In addition the medical research of Dr Hertoghe, which support's Dr Skinner's methods, was dismissed. The GMC should not allow one witness and disregard another,

especially if it favours their final decision. The GMC has also supplied inaccurate and misleading information to the High Court about this case, and made inappropriate requests for consent to obtain medical records. Yet on the other hand, the decision of guilt is made without hearing the many patients who would speak in Dr Skinner's favour, because of exposing their medical details. I think that whatever a patient witness decides to say in a hearing they are obviously happy to divulge. There are thousands clamouring to speak on his behalf!

Also of concern is that Dr Skinner was tried, not by his peers, but an Ophthalmologist and Lay people, who while minded to be fair, I'm sure, could not be expected to fully appreciate all that is at stake here.

It is the stated aim, over and over, that public confidence is of prime concern. Nothing that has happened in this hearing gives me any confidence in the fairness of the process, nor in its ability to get at the truth of this matter. It seems designed to bring down a good doctor who achieves what others have not, and frankly, shows them up. It is a poor show and the GMC is failing the public by bringing this case, and in the way Dr Skinner has been treated, but most of all in its failure to the public interest it says it serves, for it is healing us that is the whole point of the exercise.

The blood tests at issue here have failed to demonstrate my own illness, either because they are statistically flawed, and there is good reason to think this, or that they are applied to a hormone level that fluctuates, which is also true. Consigning a patient to the 'don't treat' pile on the basis of a single result that may be different later that same day, without looking at symptoms, is madness. Yet that is where we are.

I have often been given pharmaceuticals with "lets see if this works" or "you seem to be suffering from x y or z (some hypothyroid symptom!) so I'll prescribe this" with no test for anything, and no warning of side effects. So there is a double standard where thyroid is concerned.

There was even talk at the last hearing of not treating because of the cost over many years! Thyroxine is very cheap. Perhaps it was the associated exemption from prescription charges that was being referred to. The new guidelines raise the top of the reference range from around 5 to 10. Perhaps that is to save money too. It can't be on the basis of evidence because the US has lowered theirs to 2.5. Under that regime I would never have been denied treatment, yet I am the same person. The goal posts just moved.

To paraphrase, my personal opinion is that if it looks like hypothyroidism, and it responds to treatment for hypothyroidism, then it is hypothyroidism! Let doctors get on with treating it.

Yours faithfully

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

5th November 2007
Ref: /GMC/Dr Skinner

Dear Ms Collins

Re Information in support of Dr R B Skinner

I have been a patient of Dr Skinner's since whose work I hold in the highest regard. From to I had struggled with the most debilitating symptoms . For years I suspected hypothyroidism so I requested blood tests but was always advised the results were within the range and therefore I was fine. I consulted many Doctors/ Consultants over the years to try and find out why I had a whole array of distressing symptoms going from being a successful business woman travelling all over the world to finding it difficult to get down the stairs in the morning and carry out the simplest of tasks. As I am sure you are aware there are many symptoms associated with having an under active thyroid and without listing them I experienced 75% of them between & .

I found out about the work of Dr Skinner and asked my GP at the time for a referral. My husband accompanied me to for the consultation as I no longer had the confidence to tell my medical history to another Doctor. All of my consultations had been in the private sector. Sadly so often I was treated very badly by the very people I sought a diagnosis from.

My consultation with Dr Skinner was a breath of fresh air, he was interested, sympathetic, took a great deal of time to go through my medical history, reviewed test results, gave his diagnosis and discussed a treatment plan and what I was likely to experience on the road to recovery. I saw him regularly in the first years and we discussed in detail my improvements and any concerns. Consultations were never rushed and he was one of the few Doctors I met who would really spend time understanding what the problems were. Once I was stable I saw him once a year as my GP took over my care. There was always an open door to return to Dr Skinner

should I need his assistance. Suffice to say there are no words that can really convey my gratitude. I am shocked and saddened that Dr Skinner is before the GMC in a fitness to practice hearing. I am sure like me there are many other patients who have a similar experience of his work and treatment.

I have not needed to see Dr Skinner since but had reason to consult him again last month. My annual

I therefore consulted Dr Skinner as my GP was on holiday and he again spent considerable time going through my blood test results and symptoms, confirming my thyroid was under active and suggested my current dose be increased. I then saw my GP who had immediately been updated by Dr Skinner of his recommendations and suggested treatment.

Had I not had the foresight to get hold of my blood test results I would be none the wiser as to why my health had started to deteriorate. I know from first hand experience that blood tests only tell part of the story. There needs to be sound clinical evaluation and this is where Dr Skinner helps many patients who would otherwise spend there lives in the misery of ill health. He gave me my life back and I am not exaggerating. I sincerely hope that Dr Skinner can continue the work he has dedicated himself to helping so may patients return to normal fulfilled lives. He will always be held in the highest regard by myself and family and never forget the impact he had on my life and those close to me.

Yours Sincerely

CC DR Skinner
CC Mr R Shipway

Patricia Collins
Investigation Officer
Fitness to Practise Directorate
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

2 November 2007

Dear Ms Collins

Re Fitness to Practice Dr Gordon Skinner

I am a long standing patient and supporter of Dr Gordon Skinner, unfortunately I am unable to attend the final days of Dr Skinner's protracted Fitness to Practice hearing so I hereby request that you and the panel take notice of my request for this letter to be read out at the hearing as a patient testimonial.

I will not set out my personal experience again in this letter, as, if the panel have correctly studied all previous documentation submitted to date, you will know that I have previously written in support of Dr Skinner, along with many other fellow patients, on numerous occasions throughout this process. These letters detail my medical history and positive experience as a patient of Dr Skinner. They also detail the woefully lacking, unsatisfactory treatment I received for my condition prior to seeing Dr Skinner.

I will summarise by reiterating that Dr Skinner has returned me to full health. I am no longer a burden on the NHS, I lead a full and normal life. I have a demanding job which I have been able to resume because of the treatment regime Dr Skinner has prescribed for me, where other GPs and specialists *failed. I am now able to lead a normal family life, currently caring for two aged parents. I am an asset* to my family not a burden.

If the panel make the grossly misguided decision to suspend Dr Skinner's practise, I cannot express strongly enough, my fears for my health and my future, as I know I will suffer in the same way as I did prior to Dr Skinner's treatment.

I ask the panel in the strongest terms possible, to see sense, to listen to the people who have first hand knowledge and experience of Dr Skinner's work, and to let him continue to care for and cure the percentage of the population who suffer thyroid disease and do not respond successfully to synthetic thyroid treatment. Please realise the huge negative impact on our lives that inhibiting Dr Skinner's practice would have.

Personally, I obviously do not want to revert to my previous state of very ill health and extremely poor quality of life. Being unable to work as I do now will make me a burden on the NHS, the State and on my family. It will negatively affect my parents who will no longer be cared for, my husband who will have to care for me, and my daughter's future as I will no longer be able to pay for her education.

Dr Skinner is an excellent, competent and highly experienced practitioner in his field and this case should have never have been brought in the first place.

Yours sincerely

Cc Professor Sir Graeme Catto, President, GMC

Mr Ralph Shipway, RadcliffesLeBrasseur, 5 Great College Street, Westminster, London, SW1P 3SJ

Dr Mark Dudley, Medical Protection Society, 33 Cavendish Square, London, W1G 0PS

5th November 07

Dear Ms Collins

I was amazed to receive a letter stating Dr Skinner has been asked to attend a Fitness to Practise hearing. I have nothing but praise for the way I have been treated by Dr Skinner.

My own GP is happy for me to see Dr Skinner as she openly admits she is no expert on thyroid problems. Previously I have seen so called experts and I have been left to feel very disgruntled by the service I received.

When I went to see Dr Skinner it was like a breathe of fresh air, someone who actually listened and knew his subject. I was prescribed armour thyroxin and I can honestly say I have improved considerably.

I last saw Dr Skinner in , but he has rung me to see how I am getting on. He also requests that I have blood tests between months. The last test I had was and despite taking an extra mg of thyroxin my blood tests was normal! Dr Skinner has requested I have another blood test in as I am taking a high dosage.

I have been more than satisfied with the treatment I have received from Dr Skinner and would recommend him to any thyroid suffer.

It is disappointing that a person who is helping people has to prove himself.

Yours faithfully

An extremely satisfied patient

Cc Dr Skinner
Mr R Shipway

4th November 2007

Ms Patricia Collins
Investigation Officer
Fitness to Practice Directorate
General Medical Council
5th Floor St James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M1 6FQ

Re Dr. Gordon R B Skinner - Fitness to Practice

Dear Ms. Collins,

I have very grave concerns regarding the way your staff are conducting this Fitness to Practice hearing. Specifically:-

Perjury

GMC witnesses have knowingly made a number of false statements, I bring your attention to one blatant case. In his evidence to an IOP hearing Dr. Prentice said:- "Finally, as a former secretary to the British Thyroid Association I was involved with the British Thyroid Association in trying to counteract a number of private practitioners who called themselves endocrinologists but did not in fact have higher medical qualifications in endocrinology who took it upon themselves to start patients on Thyroxine in spite of normal thyroid function tests.....".

Dr. Prentice is fully aware that no practitioner has ever wrongfully claimed to be an endocrinologist, yet he has invented this "evidence" in order to harm Dr. Skinner. Dr. Prentice has deliberately and knowingly given false evidence.

Refusal to Allow Patient Witnesses

The GMC's case is predicated on the assertion that it is impossible to be hypothyroid with thyroid blood test results within the 95% reference interval. A number of such patients, with documented case histories, have been denied the opportunity to give evidence. Unlike the prosecution the defence have not been allowed patient witnesses.

Abuse of "Patient B"

"Patient B" has not been allowed to give evidence. She suffers from severe hypothyroidism but is denied adequate care and medication, her life is at risk. She is allowed no say in her care plan. The GMC treats her as if she were a piece of shit. **Please take this as formal notice that this patient is being abused and I will hold you personally responsible for any unfavourable outcome.**

Denial of the Right to an Expert Witness

Dr. John Lowe, a world renowned thyroid expert, was to give evidence in support of Dr. Skinner from his office in the USA. Mysteriously the conference facilities were made unavailable on the pretext of an operator being on a training course. If this really was the case (and I don't believe it was) then the hearing should have been postponed. The Chairman should not have allowed the hearing to continue with no expert witness for the defence.

Ignoring Evidence

Dr. Skinner carried out a survey of doctors practising endocrinology (attached). This showed that his practice is not unusual, 93% of doctors had treated patients with fT4 levels within the 95% reference interval and a further 12% had treated patients with both TSH and fT4 within their 95% reference intervals. The Bolam Ruling "A medical practitioner would not be negligent if he 'has acted in accordance with a practice accepted as proper by a responsible body of medical men skilled in that particular art" applies. This is vital evidence, which must be admitted.

Inappropriate GMC Expert Witness

It is inappropriate for Prof. Weetman to act as an expert witness. His links to the GMC make it impossible for the panel to take a neutral stance. He is an activist who has been involved in a number of similar complaints to the GMC. He is not in a position to give honest and unbiased evidence.

A Pernicious Crusade Masquerading as Independent Complaints to the GMC

A small group of activists have for a number of years used the BTA (British Thyroid Association - formerly "The Thyroid Club") as a vehicle to campaign against physicians who give clinical observation and thyroid function tests equal precedence. They assert the blood test must overrule the clinical presentation. This group includes doctors Tony Toft, John Lazarus, Tony Weetman and Malcolm Prentice. They have made complaints, or induced others to make complaints and given the impression that these complaints are spontaneous and independent.

The "Biochemical Thyrotoxicity" Fabrication

The GMC panel have claimed that patients have suffered from "Biochemical Thyrotoxicity" and this forms the basis of their verdict. I am appalled that a supposedly learned panel should show such elementary medical ignorance. Thyrotoxicity is a clinical presentation, not the result of a blood test result. One cannot be thyrotoxic without symptoms. Indeed in the case of thyroid hormone resistance the accepted therapeutic approach is to prescribe sufficient additional thyroxine in order to overcome hypothyroidism, notwithstanding the patient's blood levels of thyroxine may be three or four times the "normal" level.

There is no reference to "Biochemical Thyrotoxicity" in the literature. A search of "Pubmed", the US National Library of Medicine database, failed to deliver any hits. This database has over 17 million citations. Of less merit, I also failed to

find any reference to "Biochemical Thyrotoxicity" on Google (other than a reference to this FTP hearing). Whilst of dubious merit Google indexes in excess of 20 billion web pages. Lastly I spent an afternoon at the British Library, Euston Road. I searched all the endocrinology textbooks on open access and was unable to find any reference to "Biochemical Thyrotoxicity". A list of some of the more notable volumes is attached.

There is no such concept as "Biochemical Thyrotoxicity". The panel should not fabricate a condition in order to arrive at a verdict.

I request you carry out an urgent investigation into the behaviour of all those involved.

Yours faithfully,

DOCUMENT 5

Thyroid Replacement in Clinically Hypothyroid Patients who have Free Thyroxine or Thyroid Stimulating Hormone within 95% Reference Intervals; 23.07.07.

There is controversy in the medical profession on the advisability of thyroid replacement in patients whose thyroid chemistry in particular the free thyroxine (FT4) and or thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) lie inside the laboratory 95% reference intervals. This is a central issue in an ongoing GMC v Skinner Fitness to Practice Hearing.

I thought it would be relevant to establish in part measure what proportion of colleagues practicing endocrinology had ever provided thyroid replacement in these situations (Tables 1, 2 and 3).

A total of 173 respondents replied within 28 days of receiving the questionnaire wherein 56 of the respondents requested anonymity. There were 93% respondents who had at least once provided thyroid replacement to patients with TSH level above the 95% reference intervals with a lesser proportion of 69% for patients with FT4 level below the lower limit of the 95% reference interval and a lower but significant proportion (12%) where both were inside the 95% reference intervals. There was little difference in results between eponymous and anonymous respondents.

These conclusions do not engross information on the precise levels of thyroid hormone within a given reference interval. This matter is often cheerfully ignored by certain colleagues who advance the strange concept that if (for example) a TSH value is within a reference interval then the patient is not hypothyroid irrespective of the level of the hormone within that interval. La Place and his contemporary Gauss – they of probability distribution fame – would be astonished to learn that Gaussian theory is now being applied to the distribution of thyroid hormone levels and then, erroneously, to the frequency of hypothyroidism; they would also be astonished to learn that there is no evidence correlating thyroid hormone values within the 95% reference intervals with the frequency and/or severity of hypothyroidism and that an unproven statistic has been transmuted into a gold standard of diagnosis wherein hypothyroidism cannot apparently exist if thyroid chemistry lies within 95% reference intervals. In the absence of secure correlative evidence, only one situation permits this approach, namely if a condition has been defined *ab initio* via laboratory findings which for example might apply to hypercholesterolaemia or even sub clinical hypothyroidism where the condition has been defined as having a raised TSH level above the 95% reference interval. The 'coincidence' of a 5% incidence of hypothyroidism – and indeed of other 5% disease frequencies similarly derived - requires critical re-examination.

It must be emphasised that the frequency responses recorded in Tables 1, 2 and 3 do not represent usual or current practice of the respondents; there are of course many interpretations from information presented outwith a contextual framework.

There is an urgent case to examine the efficacy of thyroid replacement in patients who have clinical evidence of hypothyroidism with clinical chemistry lying within 95% intervals.

I thank colleagues for their courteous and timely responses to this questionnaire.

Frequency of Responses

1. Eponymous responses

Thyroid replacement given when:	Yes	No	No response
FT4 within 95% reference intervals TSH above 95% reference intervals	107 (91%)	8	2
FT4 below 95% reference intervals TSH within 95% reference intervals	85 (73%)	29	3
FT4 and TSH within 95% reference intervals:	10 (9%)	100	7

2. Anonymous responses

Thyroid replacement given when:	Yes	No	No response
FT4 within 95% reference intervals TSH above 95% reference intervals	54 (96%)	2	0
FT4 below 95% reference intervals TSH within 95% reference intervals	34 (61%)	18	4
FT4 and TSH within 95% reference intervals:	10 (18%)	45	1

3. Total responses

Thyroid replacement given when:	Yes	No	No response
FT4 within 95% reference intervals TSH above 95% reference intervals	161 (93%)	10	2
FT4 below 95% reference intervals TSH within 95% reference intervals	119 (69%)	47	7
FT4 and TSH within 95% reference intervals:	20 (12%)	145	8

"Biochemical Thyrotoxicity"

All endocrinology textbooks on open reference at the British Library, Euston Road, London were searched for references to "biochemical thyrotoxicity" or similar phrases. No reference was found. Below is a small selection of books accessed.

Williams Textbook of Endocrinology

Endocrinology in Clinical Practice

Handbook of Diagnostic Endocrinology

Diseases of the Thyroid

Werner and Ingbar's The Thyroid: A Fundamental and Clinical Text

Endocrinology: 3-Volume Set - Leslie J. DeGroot and J. Larry Jameson

Endocrinology - Halley and Levine

Endocrine Toxicology - John A. Thomas, Howard D. Colby

Clinical Endocrinology - Ashley Grossman

Principles and Practice of Endocrinology and Metabolism

Oxford Handbook of Endocrinology and Diabetes

Practical Endocrinology and Diabetes in Children

Endocrinology and Metabolism - Philip Felig, Lawrence A Frohman

Oxford Textbook of Endocrinology and Diabetes

Comprehensive Clinical Endocrinology - Michael Besser, Michael O. Thorner

Endocrinology: Specialist Handbook

Endocrinology and Metabolism - Aldo Pinchera

Paediatric Endocrinology

Challenging Cases in Endocrinology - Molitch

Endocrinology - An Integrated Approach - Stephen Nussey, Saffron A. Whitehead

The Thyroid Solution - Ridha Arem

Thyroid Disease - Stephen A. Falk

Thyroid Diseases - Korenman

Medical Management of Thyroid Disease - David S. Cooper

[redacted]

06 November 2007

Dear Ms Collins

I am writing in support of Doctor Gordon R. B. Skinner. He has treated me for severe hypothyroidism, returning me to good health.

When I first attended Dr Skinner's Clinic, I was on a low dose of Thyroxine, yet suffering from many symptoms of hypothyroidism. Despite continual visits to my GP with; [redacted]

I was told by my Surgery that I was in the "normal" range for Thyroid Function and was not offered any further treatment.

I asked my Doctor to write a letter of referral to Doctor Skinner and first saw him in [redacted].

Doctor Skinner is always careful in altering dosage very gradually; the condition of the patient, skin, pulse rate, blood pressure, temperature, finding out exactly how the patient feels along with the blood test details all produce total patient care.

Doctor Skinner is totally professional, he works with the GP, for the patient, a letter is always sent to the GP after a consultation. He is very happy to return a patient back to the GPs care and will answer any GP queries concerning treatment.

I could not believe that this case has been brought against Dr Skinner. He is a dedicated professional serving to improve the health of those that come to see him.

The case against Dr Skinner for 'incompetence to practice' would seem to be totally ill founded. If treating a patient according to their needs for thyroid health is wrong then what has the medical profession come to? We would have to examine the treatment so often given by GPs for hypothyroidism. Many patients have had their dosage of Thyroxine reduced, perhaps at the worry of litigation against their GP? The lack of treatment tends to result in a recurrence of poor health. What duty of care is this to the patient?

Dr Skinners level of patient care is far greater than that which I have experienced from several GPs over many years of under-medicated treatment. Hypothyroid medication wasn't prescribed for some time following the onset of my symptoms and failed to make a significant improvement on my health, as I now experience under the care of Dr Skinner.

Dr Skinner's treatment is based upon an overall assessment of a patient and not mere reliance upon the figures obtained from a laboratory range for a thyroid related blood test. Such a range attempts to encompass a 'normal' level of a functioning thyroid gland for the entire population, at any stage of life.

The origin of such ranges isn't clear and numbers alone may be unlikely to be indicative of what a healthy person should attain. In my experience, from discussions with fellow hypothyroid sufferers, I have concluded that all too often, it is that a blood test is treated instead of the patient. This has meant that for many, the conventional line of treatment in primary care is insufficient, in that it does not clear the range of debilitating problems aforementioned. It is my hope that more medical professionals begin to diagnose and treat without the sole reliance upon blood tests. It is a useful tool but only in the fuller context of a patient's medical presentation.

I'm more than happy to be contacted and will reaffirm my support for Dr Skinner in any future circumstances for I feel extremely fortunate to have such a capable Doctor improving my quality of life.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Patricia Collins,
Investigation Officer,
General Medical Council,
Fifth Floor,
St. James Building,
Oxford Street,
Manchester,
M1 6FQ

6.11.2007

Dear Ms Collins,

Ref .Dr. Skinner and thyroid treatments of:

During June my older daughter became ill with

Over the next few months she became increasingly weak. She was unable to

Towards the end of her degree course she became aware of the work done by Dr. Skinner, and after studying about the thyroid gland and its function decided to go to ask his advice. She was prescribed Armour thyroid replacement by him and within a few weeks of taking it began to improve.

Due to the lack of recognition of her condition she was severely disabled and very ill from the age of to years old, half of her life! If she had not continued to search for answers to her condition and by chance heard of Dr Skinner, who assisted so dramatically in her recovery she would be still living a half-life rather than functioning as an almost fully fit young woman. The result of his prescription of Armour Thyroid for her has enabled her recovery. A few years ago she attempted to go onto Thyroxine. Her GP at that time was very supportive but wanted to move onto a treatment which was more accepted by other GP practices in the event that she might need to move away from the area and join a new practice. However the Thyroxine combined with Tertroxin was very unsuccessful with many of her old symptoms gradually reappearing so she returned to using Armour and since then she has slowly improved again.

This was all purely a dream years ago, but without Dr Skinner's intervention could never have become a reality. Our gratitude to him for all he has given our daughter is immense.

It was during when I began to become very tired.

Following a visit to my GP who could not find anything the matter I decided to visit Dr Skinner. He took blood tests and a family history, noting that my mother, grandmother and great aunts all had had thyroid problems by having goitres. He prescribed for me a very slowly increasing dose of Thyroxine and within months I was feeling well again

I told my GP I was being helped by Dr Skinner and she insisted that I saw an endocrinologist at the local hospital. I attended my appointment, but when he knew I had seen a doctor other than him he walked out of the room and sent a lady doctor in to tell me that he refused to discuss thyroid treatment with me and had forbidden her to do so !

I was very distressed by this treatment and went to my GP to ask what was happening. I was told that I had unfortunately come up against a medical "cultural problem" and there was nothing to be done about it, however I should cease seeing Dr Skinner. As I had improved so greatly under his treatment and I had also witnessed how he had helped my daughter, I had no reason at all to follow this advice. None of the GPs at the local practice had been helpful or concerned in any way, ignoring for most of the years of her condition that they had a young girl patient who was so ill.

Dr. Skinner has at all times treated me in an exemplary manner. He has ensured that tests are taken regularly to support his treatment and that all records of my visits to him are sent to my GP. I have no support from my GP for my treatment and certainly none from the local endocrinologist. Without Dr Skinner prescribing for me I fear that I will not be able to continue the work that I now do Dr. Skinner has not only been able to help me, but he has totally turned round my daughter's life when no other doctor would treat her at all, insisting that she had and might never recover.

I am exceptionally grateful to Dr. Skinner for all that he has done for us and am greatly saddened that he finds himself in this situation. I am also very concerned for the treatment of other thyroid patients who may need his skills in the future, but in particular I am concerned that my own daughter will not lose her newly found health and have to return to the abysmal life she had before he began to help her.

I sincerely hope that a way can be found for him to not only be able to treat his patients but also to work alongside other interested doctors so that his knowledge can be shared further.

Yours sincerely,

6th November 2007

Ms P Collins, Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor, St James' Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Madam

I write in support of **Dr GRB Skinner.**

Dr Skinner has in the very simplest terms, given me my life back.

My first interview with him was a great surprise – he challenged everything I said. Indeed that has been a feature of each consultation – he has taken great effort to be certain of his (and my) facts.

Not having any medical training, I have to assess him as best I can. He has been assiduous in taking notes during the consultations; he has always referred back to previous notes to gauge progress. At all times he shewed a definite knowledge of the facts of my case – never did he mis-remember, nor confuse me with another patient. He has not encouraged me to incur excessive costs, for instance by insisting on frequent consultations. Each consultation was specifically about my health with no unnecessary chat about extraneous or irrelevant subject matter.

As to medication, he discussed in detail the effects of current dosage before considering an increase or a decrease. As I've said previously, constantly challenging my reports of symptoms and changes in severity.

I believe that if I had not met Dr Skinner, I would by now be a very different person. The process of declining health that started in would have continued and I would now be an old woman with physical and mental health problems – quite likely a drain on NHS resources.

To really understand what he has achieved you would need to know what I was (in and what I became in

Part and parcel of my gratitude to Dr Skinner is my disappointment with the reaction from my GP. However, as one is only allowed a few minutes consultation with a GP, and having experienced a consultation with Dr Skinner, it is understandable that they took the view they did. Nevertheless I still nurse a deep regret that I had to "lose" years of my life, almost losing my husband in the process.

Whereas Dr Skinner challenged and tested what I told him about symptoms, it seemed to me that my GPs simply didn't believe me or alternatively didn't think the symptoms important – and they didn't disguise it.

There were, of course, many other niggling 'ailments', not all of which I took to my GP. They were very good about taking blood tests (thyroid, kidney, liver, iron etc). But I find their reliance on the results of blood tests somewhat mystifying. Do they, for instance, compare my blood test results with those of the top 100 athletes? or the top 100 mathematicians? or the top 100 successful businessmen/women? Apparently they do not. Indeed information from another source suggests that they are comparing results from people who are in fact already ill i.e. those people who require a blood test.....

When I started to write this letter it was my intention not to talk about the attitude of my GPs however if they had taken me seriously and thoroughly investigated my symptoms then I would not have felt the need to find an alternative.

Sincerely

6/11/2007

cc Mr Shipway (Radcliffe Infirmary) + Dr Stone

02/11/07

Ms Patricia Collins
Investigating Officer
General Medical Council
Fifth Floor
St James Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins

Re Dr Gordon Skinner

I understand that Dr Gordon Skinner is currently going through a Fitness to Practise Hearing. I would like to add my comments to those of others concerning his treatment of his patients over the years and also share my experience of how he has helped me.

In , aged , I caught from which I failed to recover. I had been a good

. I was eventually given a diagnosis of . I was sent, over the years, to psychiatrists, immunologists, consultant physicians and saw a number of GPs due to moving home a couple of times. My parents were concerned that I might have a thyroid problem as there is a long family history of this condition on my mother's side of the family, but they were told that my blood tests definitely ruled this out.

In , when I was , a scientist friend told me about Dr Skinner and the way he treated *thyroid patients by a) taking a thorough medical history b) noting down all symptoms c)* exploring possible causes d) offering thyroid treatment if symptoms and absence of other

likely causes suggested this would be worthwhile. I was told that he used symptoms to diagnose thyroid problems, with the blood tests used as back up, and did not think statistically 'normal' blood tests necessarily ruled out the need for thyroid treatment.

When I first saw Dr Skinner I was very ill – After taking down all details and questioning me thoroughly about my medical history and symptoms he started me on thyroid replacement hormone.

The effects were nothing short of miraculous. Within months the following had happened:

As I was such an 'obvious case' (for a medic of Dr Skinner's experience and knowledge) of hypothyroidism, I was very easy to treat and I didn't realise how much skill and expertise Dr Skinner had. Recently, thanks to a change in the medication I was taking for my thyroid condition, some of my old symptoms returned. He has advised on management strategies, spotted symptoms that I had not realised had returned, monitored me carefully and returned me to a manageable dose of thyroid replacement hormone. In this time I have been more impressed than ever with his analysis of symptoms, his care for patients and his understanding of the condition.

He has always written regularly to my GP, responded with phone calls (at no extra cost, I might add) when I have had concerns, and been helpful and willing to explain symptoms and changes in his approach to both myself and my GP. My GP has prescribed Armour Thyroid for me in collaboration with Dr Skinner which I get for free as a patient with a lifelong medical condition (hypothyroidism). I am very grateful to Dr Skinner for giving me back my health and my ability to live an active and interesting life, where I have a future to look forward to.

I would be horrified to think that a doctor of his calibre could be suspended, or in some other way disciplined, because of an unorthodox (yet extremely effective in numerous cases) approach to thyroid diagnosis and treatment. I ask this his excellent treatment of many, many patients, including me, be taken into account when his case is looked at.

Yours sincerely

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor St James Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

Wednesday 7 November 2007

Dear Ms Collins

Reference Dr Gordon Skinner – Fitness of Practise

I understand that there is to be an inquiry/hearing into the practises of Dr Gordon Skinner and therefore I would like to submit my letter of support.

I am a patient. I originally went to see Dr Skinner late in [redacted], I was extremely ill at the time, my symptoms were many, but the overriding problem was [redacted]

Although I was at the time with a practise of doctors in [redacted] over a period of [redacted] years they did not seem to be able to find out what my problem was. I was diagnosed with [redacted]

I made the mistake of mentioning to my doctor the possibility of a thyroid problem, with some reluctance he organised a blood test. When I enquired as to the out come I was fobbed off and told that the blood test came back in *'The Normal range'* It was in fact at the very low end of the normal range, but never the less in the range.

I progressively got worse and one of my clients on seeing the deterioration of my health suggested I make an appointment to see Dr Skinner as he had made a great difference in the treating of her son and husband.

I spent two and a half hours talking with doctor Skinner; he systematically took all my medical details, listened to my ailments and probed into every aspect of my symptoms and general health. He took blood tests and undertook a physical examination.

After the results were returned he prescribed medication, I was prescribed Armour Thyroid, which I still take.

Dr Skinner immediately contacted my family practitioner by letter and then by telephone, but met with a hostile response.

The medication slowly begun to work, slowly felt I was returning to the real world. Over the next

My health has improved immeasurably, Over the last five years I have been able to undertake full stable management and get fully involved with the physical activities required.

I have taken a rest from the medication on two or three occasions each time I slowly reverting to the state I was before the medication.

I take Armour Thyroid at a dosage of gram tablets once a day.

Doctor Skinner has always been very professional in every aspect of my dealings with him, he fully explains any queries I may have and continues to provide a proficient and friendly service. I therefore believe that the persecution of Dr Gordon Skinner is immoral. I know that without his help I would not be able to enjoy the full life his advise, medication and support returned me to. It is imperative to me that I am not deprived of the essential medication I take to ensure that I can lead a normal, healthy life.
I live dread of having the medication being withdrawn and having to return to the horrendous situation I was allowed to get by the medical profession.

I can be contacted by mail at the aforementioned address, but it sometimes takes time for me to reply, due to overseas commitments.

Yours Sincerely.

Wednesday, 7th November, 2007

Dear Ms Patricia Collins,

After Dr Skinner's wonderful treatment made me curious about thyroid treatment over the ages I decided to look into the research that had been done.

I live the near British Library and was amazed to find that a lot of research actually supports completely the way that Dr Skinner practises with his mixture of blood tests and clinical judgement.

I decided to collate as much of this information as I could and organize it on a website to make it available to doctors, researchers, patients and others around the world.

I did this in part as a thank you to Dr Skinner for the wonderful help he gave me which I consider has saved my life.

Yours sincerely,

c.c. Dr. Skinner

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
GMC
Manchester

9th November 2007

To Whom It May Concern – Dr G Skinner

I am a patient of Dr Skinner and I write in support of him and the service that he offers. He has made a positive difference to my life and the lives of many other patients. To prevent him from practising medicine would be grossly unfair to both Dr Skinner and his patients.

I find it hard to believe that he has been taken to task by the GMC. It is not as if anyone has died. I bet there are many junior hospital doctors who, through lack of sleep and inexperience, have made decisions that adversely affected the health of their patients and yet a blind eye has been turned.

I express the hope that Dr Skinner will be allowed to continue to practise. His patients need his services – they wouldn't be there in the first place if they got a decent service from the NHS.

Yours sincerely

Copied to Dr G Skinner
& Mr R Shipton

15/11/7

Dear Mr Collins

My wife, and I have been treated and monitored for hypothyroidism by Dr. Skinner for several years. He has acted in a totally professional way at all times - communicating well with us and our General Practitioner. With his help and advice our conditions have improved considerably - we are extremely surprised to learn he has been asked to attend a Fitness to Practice Hearing and suggest from our experience this is totally unwarranted.

Yours Sincerely

c.c. Mr R. Shipley
c.c. Dr. Skinner

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James' Building
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

14 November 2007

To Ms Collins,

I understand that an investigation is underway looking at the practices of Dr Gordon Skinner. Without Dr Skinner my mum wouldn't be in the health she is now.

My mum was very ill before she went to see Dr Skinner. [redacted] Then a friend told her about Dr Skinner. My mum thought it would be worth a go to see if he could tell her anything she didn't know.

He diagnosed her with an under active thyroid and prescribed her with Armour Thyroid Tablets. Even though she will never be healed, she now leads a full and active life [redacted] She is a now very active woman and even though she will have to take the tablets everyday for the rest of her life, it is a very small task to undertake to give her her life back. I am very glad to have my mum back, and even though my wardrobe gets raided every time she comes to my house, I wouldn't change it for the world. If it wasn't for Dr Skinner she may not even be here now and for that I am eternally grateful to him.

Many Thanks for your time,

Cc. Dr Gordon Skinner MD(hons)DSC FRCPath FRCOG
Mr R Shipway

16 November 2006

Dear Sir/Madam

Dr Gordon Skinner

I write to express my support and gratitude for Dr Skinner.

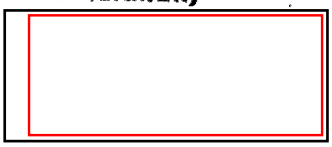
I have been a patient of Dr Skinner since [redacted], when I had an undiagnosed thyroid condition that my NHS General Practitioner could not assist with. At this time he offered a very thorough assessment (far more than just scrutiny of blood tests) of my health needs.

Since then I have now had a thyroidectomy and it is Dr Skinner I have turned to for support in managing my condition. Again, he has provided an excellent, supportive service in terms of my health needs and presenting symptoms.

As a professional myself whose own skills are in the field of assessment, I consider Dr Skinner to be exemplary, he conducts a thorough and holistic assessment, which does not simply rely on a blood test. I consider this a far more satisfactory and robust approach to addressing my symptoms. Certainly, whilst receiving a service from Dr Skinner my health has improved and I have complete confidence in his skills and expertise.

Please, I need this doctor available to me so as I can maintain a good level of health.

Yours faithfully



Ms Patricia Collins
Investigating Officer
Fitness to Practise Directorate
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St James Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FQ

cc. Mr R R Shipway
[redacted]

Ms P Collins
Investigation Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor St James Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M1 6FQ

23rd November 2007

Dear Ms Collins

I am writing in support of Dr G Skinner. The National Health Service has failed many hypothyroid sufferers, myself included. I spent all of my [redacted] dismissed by NHS doctors, [redacted]. Initially under the treatment, care and expertise of Dr [redacted] and latterly under the care of Dr Skinner I have had my health and well-being restored.

Of serious concern is the TSH blood test and the current reference ranges, the AACE have recently lowered their range to 0.3 - 3.0 and the AACC suggest an upper limit of 2.50. The GMC must be aware of the controversy, yet thus far has failed to implement any changes.

I am no expert, I am a very grateful patient who has been made well and I wish to offer my support for the Doctor who made me well, Dr Skinner's experience and expertise in this field is outstanding.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]

13TH December 2007

F.A.O.
Ms. P. Collins
Investigating Officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St. Jame's Buildings
79, Oxford Street
MANCHESTER
M1 6FQ

With reference to:- Dr, Gordon R. B. Skinner MD (Hons) DSc FRCOG,

Dear Ms. Collins,

I write in support of the above Dr. Gordon Skinner.

As a present and ongoing patient of his I am so very thankful of the understanding, help and support which I have had and still am receiving from him. With regards to my thyroid issues; his kind of care and help, surpasses and peaked that which I have encountered from the National Health Service. *(I mean that without being disrespectful to the National Health Service Doctors, as I know I have a lot to thank doctors for and Iv met some nice people as doctors)*

However, I am so pleased and grateful to the wonderful service Dr Skinner gave understandingly to me. Its only because he is in practice that I have been heard, understood ***and received the help that I deserve***.

His insight, wisdom, and knowledge should not go unaccounted for. The National Health Service could learn a lot from his ways and methods whilst being a benefit to mankind.

Also I believe the National Health Service should reassess and revalue the way it treats and handle Thyroid Patients. Thyroid sufferers are suffering enough without being undermined, dismissed or rejected by doctors. Doctor Gordon Skinner is unique and a blessing, he gave me help where others doctors failed to accept.

Yours sincerely

Ms P. Collins
General Medical Council
Regents Place
350 Euston Road
London NW1 3JN

31st December 2007

Dear Ms Collins

FTP – Dr G. Skinner

Thank you for your letter of 27th November which is surprisingly helpful.

At no point in your letter, however, do you give any indication that lessons have been learned from the misdiagnosis which resulted in such suffering over so many years. Your letter does indicate movement in terms of the excessive reliance on blood tests, but practitioners must now be thoroughly confused. On the one hand Dr Skinner is commended for his caring and compassionate approach. On the other hand he is impaired for alleged lack of care for a patient who has come to no harm and who made no complaint. When this alleged minor failure is compared with the negligence of many of the practitioners who treated the seventeen patients it makes no sense. Again I ask – are no questions to be asked? Are no lessons to be learned? Is no apology to be issued to the patients concerned? Are fresh guidelines going to be issued to practitioners in the light of recent developments to clarify the position regarding diagnosis of hypothyroidism?

Seventeen patients travelled from all over the country to Manchester and had the courage to provide testimony. Countless more were willing to do so, but time did not permit. Thousands have signed a petition. Several have been driven to writing books in an effort to highlight the needless suffering. For how much longer is the misdiagnosis of hypothyroidism to continue?

The testimony of the patients is a matter of record available to all. It is an absolute disgrace which cannot be ignored. May I suggest that Sir Graeme and every practitioner registered with the GMC should read every word of every patient's testimony. They should then address the issue as to why the NHS failed these patients so badly and whether or not such failures are continuing to-day? If no action is taken and further cases come to light, someone must be accountable!

It is asserted in your letter that Dr Skinner failed to investigate other possible causes of patients' symptoms. Yet you conveniently choose to ignore the failure of so many practitioners to properly investigate the seventeen patients. The practitioners certainly investigated other possible causes during which time the patients suffering was unnecessarily prolonged. It is somewhat ironic that it is Dr Skinner who is accused of lacking insight rather than the aforementioned practitioners who failed to diagnose the seventeen patients. It beggars belief that Dr Skinner can be accused of failing to recognise that his approach may be flawed while the same criticism is not levelled at Professor Weetman. I do accept that the GMC does not fund medical research, but their own expert witness testified in court that further research as called for by Dr Skinner is unnecessary. If that does not display lack of insight – what does?

It is wrong to say that no other practitioner supports Dr Skinner's view that biochemical toxicity is a misconception, but which practitioner would be willing to prejudice both his career and his practice to provide testimony on behalf of a colleague? The GMC has created a climate of fear in which doctors are afraid to speak out. Equally, which endocrinologist would prejudice his merit award by giving evidence contrary to the view of his esteemed peers who assess his award? Is it really necessary to provide huge incentives to endocrinologists to do their job to the best of their ability? I would suggest that the abolition of these merit awards would solve a great many problems.

The GMC has pursued a witch hunt over a period stretching back many years. Apart from one patient who has testified that she expressed no wish to lodge a complaint, no patient has complained. No patient has been harmed – quite the contrary. How much money will have been spent? What will have been achieved? Questions need to be asked, but they will not be asked until this climate of fear is removed. The GMC now has clear evidence that hypothyroidism is being mis-diagnosed. If this continues resulting in still more unnecessary suffering - I repeat, someone must be accountable!

I intend to pursue further the failure of the GMC in this matter, but before doing so I would welcome your response to the above and in particular what lessons have been learned.

Yours sincerely

MS P Collins
Investigation officer
General Medical Council
5th Floor
ST James building
79 Oxford sty
Manchester
M1 6FQ

8TH Jan 2008

RE LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR DR G SKINNER

Dear Ms Collins,

I am writing to you to express my concerns about your investigation of Dr Skinner.
All my life I have been very active, and enjoyed life to the full. I had seen my mum misdiagnosed with later to find she was misdiagnosed with hyperthyroidism. Only then to find she has hashimoto's disease!

My Father suffered with hyperthyroidism, my grandmother suffers with hypothyroidism, and my sister suffers with hypothyroidism, so it's safe to say there appears to be a family history!

Over time I started to suffer every symptom in the book!! [redacted]

I had visited my GP surgery regularly!!

By [redacted] I went off sick from my job as a [redacted]

I eventually went back to the GP and agreed to try [redacted] reluctantly as I knew I was not depressed but my thyroid function test was considered normal T4 was 14. I tried several non improved my symptoms.

Dr skinner was then recommended to me so I used BUPA healthcare policy as saw DR Skinner in [redacted] He was the first person to understand my symptoms and offer me hope. I started thyroxine which was gradually increased until I felt normal again. I returned to work [redacted]. I have been regularly monitored by both my GP and DR Skinner.

Since this my daughter has been diagnosed with Addison's disease after I refused to listen to her tiredness being due to exam stress and pushed the health service for further tests.

Had I have accepted the diagnosis of [redacted] my life would not be as it is today nor would I have had the energy to have pushed for my daughter. Without DR Skinner many peoples lives would suffer, all I and many others want is to feel normal, go to work, live our lives and feel naturally tired at the end of the day.

I hope DR Skinner continues to be allowed to carry on his good work especially as thyroxine is readily available on the internet and it would be then used without regular monitoring or many people will return to ill health, not able to go to work and clutter busy GP surgeries.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

Cc DR Skinner
Mr Shipway

22nd February, 2008

Ms. P Collins
Investigation Officer
Fitness to Practise Directorate
General Medical Council
5th Floor
St. James's Buildings
79 Oxford Street
Manchester M1 6FQ

Dear Ms Collins,

Please find enclosed a copy of my letter to Dr. Malcolm Prentice.

I have asked him just two questions which I think need to be answered **and believe you needed to see the letter because this is an extremely important issue affecting thousands of patients.** There are many more questions arising from the hearing (as in the transcripts) but these will be brought to your attention at a later date.

Without our medication, our health will suffer and I for one do not wish to see my daughters' health, nor mine (or lack of) return to that of years ago.

At the end of the GMC Fitness to Practise hearing of Dr. Gordon R. B. Skinner, the panel stated that "It is clear that you are a caring and compassionate doctor whose overwhelming concern is the care and well-being of your patients, many of whom have pleaded that you should be allowed to continue to practise. The Panel has taken account of the fact that the majority of the written testimonials, and all of the oral evidence, were given in full knowledge of the facts, found proved against you and of the Panel's finding of impairment. A large body of evidence has been submitted throughout this case demonstrating that many patients have benefited from the medication which you have prescribed."

Had the Panel heard the oral testimonies before the verdict, I believe Dr. Gordon Skinner would never have been found guilty of impairment, particularly as one of the main witnesses to the case, Patient B was not allowed under oath until after the verdict. The panel found him guilty that the patient had palpitations, but she confirmed that she was having them after she had stopped the Thyroxine.

Dr. Skinner has relatively few 'conditions' on him and yet because of the hearing, the patients may well have to take this to the Court of Human Rights as doctors are now denying them the medication to keep them well, doctors who have been happy to prescribe until now.

Surely being allowed to be well is a basic human right.

Yours sincerely,

22nd February, 2008

Private and Confidential
Dr. Malcolm Prentice

Dear Dr. Prentice,

I do hope you don't mind my writing to you, but I wondered if you could answer a couple of questions that have been puzzling me.

I and my two daughters first consulted Dr. Gordon Skinner years ago and not once has he said he was an Endocrinologist; we have always known he was a Virologist, and yet in the GMC transcript D4/62/E(kindly sent to me by the GMC and heard by me at the FTP hearing in Manchester), you state, **"Finally, as a former secretary to the BTA, I was involved with the BTA in trying to counteract a number of private practitioners who called themselves endocrinologists etc."**

I attended the whole of the FTP hearing in Manchester and spoke to many other patients who were there and not one of them knew Dr. Gordon Skinner as an Endocrinologist, they all knew him as a Virologist.

So my question is, why did you make the above statement?

I ask this question as I am afraid that it will worry our GPs who have until now been happy to prescribe our thyroid medication. To be returned to the dreadful ill-health of the past would I am sure, be against our human rights.

My daughters and I have come to absolutely no harm under the care of Dr. Skinner.

The second question is with reference to the BTA guidelines, July 2006. **" Routine thyroid function testing has been available for more than thirty years. Therefore, it may be surprising that the quality of evidence to support the recommendations in these guidelines is generally poor."** It goes on to say in paragraph 8 page 68, **"There is real need to conduct new studies that conform to the rules of evidence based medicine in order to provide answers to some of the contentious issues in the use of thyroid function testing."**

Professor Weetman said there should be no trials into Dr. Skinner's theories; do you feel the same way even though the BTA guidelines say there should be new studies to provide answers to contentious issues?

I have enclosed a self-addressed envelope for your reply.

Thank you so much for taking the time to answer my two questions.

Yours Sincerely,

Copies to:

Dr. Gordon R. B. Skinner
[redacted]
Mr. Ralph Shipway, RadcliffesLeBrausseur
Dr. Mark Dudley, MPS
MDU
Royal College of Physicians
Ms. Patricia Collins, GMC
Prof. G. Catto, GMC