

Married surgeon, 66, 'had affair with 39-year-old patient after waiving his private medical fees for treatment on her leg'

- **Dr Jonathan Beacon 'bombarded patient with sexually charged texts'**
- **'Told her he wanted to have sex even though she had a plaster cast'**
- **She was a married mother-of-one, from Herts, in the midst of divorce**
- **Beacon appears before General Medical Council fitness to practise panel**

By Leon Watson



It is alleged father-of-three Dr Jonathan Beacon began an affair with a patient almost half his age

A married surgeon began an affair with a patient almost half his age after he waived his private medical fees for treatment to her injured knee, a medical tribunal heard today.

Father-of-three Dr Jonathan Beacon bombarded the woman with sexually charged texts, romped with her inside his car, took her on a string of lunch dates and spent the night with her in a series of hotels, it was claimed. During one meeting, consultant orthopaedic surgeon Beacon, 66, told his 39-year old mistress he wanted to have sex with her even though she was wearing a plaster cast on her leg, it was alleged. The married mother-of-one, who in the midst of a divorce, was said to have found him 'charismatic' and 'enjoyed the attention'.

But the illicit relationship eventually ended after 19 months when she met another man and ultimately married him, a General Medical Council fitness to practise panel was told.

'Dr Beacon used his trust and responsibility as a consultant and surgeon to develop and pursue an emotional and sexual relationship at a time when she was both emotionally and physically vulnerable,' said Mr Ben Fitzgerald counsel for the GMC.

'It constitutes a sustained and prolonged breach of the doctor-patient rules.' The Manchester hearing was told the woman - known as Patient A - met Beacon after she was involved in a motorbike accident in 2004 which left her with 'complex' injuries to her left knee. She was initially treated at a hospital accident and emergency unit and underwent surgery but was referred to Beacon's surgery in St Albans, Hertfordshire, after being advised to opt for private treatment.

At their first meeting in November 2005, the woman said she found Beacon 'approachable and able to explain things clearly to her'.

But by October 2006 she did not have the means to continue to pay for private treatment, as she was in the final stages of divorce. She needed money gained through the compensation of the accident to buy the family home.

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'She told Dr Beacon she could not afford it,' said Mr Fitzgerald. 'He told her that her knee required further treatment but he was willing to forgo fees if she paid for nursing fees and it went ahead on that basis. 'In minimising hospital costs and waving his own fees it enabled contact to continue. 'The relationship while had been friendly had been one purely of doctor and patient however he now started to take greater interest in her private life particularly her divorce.

'They exchanged mobile telephone numbers to facilitate easier communications about appointments. He began to send text messages which became more flirtatious. She found him charismatic.

'Dr Beacon used his trust and responsibility as a consultant and surgeon to develop and peruse an emotional and sexual relationship at a time when she was both emotionally and physically vulnerable'

GMC counsel

'She was lonely after her separation from her husband and living alone, she had low self-esteem and thought no-one would ever want her again, in this context of vulnerability the attention felt something of a lifetime. She came to realise he took advantage of that vulnerability.'

By Christmas 2006 patient A was receiving frequent social calls and text messages which became 'increasingly sexual'. Mr Fitzgerald went on: 'He took out her to lunch before a planned appointment, at the end of the day he kissed her on the cheek as she left.

'He later called to say he wanted to have lunch with her again but it was wrong to mix business with pleasure. This left Patient A feeling somewhat confused about his intentions she described it as being "contact, enticement and rejection".

'As time went on the calls became a daily occurrence, he called and sent texts at all hours. From around January 2007 the relationship became a sexual one.

'Patient A described meetings with Dr Beacon often coinciding with medical appointments. They would have lunch and engage in sexual activity in his car.

'On other occasions they would meet and drive out to secluded parts of the countryside where they would take part in sexual activity.

'She also recalls a consultation at his home despite having a plaster cast on her leg he wanted to have sex with her before.

'At the time she went along with it because she was enjoying the attention she was getting. The relationship went on throughout 2007 and into 2008.

'The lovers spent the night together in hotels on four occasions in Norwich where he undertook consultations near to her house. They stayed at the Best Western Annesely House Hotel in November 2007 in January 2008 and in the summer of 2008.

'On each occasion they booked into separate rooms but spent the night together. The fourth night was spent in the Best Western George Hotel in July 2008.

'The relationship between the two came to an end soon after,' said Mr Fitzgerald. 'She met a man who she would marry. It brought her to realisation, and ended the affair on 29th July.' Despite the split, Patient A went for further consultations with Beacon but eventually sought a second opinion and moved to another doctor.

She underwent further surgery in January 2011 and in view of her 'emotional turmoil' she was referred for a meeting with a psychiatrist in which she broke down and told of the affair. Beacon, of Dunstable, Bedfordshire, was not at the hearing and is not represented. The case continues.