

Department of Education & Policy

Supplementary Prescribing – Approving Courses

Executive Summary and Recommendations

1. Introduction

The Department of Health (DH) intends to amend the Prescription Only Medicine Order 1997, and NHS regulations ('National Health Service (General Medical Services Contracts) Regulations 2004 - SI 2004/2694' and the 'National Health Service (Personal Medical Services Agreements) Regulations 2004 – SI 2004/267') in order to allow radiographers, physiotherapists and chiropodists/podiatrists to become supplementary prescribers. The HPC must therefore set up a process for approving Supplementary Prescribing courses, and annotate the Register for those registrants successfully completing such approved courses.

2. Decision

The Committee is asked to **recommend to the Education and Training Committee** that the following criteria are adopted for the approval of Supplementary Prescribing courses:

That the courses should be assessed:

- against the Council's existing Standards of Education and Training (with the exception of SET 1: *Level of qualification for entry to the Register*, which is not applicable since these are post-registration courses) and the Standards of Proficiency;
- using Curriculum Guidance provided by the document 'Outline Curriculum for Training Programmes to prepare Allied Health Professional Supplementary Prescribers' (Department of Health and the National Prescribing Centre, 2004); and
- by a Visitor Panel, which will initially include at least one registrant chiropodist/podiatrist (who must have local anaesthetic/prescription-only medicine entitlements), or one registrant paramedic.

3. Background information

3.1 Visitor Panels

It is proposed that the Council initially assess Supplementary Prescribing courses using the above mentioned composition of registrant members. Once a number of these courses have been established, the Education and Policy Department will then work with the Human Resources Department to recruit and train Visitors, who are registrant members who have undergone such approved training and are flagged on the Register as such. Visitors will be trained in the normal HPC manner.

Paramedics, and Chiropodists/Podiatrists with the relevant entitlements are suggested as the most appropriate registrant Visitors for these programmes because they already have certain legal entitlements and/or prescribing rights, as outlined below:

3.1.1 Paramedics

Currently paramedics get their prescribing powers from the the Prescription Only Medicines (Human Use) Order 1997, the Medicines Act and the Misuse of Drugs Act where morphine is concerned. These allow the registered paramedic to administer a range of some 25 drugs and fluids. Also, registered Paramedics are allowed to supply and administer medicines under Patient Group Directions (PGDs).

3.1.2 Chiropodists and Podiatrists

Registered chiropodists/podiatrists have certain exemptions from the Prescription Only Medicines (Human Use) Order 1997. Some chiropodists and podiatrists have completed training in local analgesia and prescription-only medicine (LA and POM). These chiropodists and podiatrists have their entitlements marked on their HPC certificate, and on their entry on the online register. Also, registered chiropodists / podiatrists are allowed to supply and administer medicines under Patient Group Directions (PGDs).

3.2 'Outline Curriculum for Training Programmes to prepare Allied Health Professional Supplementary Prescribers'

This document is attached as an appendix to this paper, for the Committee's information. It is suggested that the Committee adopt this document as Curriculum Guidance for the purposes of assessing Supplementary Prescribing programmes.

The Outline Curriculum document has been developed by a joint initiative undertaken by the Department of Health (DH) and the National Prescribing Centre. The document was written in parallel with the DH and Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency consultation, and aims to build on the work undertaken to develop curriculum frameworks for nurse and pharmacist supplementary prescribers. A full list of those involved in compiling the document is available on page 24 of the Outline Curriculum.

3.3 Standards of Proficiency

At its meeting on 1st September 2004 the Education and Training Committee agreed a change to generic section 1b of the Standards of Proficiency for radiography, physiotherapy and chiropody/podiatry to take account of the new legislation. Under the Health Professions Order 2001 any changes to the Standards of Proficiency must be consulted upon. Subject to the results of the current consultation being carried out in this regard, the following will be added to the aforementioned Standards of Proficiency:

*Registrants must:
know and be able to apply the key concepts which are relevant to safe and
effective practice as a supplementary prescriber in order to have their name
annotated on the Register.*

4. Appendix

‘Outline Curriculum for Training Programmes to prepare Allied Health Professional Supplementary Prescribers’ (Department of Health and National Prescribing Centre, 2004).