

Communications Committee 5 November 2009

Public affairs and stakeholder update

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

This paper provides an update on the key public affairs and stakeholder activities undertaken since the last Communications Committee in May 2009.

Decision

This paper is for information only. No decision is required.

Background information

The Chair and Chief Executive represented the **HPC at the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat party conferences** which were held in September and October this year. As a member of the 'Health Hotel', along with 45 other organisations (including statutory bodies, charities and trade unions) we took part in a number of activities including consultations with parliamentarians from the health teams of the three main political parties, Health Hotel receptions and fringe meetings. These events were well-attended by political representatives and key stakeholders and were a good opportunity for us to communicate our role in protecting the public as well as providing an opportunity to discuss future health policies and the direction of professional regulation with key opinion formers.

This year, for the first time, the HPC held fringe meetings with fringe partners the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the General Medical Council (GMC), and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). The fringe meetings had health representatives from the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties and the Chair of the Commons Health Select Committee who discussed their vision for the future of healthcare regulation in the UK. The meetings were chaired by representatives from the King's Fund and our fringe partners also had representatives speaking on the panel.

The discussions were focused around effective healthcare regulation being essential for patient-safety, high-quality care and professional and public confidence. Both the Chair and Chief Executive represented the HPC and discussed two issues:

- the need for existing plans to extend statutory regulation to psychotherapists and counsellors and a range of healthcare scientists to

be completed in a reasonable timeframe, so that public protection can be increased.

- the possibility of regulating other healthcare occupations, assistants and others currently outside regulation such as traditional Chinese medicine practitioners and the need to make a clear and unambiguous decision on how to proceed. We strongly believe that statutory regulation is necessary for the protection of members of the public.

The Public Affairs and Stakeholder Manager and the Policy Manager also represented the HPC at the **Scottish National Party Annual Conference** in Inverness. Almost 2000 delegates attended the conference over the four days and the HPC exhibition stand afforded an ideal opportunity to engage with Members of Scottish Parliament (MSPs) and conference delegates, including other health organisations. The first Minister for Scotland, Alex Salmond MSP, visited the stand and the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, Nicola Sturgeon MSP, once again voiced her thanks for our presence at the conference. The HPC will also be exhibiting at the **Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) annual party conference in Belfast** on 21 November.

This quarter we have also sent **letters to key parliamentarians** across the UK informing them about the launch of our consultation on the statutory regulation of counsellors and psychotherapists. This included the Secretary of State for Health, Health (and Shadow) Ministers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as health committee members, all party groups on mental health and those who have asked parliamentary questions on relevant areas.

The Policy Manager and Public Affairs and Stakeholder Manager met with the following **stakeholders in Edinburgh** over a couple of days in July:

- The Scottish Government Health Directorates. Met with Regulatory Unit including Catherine Clark, Robert Girvan and Jennifer Dunlop, as well as Audrey Cowie, Professional Adviser, Regulation and Workforce Standards.
- Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA) to discuss joint communication work around public information and older people campaigns.
- Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Chief Executive, Carole Wilkinson and Geraldine Doherty. Following this meeting, members of the HPC Executive Team will be visiting the SSSC offices in Dundee in October.
- Joint professional body meeting with Scotland policy officers: Kenryck Lloyd-Jones, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) Scotland; Kim Hartley, Royal College of Speech and Language Therapy (RCSLT) Scotland; Maria Murray, The Society and College of Radiographers (SoR); Karen Uttling, The Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists. Annual update meetings will be held in the future following the success of this format.
- AHP Programme Director for the NHS Education for Scotland (NES)
- Scottish Affairs Officer, General Medical Council (GMC)

Other **meetings with stakeholders** included:

- Department of Health induction in Leeds with the Regulation Unit.

- Welsh Assembly Government meeting with the Chief Scientific Adviser, Deputy Chief Scientific Officer, Therapies Advisor and DHSS HR.
- Director of Allied Health Professions Federation (AHPF), Paul Hitchcock.
- Various Health Hotel fringe meetings and Political Engagement Task Group meetings for the political party conferences in September and October 2009.
- Jan Robinson, CEO and Registrar of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario as part of a familiarisation day and to discuss communications work.
- Scottish Director for the General Dental Council (GDC) in Glasgow during NHS Scotland conference.
- NHS Education for Scotland (NES) meeting with the Chief Executive, Acting Director of Policy and Standards, Director of Operations, Education Manager and the NES Chair, Chief Executive and various Directors across the organisation.

The Public Affairs and Stakeholder Manager has **participated and exhibited at a number of stakeholder conferences** including:

- Presented the HPC's work on 'sensitivities to devolution' as part of the Governance and External Relations session for the CHRE Good Practice Seminar.
- Scottish Regulation Event in Edinburgh with Chair of HPC speaking on revalidation. Exhibition stand over two days.
- Council on Licensure Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR) congress in Dublin with regulators from around the world attending over the two days.
- 'Maximising AHP Potential' conference with Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, Nicola Sturgeon, who spoke alongside the Chief Health Professions Officer, Jacqui Lunday. Over 150 delegates visited the HPC's stand.
- NHS Scotland annual conference in Glasgow with over 150 delegates visiting the stand over two days.

The Public Affairs and Stakeholder Manager **attended a number of events** including:

- 2nd Annual Regulatory Reform Conference.
- King's Fund Breakfast Briefing with Andy Burnham, Secretary of State for Health.
- Reform event – 'The future of Health' with Minister of State for Health, Mike O'Brien MP, Shadow Health Minister, Andrew Lansley MP and Liberal Democrat Health Secretary, Norman Lamb MP.
- Independent Healthcare Advisory Services (IHAS) launch event for code of practice for handling complaints.
- Help the Aged and Aged Concern parliamentary reception.

Resource implications

Activities in this report are set out in the 2009-10 communications workplan.

Financial implications

Activities set out in this paper are accounted for within the 2009-10 communications workplan budget.

Appendices

None