

Health Professions Council
Council 12th May 2005

DECISION ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL

Executive Summary and Recommendations

Introduction

The Health Professions Order 2001 links the number of Council members to the number of professions that are regulated by the Health Professions Council (HPC). The HPC currently regulates 13 professions and there are 13 registrant and 13 lay Council members. Because the President is a registrant, Council comprises 26 members and a President, making a total of 27 members.

Since the HPC came into existence in April 2002, one new profession, the Operating Department Practitioners, became statutorily regulated in October 2004. It is assumed that Applied Psychologists will be regulated by the HPC from early 2006. Clinical perfusionists, clinical physiologists, clinical technologists and dance movement therapists have also been recommended for statutory regulation. Over a dozen other professions have indicated to the HPC that they will apply to be regulated by the HPC.

The resulting increase in size of the Council beyond 30 members will mean that it will become inefficient and unwieldy and will inhibit good corporate governance.

To seek a solution to the problem the Council undertook a consultation between March and May 2004. Following the conclusion of the consultation the Council met four times. The meetings were held on the following dates:-

14th September 2004 Park House, London SE11

7th October 2004 Seamill, Ayrshire

1st February 2005 Park House, London SE11

29th March 2005 Evangelical Alliance, London SE11

It should be noted that these were special meetings of the Council, in that both registrants and alternates were able to attend and participate.

The recommendations of the series of meetings were drafted at the last meeting. They are as follows:

Annual Conference Model

Aspects of the existing system which will remain the same:

- Existing ratio of registrant to lay members
- The Council will elect the President

- Voting will be First Past the Post (FPP)
- The requirement to have registrant and lay Council members from each of the four home countries
- If the President is a registrant, the Council membership will be increased by 2 (1 registrant and 1 lay member)
- Electoral Reform Services will manage the elections
- The Education and Training Committee will have at least one registrant from each profession regulated
- The statutory committees would remain the same – Education and Training, Investigating, Conduct and Competence, and Health

Changes

- The size of the Council will not be linked to the number of professions regulated
- The Council will consist of 12 registrants and 11 lay members, ie a maximum of 25 if the President is a registrant
- Alternates will not be used
- One quarter of registrants to stand for election each year and one quarter of lay members to be appointed by the NHS Appointments Commission each year
- An annual conference would elect Council members

Principles

- The Council is a regulator of health professionals, and is not a representative forum of the professions
- Role of Council members is not to represent a particular profession or specific interest group, but to bring their experience to the discussion and decision making

Annual Conference

- An Annual Conference will be held at least once each year
- The members of the Annual Conference would be elected by HPC registrants
- Two members of the Annual Conference would be elected from each profession
- The elected members of the Annual Conference would elect members to the Council
- All members of the Annual Conference would either be elected to the Council or elected to a statutory committee
- Elected registrants who were not members of Council would sit on a maximum of one statutory committee until 24 professions are regulated
- The Annual Conference would have only one function, of electing registrant members of Council and of registrants to be members of statutory committees
- The cost of the Annual Conference will be funded exclusively by the HPC, including members' travel and expenses

The table shows how registrant Council members and non-Council members could be allocated to the Statutory Committees.

Number of professions regulated	Number of members of Annual Conference	Number of registrant Council members	Number of registrant non-Council members on E&T Cttee	Number of registrant non-Council members on FTP Cttees
13	26	12	13	1
14	28	12	14	2
15	30	12	15	3
16	32	12	16	4
17	34	12	17	5
18	36	12	18	6
19	38	12	19	7
20	40	12	20	8
25	50	12	25	12

Decision

The Council is requested to agree that the Health Professions Order 2001 should be amended and establish an Annual Conference; and that the Chief Executive write to the Privy Council requesting that the Health Professions Order 2001 be amended.

Background information

See attached paper. Options to amend the Structure of the Council.

Resource implications

It is assumed that the process of appointing the Council via an Annual Conference will be no more than the existing process of elections.

Financial implications

Assumed to be the same as existing arrangements.

Background papers

None.

Appendices

None.

Date of paper

3rd May 2005

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