

Council, 1 July 2014

Policy and Standards Report

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

The report provides an update about the activities of the Policy and Standards Department.

Decision

The Council is requested to discuss the report.

Background information

None

Resource implications

The resources for the Department are set out in the annual workplan and budget 2014-15.

Financial implications

As above.

Appendices

None

Date of paper

18 June 2014

Policy and Standards Department – Council meeting, 1 July 2014

The following provides an update about the work of the Department.

Leadership Alliance for the Care of Dying People (LACDP)

- The LACDP is a Department of Health convened group comprising of various stakeholders across health and social care, including the GMC, NMC and the HCPC. This has looked at developing the system-wide response to an independent review into the operation of the Liverpool Care Pathway, a standardised care pathway previously in place for the care of dying people in their last days and hours.
- As part of this, stakeholders, including the HCPC, have been asked to make a range of narrative commitments about delivering the outcomes that the independent review considered to be important. As part of this, the HCPC has made a number of commitments about making sure our standards are consistent with personalised care. These have already been fed into the work of the PLG reviewing the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.
- At the time of writing, the response to the independent review was expected to be published towards the end of June 2014. The Executive will highlight the priorities of care developed as part of this work to registrants through the 'In Focus' newsletter and other communication channels.

'Non-medical' Public health specialists

- In the absence of a regulatory Bill as part of the Queen's speech, the Department of Health public health team has informed us that they intend to take forward the regulation of public health specialists from 'non-medical' backgrounds with the HCPC via a Section 60 Order under the Health Act 1999. Jane Ellison MP, the Minister responsible for public health, has written to the HCPC to confirm the Department's commitment to the regulation of this group.
- The Department anticipates consulting on the draft legislation before the summer recess 2014, with a view to having legislation in place by before the general election in May 2015. At present, the intention would be to open the HCPC Register by the end of 2015. As is normal practice, the Department would reimburse the HCPC's costs associated with this work, including, for example, those related to changes to IT systems and partner recruitment.

Paramedic threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register

- The threshold level of qualification for paramedics set out in the first of the standards of education and training (SET 1) is 'Equivalent to a Certificate of Higher Education'. The large majority of approved programmes in this profession are now delivered in excess of this level.

- The Education and Training Committee agreed at its meeting in June 2014 to consider at subsequent meetings whether the level specified in this profession should be increased. Any such proposal would be subject to public consultation.
- The Director of Policy and Standards represents the HCPC on the steering group of a Health Education England (HEE) project which is seeking to reform the arrangements for the education and training of paramedics. There is general consensus (including amongst representatives from the devolved nations) of a direction of travel towards BSc honours degree provision at entry to this profession.

Professional indemnity

- The professional indemnity legislation will come into force on 17 July 2014.
- The Executive has sent to the Department of Health a proposed timetable for necessary consequential changes to the relevant Rules. If agreed, the intention would be to consult on the draft Rules from the autumn 2014, with the Rules in place by early 2015-2016. We have yet to receive a response.

Professional Standards Authority performance review 2013-2014

- We anticipate that the PSA's performance review report for 2013-2014 is likely to be published in mid July 2014. The Council will consider a copy of the report and a paper discussing the outcomes at its meeting in September 2014.

Standards of conduct, performance and ethics review

- The first meeting of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics Professional Liaison Group (PLG) took place on 2 June 2014.
- The group considered papers about the purpose of the review and the role and purpose of the standards, and its first papers on the themes identified in the range of research and engagement activities carried out to date.

Standards of proficiency review

- The review has continued to timetable.
- The consultations on draft standards for biomedical scientists and clinical scientists closed on 20 June 2014. The results of these consultations are planned to be taken to the Education and Training Committee and the Council at their meetings in September 2014.