

Policy and Standards Department – Council meeting, 13 May 2015

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

Europe

- The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) is consulting on arrangements for the transposition of the revised directive on mutual recognition of qualifications. A response is being prepared.
- We anticipate that the Department of Health will consult on a Section 60 Order in the next parliament to allow the HCPC to introduce language controls for applicants exercising mutual recognition rights.

Paramedic SET 1

- Health Education England (HEE) are finalising the outcomes of a project which is reforming education and training for paramedics.
- HEE have indicated that they wish to commission degree level pre-registration programmes only from the 2016-2017 academic year, with only degree level paramedics graduating from 2019 onwards. We understand there is agreement with the other countries on the movement to degree level entry, but timescales for delivering this in the other countries are unclear at this stage.
- The ETC will be asked to consider shortly what, if any change, we might make to the threshold level for paramedics currently specified in the first of the standards of education and training (SET 1) (currently specified as a Certificate of Higher Education).

Private Members' Bill

- The Council were previously advised of a private members bill which proposed to amend legislation to introduce a consistent overarching objective for the professional regulators. This was proposed by the Law Commissions. The wording is consistent with that already included in the Order and it is not anticipated that this change will affect our day-to-day work in any significant respect.
- The proposed objective refers to protecting, promoting and maintaining the health, safety and wellbeing of the public; promoting and maintaining public confidence in the regulated professions; and promoting and maintaining proper professional standards and conduct for members of those professions.

- The Bill has now completed its passage through parliament and has received Royal Assent. The Act will be brought into force by secondary legislation at a date yet to be advised.

Public health specialists

- The Section 60 Order was withdrawn from parliament following drafting issues raised in Committee in the Scottish Parliament and in Westminster.
- DH officials have said that they will be seeking ministerial approval after the general election in May 2015 to relay the Order.

Regulation of herbal practitioners

- Prof David Walker has now published his advice to ministers, which advises that herbal practitioners should not be brought into statutory regulation. A paper to note is on the 14 May 2015 meeting agenda.

Research

The following provides an update about all the on-going research activities managed by the Department.

- **CPD perceptions and experiences study (Qa research).** More than 900 registrants completed an online survey about their views of the CPD standards and their experiences of the CPD audit process. Interviews and focus groups with registrants (audited and non-audited), CPD assessors and key stakeholders are ongoing. The research team are due to present to the Education and Training Committee on the research outcomes in September 2015.
- **Preparation for practice (Kingston University / St George's University of London).** The aim of the research is to assess the effectiveness of the existing standards of education and training in ensuring that registrants are fit to practise at entry to the Register and identifying any improvements to the standards (if any). A literature review is ongoing.
- **Interprofessional education (Keele University)** are undertaking research looking at interprofessional education in approved programmes as part of the review of the standards of education and training. A literature review and a survey of education providers has been completed. Interviews / focus groups in case study sites are ongoing.
- **Links between cautions and convictions for alcohol related offences, alcohol dependency and fitness to practise / work (King's College London).** The outcomes will inform our approach to the issue of health

assessments where registrants are convicted of these offences. The literature review is underway and this work is on course for completion by May 2015.

Work on other standards and guidance

- The revised standards of proficiency for practitioner psychologists and the standards for podiatric surgery are due to be published in June 2015.
- The outcomes of the consultation on revised guidance for disabled people wanting to become health and care professionals is due to be considered by the Education and Training Committee and the Council in June and July 2015.
- A work plan is being developed for the review of the standards of proficiency for social workers in England and is now due to be considered by the Education and Training Committee at its meeting in June 2015.
- A consultation on standards for medicines exemptions for orthoptists is being prepared and is due to be considered by the Education and Training Committee and Council in June and July 2015. This is an action for the HCPC as part of the next stage of the NHS England led project to extend prescribing and medicines exemptions to further professions.
- The review of the standards of education and training has continued. Upcoming activities include a workshop with employees of the Education Department; workshops with service users and carers at two universities; and workshops at the Council of Deans' upcoming meeting. The Education and Training Committee and the Council will be invited to agree the terms of reference for a Professional Liaison Group at their meetings in June and July 2015.