

Council, 7 December 2016

Policy and Standards Report

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

This report provides the Council with an update into the work of the Policy and Standards Directorate in the period September to November 2016. Areas from the report to highlight are as follows.

- The changes agreed by the Council to how the medicines exemption annotations held by some chiropractors and podiatrists are described have now been implemented.
- The regulations necessary to implement ('transpose') the revised European Professional Qualifications Directive are now in force. We are now charging for European Professional Card (EPC) applications.
- The research being carried out by the University of Surrey is progressing to timetable with an interim report due to be considered by the Council at its March 2017 meeting.

Decision

The Council is asked to discuss the Policy and Standards report

Appendices

None

Date of paper

21 November 2016

Policy and Standards Directorate report – 7 December 2016

This paper provides an update about the work of the Directorate.

1. Consultations – open

- Consultation on social media guidance – ends 13 January 2017.
- Consultation on revised CPD guidance – ends 13 January 2017.
- Consultation on revised guidance on confidentiality – ends 13 January 2017.
- Consultation on revised standards of education and training and guidance – extended to 9 December 2017.

2. Consultations – recently closed

- Consultation on revised returning to practice guidance – ended 7 October 2016. Outcomes due to be considered by the Education and Training Committee and the Council in March 2017.

3. Department resourcing

- Katherine Timms started on 29 November 2016 as the Department's Policy Manager.

4. Register changes

- An operational project has recently been completed to make changes to the registration system and online register.
- The 'Local anaesthetics' and 'Prescription only medicines' annotations of chiropodists and podiatrists have now been renamed, in line with the Council's decision following a consultation earlier this year.
- The registration system now allows the Register entries of dietitians, therapeutic radiographers and orthoptists to be annotated once they have completed training in prescribing or medicines exemptions.
- The online register now includes extra information about arts therapists and radiographers that was previously only published on registration certificates. The Register now tells you whether a registered arts therapist is an art therapist, art psychotherapist, music therapist or dramatherapist. The register now tells you whether a radiographer is a diagnostic or therapeutic radiographer.

5. Revised professional qualifications directive

- The regulations necessary to fully implement ('transpose') the revised professional qualifications directive (which governs how the HCPC handles applications from applicants exercising European Economic Area mutual recognition rights) have been laid and are now in force.
- The HCPC is already working in line with the revised Directive, so the regulations being in place have little direct impact. The main implication is that we have commenced charging for European Professional Card (EPC) applications (as agreed by the Council at its December 2015 meeting). The EPC is an initiative which applies to physiotherapists which is intended to streamline the process of recognising professional qualifications.¹

6. Research

- The following provides an update about some of the research activities managed by the Department.
 - **Costs and impact of CPD (Newcastle University; commissioned by the Department of Health)**
We are now in receipt of a final report. A paper is due to be considered by the Council at its March 2017 meeting.
 - **Understanding the prevalence of fitness to practise cases about paramedics and social workers in England (University of Surrey)**
The review of fitness to practise cases is underway. Interviews are also ongoing and planning is taking place for registrant focus groups to take place in February 2017. An interim report is due to be considered by the Council at its March 2017 meeting.
- An event took place on 10 November 2016 to engage stakeholders on our future research priorities.

7. Welsh language standards

- A response has been submitted to the Welsh Government's consultation on draft regulations which would enable the Welsh Language Commissioner to apply certain standards about the Welsh language to some of the professional regulators, including the HCPC.

¹ For more information about the European Professional Card see paper considered by the Council at its 2 December 2015 meeting.

<http://www.hcpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10004E5FEnc09-EuropeanProfessionalCardFees.pdf>

- The Welsh Government is proposing to exempt the regulators listed from some sections of the standards, as it has concluded that some of them are inappropriate for organisations that are not physically located in Wales. The remaining standards, if included in the final regulations and enforced by the Commissioner, may have an impact on the HCPC, some of which could be significant – for example, there are standards relating to producing a completely bilingual website. Once regulations are laid and come into force, we will not know which standards will definitely apply and in what timeframe until the Welsh Language Commissioner issues a compliance notice.
- The Executive has also provided further information and data to inform a regulatory impact assessment and has provided information and data to the Welsh Language Commissioner as part of demonstrating compliance with our existing Welsh Language Scheme.
- We will keep the Council updated about developments in this area.