

THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL

Chief Executive and Registrar: Mr Marc Seale

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MINUTES of the fifteenth meeting of the Health Committee held at **11a.m. on Monday 16th January 2006** at Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London, SE11 4BU.

Professor T Hazell (Chairman)
 Mr O Altay
 Mrs P Blackburn
 Mr M Davies
 Ms R Levenson
 Mrs J Pearce
 Mrs A Turner

IN ATTENDANCE:

Professor N Brook, President
 Ms S Butcher, Secretary to Committees
 Miss K Johnson, Director, Fitness to Practise
 Miss L McKell, Partners Manager
 Mr M Seale, Chief Executive and Registrar

Item 1.06/01 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Professor Brook to the meeting; who was attending the meeting in her capacity of President of the Health Professions Council.

Item 2.06/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2.1 Two apologies for absence were received from the following committee members; Mrs S Drayton and Dr C Kenny.

Item 3.06/02 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 3.1 The Health Committee approved the agenda.

Item 4.06/03 MINUTES OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7TH NOVEMBER 2005

- 4.1 It was agreed that the minutes of the fourteenth meeting of the Health Committee be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Item 5.06/04 MATTERS ARISING/ACTIONS LIST

- 5.1 The Chairman reported that a meeting had taken place between the Chairmen of the Committees as well as the Chief Executive at which it was agreed that an actions list be provided at all future committee meetings. This was to ensure that all committee members were in agreement with the agenda, if additional agenda items were identified the Committee was encouraged to notify the Secretary as soon as possible.

Action: Health Committee members (as soon as possible)

- 5.2 Item 9.4 – Making a complaint about a Health Professional
- 5.1.2 The Chairman reported that Community Health Councils in Wales carried a statutory responsibility for dealing with complaints about the NHS in Wales. He provided information to be included in guidance for members of the public regarding making a complaint against a health professional. The Chairman urged committee members to forward any other information regarding such support organisations to the Director of Fitness to Practise.
- 5.3 Item 12.3 – HPC Performance Appraisal System for Panel Members and Panel Chairs
- 5.1.3 The Partners Manager reported that the Partners' complaints system had now been presented to Council and all recommended revisions incorporated. The 20th January 2006 was the deadline by which further comments should be received. The final document would be presented to the March meeting of Council for approval.
- 5.2.3 Further clarification was sought on the ratification process as undertaken via e-mail to approve documents, specifically whether alternate members of Council were included in such requests. The Secretary to the Committee reported that she would consult the Secretary of Council on this matter and report back at the next meeting.

ACTION: SB (by 12th April 2006)

- 5.4 Item 13.4 – Practice Notes
- 5.1.4 The Committee noted that the practice notes were currently being updated.

Item 6.06/05 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- 6.1 The Chairman had nothing to report on this occasion.

Item 7.06/06 DIRECTOR OF FITNESS TO PRACTISE REPORT

- 7.1 The Committee received the Director of Fitness to Practise Report.
- 7.2 The Director of Fitness to Practise reported that the number of hearings had risen since December 2005 and that there was nothing significant to report back to the Committee at this stage. The Committee made no additional comments.

Item 8.06/07 STRATEGIC INTENT

- 8.1 The Committee received a paper from the Chief Executive for discussion/approval.
- 8.2 The Committee agreed that they would review section six of the strategic intent 'Issues to Resolve'. This was the most relevant for the committee's work as the preceding sections were factual and not indicative of future challenges.
- 8.3 The Chief Executive reported that HPC had produced a number of documents to assist in the future forward planning of the organisation, for example the five year plan. The Committee noted that the strategic intent document provided an indication of the issues that HPC may need to address and was in the public domain for reference. The document as presented had been amended to incorporate Council members' feedback received at the Away Day.
- 8.4 The Committee noted that the Foster and Donaldson reports when published would be of especial importance. The full extent of the changes may take up to two years to adopt and some changes maybe adopted via Section 60 Orders.
- 8.5 The Committee noted that a refinement of the approvals process was still in progress. The Equality and Diversity scheme once approved by Council was to be implemented in the next 5 years. The paper would then be referred onto the fitness to practise committees for their information. The Committee noted that as more professions were regulated by the HPC a centralised grandparenting assessment process might be adopted as opposed to the distributed system currently in operation.
- 8.6 A committee member asked where matters of health, disability and registration were debated now that the professional liaison group set up to

discuss such matters had concluded its work. The Committee noted that two guidance documents had been produced by the group; Becoming a registered Health Professional and Information about the Health Reference. The Committee noted that these were guidance documents only and in terms of the register the Council set the standards under Article 5(2)(b) of the Health Professions Order 2001. A Committee member was concerned about students that met the standards of proficiency but yet were refused registration because of their subsequent health reference. The Chief Executive requested that the Committee member forwarded the concerns of the students in writing to him. The Chairman reported that he would highlight this matter at the next Education and Training Committee.

Action: Chairman (by 29th March 2006)

- 8.7 The Committee discussed recent events which had been reported in the media whereby it had transpired that some teachers who were on the sex offenders register had managed to escape identification. The Committee were concerned to prevent a similar thing from happening with regard to the health professionals that HPC registered. The Director of Fitness to Practise reported that she currently sat on the regulatory group for Bichard whose remit included the effective sharing and dissemination of information across the regulatory bodies. The Committee noted that the groups' work was still very much in the planning and policy stages.
- 8.8 The Committee noted that the sanctions notes were revised last year and the note asked the panel to consider whether a registrant having their name on the Sex Offenders Register was conducive with continued registration. The Committee also noted that a potential applicant was obliged to declare any conviction or caution at the point of admission to the register. It was also noted that the HPC should be informed if a registered was convicted or cautioned for an offence.
- 8.9 The Chief Executive reported that there was a new directive in Europe to seek common platforms for professional standardisation. All were in agreement that it was important for the HPC to be aware and informed of this process.
- 8.10 The Committee discussed prospective new professions arising from the NHS and what this meant in terms of regulation for the HPC. The Committee noted that Stroke therapists for example undertook various duties which had borrowed different aspects from other health roles and combined them under a generic title. The Committee noted that this matter would be specifically addressed in the Foster Review as there was a growing trend in these types of professions emerging. The Committee agreed that HPC needed to be patient centred when reviewing its strategy

and protecting the public was its priority. It was therefore agreed that Public/patient involvement should be included as a short-term plan in the strategy.

Action: MJS (as soon as possible)

- 8.11 The Committee recommended that Council approved the strategic intent document subject to the incorporation of the changes as detailed above.

Item 9.06/08 HPC PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM FOR PANEL MEMBERS AND PANEL CHAIRMEN

- 9.1 The Committee received a paper from the Partners Manager for discussion/approval.
- 9.2 The Committee noted that the appraisal forms developed for both panel members and panel Chairmen had already been reviewed by the Registration and Education and Training Committees and all comments incorporated. The appraisal forms had also been reviewed by HPC's public affairs Solicitor and Kingsley Napley HPC's Human Resources Solicitors. Once implemented the appraisal forms would be refined and changes incorporated where necessary. The Partners Manager reported that the opportunity was given for panel members and or panel Chairmen to request a one to one meeting with their appraiser if this was felt to be appropriate.
- 9.3 The Committee discussed how categories such as outstanding performance were defined and by what parameters this was measured. The Committee noted that appraisal questions were provided under competency types and therefore assessment criteria should be easily comprehended.
- 9.4 The Committee approved the appraisal system for panel members and panel Chairmen and recommended that Council did the same.

Item 10.06/09 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 10.1 There was no other business.

Item 11.06/10 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- 11.1 The next meeting of the Health Committee will be held at 11.a.m. on Wednesday 12th April 2006.

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