

# Standards of Proficiency Review PLG Meeting: 24<sup>th</sup> January 2006

## Scope of practice

### Executive Summary and Recommendations

#### Introduction

At its meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2005 the Professional Liaison Group requested that the work undertaken for the Health, Disability and Registration PLG on scope of practice was distributed to the group at the next meeting.

The Council has recently consulted on a document entitled 'Managing fitness to practise'. This document deals with the ways in which health professionals and employers can manage fitness to practise and was produced as a result of the PLG on Health, Disability and Registration.

The document considers issues around scope of practice. This section is enclosed for the consideration of the group.

The full text of the consultation document is available on our website: [www.hpc-uk.org/publications](http://www.hpc-uk.org/publications)

Attached is a draft of possible revisions to the introductory section of the Standards of Proficiency which deals with scope of practice. The amendments are suggested following the work undertaken on health, disability and registration and managing fitness to practise. The amendments suggested include paragraphs addressing how the standards sit along side other professional guidance and defining more clearly scope of practice.

#### Decision

The scope of practice section from the 'Managing fitness to practise' consultation document is enclosed for discussion; no decision is required.

The group is invited to comment on the proposed changes to the introduction of the Standards of Proficiency. Any suggested amendments could then be made and this section kept under review as the Group's work progresses.

#### Background information

None

#### Resource Implications

None

## **Financial Implications**

None

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Scope of Practice, from 'Managing Fitness to Practise' (consultation document).

Appendix 2: Suggested changes to the introduction of the Standards of Proficiency.

## Your scope of practice

Each profession that we regulate has its own Standards of Proficiency. You can download these from our website, or contact us to request a hard copy. These standards define the expectations of a health professional, the skills required for the application of practice, and the knowledge understanding and skills. Every registered health professional must meet these standards, and must also meet the Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics.

When you first apply to come onto the Register, we need certain pieces of information from you, to make sure that you meet our standards. You need to send us a health reference and a character reference, and you are also required to tell us about any criminal convictions or cautions, or any action taken against you by a professional body or another regulator.

Before you are registered, we also need to know that you meet our Standards of Proficiency. How we check that you meet our Standards of Proficiency varies depending on where you trained.

If you completed a UK approved course, this means that we have assessed your course, we know that it meets our standards of education and training, and that people who complete that course meet the standards of proficiency for your profession. If you trained abroad, then your experience and qualifications are assessed by people from the same profession, to see whether you meet the Standards of Proficiency.

When you come onto the Register for the first time, this means that you meet the whole of the Standards of Proficiency for your profession<sup>1</sup>.

The Standards of Proficiency say, 'We do recognise ... that your practice will change over time and that the practice of experienced registrants frequently becomes more focused and specialised than that of newly qualified colleagues, because it relates to a particular client

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<sup>1</sup> The exception to this is applicants via the 'Grandparenting' route A, who need to demonstrate three out of the last five years 'lawful, safe and effective practice' in order to be registered. This transitional route to registration is only open for a limited time for each profession, and then closes. More information about Grandparenting is available on our website: [www.hpc-uk.org](http://www.hpc-uk.org)

group, practice environment, employment sector or occupational role. Your particular scope of practice may mean that you are unable to demonstrate that you continue to meet each of the standards that apply for your profession...

‘So long as you stay within your scope of practice and make reasonable efforts to stay up to date with the whole of these standards, this will not be problematic.

‘However, if you want to move outside your scope of practice, you must be certain that you are capable of working safely and effectively, including undertaking any necessary training and experience.’

After you have been registered with us, your scope of practice may therefore change so that you can no longer demonstrate that you meet the whole of the standards of proficiency. This may be because of specialisation in your job, a move into management, education or research, or it may be because your fitness to practise in certain areas is impaired. A changing scope of practice is not necessarily a cause for us to take action or a cause for concern.

### **Example**

A speech and language therapist’s first job after graduating was one where she worked entirely with children. She worked in this area for nearly ten years, building up considerable expertise.

When the opportunity came to manage a team of speech and language therapists that worked with a variety of different patients, clients and users, she felt that her skills in other areas needed refreshing. With the support of her new employer, she attended training, and completed private study, to update her skills and ensure that she could safely extend her scope of practice to effectively practise in her new role.

Your scope of practice is the area or areas of your profession in which you have the knowledge, skills and experience to practise lawfully, safely and effectively, in a way that meets our standards and does not pose any danger to the public or to yourself. Your scope of practise may change over time, and you should be aware of your scope of practice and ensure that you only practise within it. It is closely linked to your ‘fitness to practise’, but the two are not the same.

## Appendix 2

### **Suggested changes to the introduction of the Standards of Proficiency**

New or amended sections appear in italics

Page 3:

#### **‘A note about our expectations of you**

The standards of proficiency play a central role in how you can gain admission to, and remain on, the Register and thereby gain the right to the protect title(s) of your profession. Therefore we expect you to be able to meet these standards.

*The standards set out in this document sit alongside information and guidance issued by other organisations, such as your professional body or your employer. We recognise that most registrants will comfortably exceed our standards. However it is important that you read and understand this document. If your practice is called into question we will consider these standards (and our standards of conduct, performance and ethics) in deciding what action, if any, we need to take.*

#### ***Your scope of practice***

*Your scope of practice is the area or areas of your profession in which you have the knowledge, skills and experience to practise lawfully, safely and effectively, in a way that meets our standards and does not pose any danger to the public or to yourself.*

We recognise that a registrant’s scope of practice will change over time and that the practice of experienced registrants becomes more focused and specialised than that of newly registered colleagues. *This might be because of specialisation in a certain clinical area or with a particular client group, or a movement into roles in management, education or research.*

Your particular scope of practice may mean that you are unable to demonstrate that you meet all of the standards that apply for your profession. For instance, if you work with adults alone, then any standards that relate to how you must work with children will not apply to you day-to-day work. *As long as you ensure that you are capable of practising safely and effectively within your given scope of practice and do not practise in the areas where you are not able to do so, this will not be a problem.* If you want to move outside of your scope of practice you should be certain that you are capable of working safely and effectively, including undertaking any necessary training and experience.

#### ***Meeting the standards***

*It is important that our registrants meet our standards and are able to practise safely and effectively. However, we don’t dictate how you should meet our standards. There*

*is often more than one way in which a standard can be met and the way in which you meet our standards might change over time because of improvements in technology or changes in your practice. As an autonomous professional you need to make informed, reasoned decisions about your practice to ensure that you meet the standards that apply to you. This includes seeking advice and support from education providers, employers, colleagues and others to ensure that the wellbeing of patients, clients and users is safeguarded at all times.'*



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