

Notes of a meeting to discuss the structure of the register held at 10am on Tuesday 14 September 2004 at Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London, SE11 4 BU.

PRESENT: Professor N Brook (President)
Mr J Camp
Mr R Clegg
Ms C Farrell
Prof. J. Harper
Professor T Hazell
Dr R Jones
Mr C Lea
Ms R Levenson
Professor C Lloyd
Professor J Lucas
Mrs C McGartland
Mr W Munro
Dr J Old
Miss G Pearson
Mr K Ross
Mrs. B. Stuart
Mr G Sutehall
Dr A Van Der Gaag
Mr D Whitmore
Mr N Willis
Dr S Yule

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. J. Bracken, Bircham, Dyson, Bell
Ms F Nixon, Director of Education and Policy ((part))
Ms N O'Sullivan, Secretary to Council
Mr M Seale, Chief Executive and Registrar

- 1.1 The Chief Executive, Mr Seale, opened the meeting by outlining the background to the issue to be discussed. He noted that currently there were 25 members on Council and that each of the 12 registrant members had an alternate, making a total number of 37 Council members. There was a correlation between the size of the Council and the number of the professions regulated as there was a registrant Council member for each part of the register and the number of lay members reflected the number of registrant members. Since the HPC had been established in April 2002 there had been approaches from over 40 aspirant groups seeking regulation. Under the current system the number of members on the Council could rise to over a hundred if the HPC agreed to regulate all these professions.
- 1.2 In March 2004 the HPC had consulted on the structure of the register and had laid out three options as follows;

- (i) The regulation of a new profession by the HPC should always result in the creation of a new part of the register and the number of Council members increasing by two.
 - (ii) The number of registrant members should not directly correlate to the number of parts of the register or the number of specific professions.
 - (iii) Gradual evolution of the structure of the register and the number of members of Council
- 1.3 There had been 36 written responses to the consultation and the majority of the respondents had agreed with option 3.
- 1.4 The Council noted that the register for Operating Department Practitioners would open on 18 October 2004 and that Council would be asked to make a recommendation of the regulation of four healthcare scientist professions in October 2004. Any decision regarding the structure of the register would have to be implemented rapidly. There was a need to decide on the maximum size to which Council could grow. There appeared to be a general consensus that there should be a maximum of 30 members. The Council noted that the third option set out in the consultation, a gradual evolution of the structure of the register, appeared to be the most workable however it was important that there was a strategic overview of what that evolution should be. There was a need to set down principles regarding the grouping of professions. The detail would emerge once there had been a decision regarding general principles.
- 1.5 The Council noted that there appeared to be an ongoing misunderstanding that the role of registrant members was to represent the interests of their individual profession. The Health Professions Order 2001 made no distinction between the roles of registrant and lay Council members and all were expected to participate in and work towards fulfilling the Council functions. It was important to set up a structure which reached beyond Council to communicate with and receive feedback from all regulated professions and stakeholders. In this way all professions would be involved in the setting of standards and in ensuring that the HPC carried out all its functions. The strategy followed by Council since its inception had been to create common standards for all professions with the overriding aim of protecting the register. This suggested that the link between the professions regulated by the HPC and the structure of the register could be broken. The election voting mechanism could be altered so that there could be a fixed number of candidates for which all registrants could vote.
- 1.6 The Council agreed that all members should put their thoughts on this issue in writing and forward these to the Chief Executive by Monday 27 September 2004. The Executive would prepare a paper to be presented to the October away day for discussion.