

Health Professions Council
Council Meeting, 6th July 2006
Review of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics: Work plan

Executive Summary and Recommendations

Introduction

Article 21 (1) of the Health Professions Order 2001 (“the order”) provides that:

The Council shall—

(a) establish and keep under review the standards of conduct, performance and ethics expected of registrants and prospective registrants and give them such guidance on these matters as it sees fit

Article 27 of the order further provides that the Conduct and competence Committee shall—

(a) having consulted the other Practice Committees as it thinks appropriate advise the Council (whether on the Council’s request or otherwise) on—

(i) the performance of the Council’s functions in relation to standards of conduct, performance and ethics expected of registrants and prospective registrants

The attached work plan sets out the proposed timetable of activities to review the existing standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

At its meeting on 20th April 2006, the Conduct and Competence Committee agreed the work plan and recommended its approval by the Council.

Decision

The Council is invited to approve the attached workplan.

Background information

The work plan was considered by the meeting of the fitness to practise chairmen and deputy-chairmen on 3rd March 2006. Their comments have been incorporated into the workplan.

Resource implications

- Research and writing of committee papers
- Consultation on new standards (if appropriate)

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2006-06-06	a	POL	PPR	SCPE - Workplan - Council 06.07.06	Final DD: None	Public RD: None

- Producing consultation responses document
- Type-setting and publication of new standards (if appropriate) online and in hard-copy.

Financial implications

- Editing of new standards (if required) by the Plain English campaign
- Publication of new standards (if required)

Background papers

None

Appendices

None

Date of paper

26th June 2006

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Review of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics: Work plan

1. Terms of Reference

To review the Standards of conduct, performance and ethics to make sure that they:

- (i) assist in HPC's primary role to protect the public;
- (ii) conform to public expectations of health professionals;
- (iii) are suitably generic so that they are relevant to registrants of all 13 professions;
- (iv) are appropriate to the situations faced by registrants; and
- (v) are easily understood by registrants, members of the public and other stakeholders.

The standards are used in fitness to practise proceedings and in making admission decisions about good health and character and the review will ensure that the standards continue to be fit for these purposes.

2. Lead

The Conduct and Competence Committee should lead the review, taking into account the views of the Health Committee and Investigating Committee and members of the Education and Training Committee. They should make recommendations to the Council.

The review will follow the proposed work plan as far as possible. However, the Conduct and Competence Committee will be responsible for any subsequent alteration to the plan of activities and timetable.

3. Plan

The review should take into account the views of all relevant stakeholder groups.

There should be an initial online consultation period during which feedback about the standards is invited from HPCs stakeholders. This will be an online form which asks a small number of questions about the existing standards and invites any comments or suggestions about whether or how they should be amended. The form will be available via a link from the front page of the HPC website and will be publicised via:

- a press release;
- an article in the news letter; and
- a letter to all key stakeholders

The review should also consider and take into account:

- the standards and codes of practice of other organisations;
- any changes in legislation since the original standards were produced;

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- information from fitness to practise panellists and a review of the cases heard to date;
- information from the professional bodies; and
- information from groups who have a patient/ public involvement perspective.

The above is not an exhaustive list.

The above approach is suggested as a thorough way of reviewing the standards. The initial consultation will allow the Council to reach a potentially wide range of stakeholders who have an interest in the standards. This will inform the progress of the subsequent review process.

4. Plan of Activities

The following is a suggested plan of activities for the review:

July/August 2006

Initial Online Consultation – approximately 6 weeks

September 2006

Meetings of the Health Committee (7th September 2006), Investigating Committee (14th September 2006), Conduct and Competence Committee (19th September 2006).

Discussion forums with patient / consumer groups and professional bodies

These meetings have been provisionally scheduled for **25th September 2006** and **29th September 2006**.

There will be participation of the chairs of the three fitness to practise committees.

October 2006

Discussion at Council away day – 4th and 5th October 2006 (pending the approval / opinion of the new President)

November 2006

Draft produced and presented at meetings of Health Committee (7th November 2006), Investigating Committee (16th November 2006) and Conduct and Competence Committee (22nd November 2006). Views sought from members of the Education and Training Committee (electronic).

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December 2006

Recommendations of Conduct and Competence Committee made to Council for discussion/ approval at meeting – 14th December 2006.

January to March 2007

Public consultation

April 2007

Conduct and Competence Committee – 23rd April 2007. Committee considers draft consultation responses document and makes decisions regarding final draft of the standards.

July 2007

Council meeting 5th July 2007 – new standards ratified (subject to plain english editing).

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