

Council, 4 July 2013

Annotation of the Register – qualifications in podiatric surgery

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

At its meeting on 10 May 2012, the Council, following a recommendation from the Education and Training Committee, decided that we should annotate qualifications in podiatric surgery on our Register.

The qualification is currently the Certificate of Completion in Podiatric Surgical Training, although work is taking place in Scotland to develop a comparable qualification delivering training in podiatric surgery practice as well. We will annotate both of those qualifications on our Register. We currently anticipate that we will start annotating the Register in spring 2014.

This paper asks Council to agree how we will describe the annotation. We are asking Council to make the decision now, so that this can be communicated to stakeholders in good time and so that we can include the decision within the consultation document setting out the draft standards. This paper was previously considered and agreed by ETC at its meeting on 6 June 2013.

Decision

The Council is invited to agree that the annotation should be described as ‘podiatric surgery’, as set out in paragraph 4.4 of the document.

Background information

The Council has previously considered several papers on podiatric surgery. The most recent was at the meeting in May 2012:
www.hcpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10003A3Eenc06-annotationofregisterpodiatricsurgery.pdf

Resource implications

There are no resource implications associated with this paper.

Financial implications

There are no financial implications associated with this paper.

Appendices

None

Date of paper

24 June 2013

Annotation of the Register – qualifications in podiatric surgery

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting on 10 May 2012, the Council, following a recommendation from the Education and Training Committee (ETC), decided that we should annotate qualifications in podiatric surgery on our Register.
- 1.2 The qualification is currently the Certificate of Completion in Podiatric Surgical Training, although work is taking place in Scotland to develop a comparable qualification delivering training in podiatric surgery practice as well. We will annotate both of those qualifications on our Register.
- 1.3 Work is currently taking place to draft standards for the annotation. These standards will be presented at the ETC meeting in September 2013 and at a subsequent meeting of Council.
- 1.4 This paper asks Council to agree how we will describe the annotation. We are asking Council to make the decision now, so that this can be communicated to stakeholders in good time and so that we can include the decision within the consultation document setting out the draft standards. This paper was previously considered by ETC at its meeting on 6 June 2013.

2. Background information

Our powers

- 2.1 We have powers to annotate our Register. These powers are set out in the Health and Social Work Professions Order 2001 ('the Order') and in the Health Professions Council (Parts and Entries in the Register) Order of Council 2003.
- 2.2 Those Orders give us powers around post-registration qualifications. They are the power to:
 - record post-registration qualifications or additional competencies in the Register;
 - approve post-registration qualifications for these purposes;
 - approve and establish standards of education and training for post-registration entitlements; and
 - produce standards of proficiency or their functional equivalent.
- 2.3 Whilst we have powers to annotate qualifications on our Register and to decide how the annotation will be described, we do not have powers to protect a title or function linked to that annotation. Protection of a title or function requires a

change in the law and such decisions are a matter for government and not for ourselves.

Existing annotations

- 2.4 Currently we annotate our Register to indicate where a registrant has undertaken additional training around medicines and has obtained entitlements to supply, administer or prescribe these medicines. We are required to do this by the Prescriptions Only Medicines (Human Use) Order 1997.
- 2.5 The Register is currently annotated where:
- A chiropodist / podiatrist, physiotherapist or radiographer has completed an approved programme enabling them to become a supplementary prescriber.
 - A chiropodist / podiatrist has completed an approved programme allowing them to sell / supply prescription only medicines and / or administer local anaesthetics.

Communicating an annotation

- 2.6 When we annotate the Register, we can set standards for the practice linked to the annotation and approve relevant qualifications. Annotation also provides information to the public (including to service users, colleagues and employers) about whether a registrant has completed additional training in a particular area.
- 2.7 We communicate information to members of the public about annotations in a number of ways including:
- through the on-line Register (where additional information explains the annotation); and
 - through the registration certificate (issued every time that a registrant renews their registration).
- 2.8 As we do not have powers to protect a title or function linked to an annotation, in the past we have used the verb to describe the annotation. For example, we use the phrase 'supplementary prescribing' to describe the annotation to show that a registrant is entitled to act as a supplementary prescriber, rather than using the term 'supplementary prescriber'.
- 2.9 As the annotation appears on-line and on registration certificates, it is important that it is succinct and can be easily understood by stakeholders.

3. Use of title

Titles currently being used

- 3.1 Most podiatrists working in this area within the NHS in England are employed under the title 'podiatric surgeon'. The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists has previously discussed whether the title should be changed.¹

¹ <http://www.scpod.org/media-centre/press-section/press-release-archive/podiatric-surgeons-consider-change-of-title/>

- 3.2 NHS Education for Scotland (NES) is currently developing a training programme in Scotland that will deliver training in podiatric surgery. Their current intention is that podiatrists who complete the programme will work in Scotland using the title Consultant Podiatrist in Podiatric Surgery.
- 3.3 There is currently no training in podiatric surgery in Northern Ireland or Wales, and we are aware of a few podiatrists practising in podiatric surgery in Northern Ireland, with none practising in Wales.

Stakeholder feedback

- 3.4 Between November 2010 and February 2011, we consulted on proposals related to post-registration qualifications and annotation of the Register. We asked stakeholders for their feedback on a number of areas, including whether or not we should annotate qualifications in podiatric surgery on our Register.
- 3.5 A number of respondents to the consultation raised concerns about the use of the title 'podiatric surgeon'. They were concerned that the title implied that the individual was a qualified medical practitioner who had moved into surgery of the foot and that the public was being misled about the individual's qualifications.
- 3.6 However, other respondent pointed out that 'podiatric surgeon' is a title that is already widely used within the NHS in England. Podiatrists are employed under that title and have been using it for a number of years.
- 3.7 We have also been contacted in the past by journalists, including a BBC London piece in 2009.² We also occasionally receive correspondence from stakeholders, including professional bodies for the medical/surgical professions and individual service users about the use of the title podiatric surgeon.

4. Proposal

- 4.1 As set out in paragraph 3.1 above, the Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists has previously discussed a proposal to change the title that podiatrists working in this area use. Several different titles have been discussed, including 'podiatrist in podiatric surgery' and 'podiatrist in foot and ankle surgery'.
- 4.2 However, 'podiatrist in foot and ankle surgery' is not a title which is currently used by service providers. In addition, podiatrists continue to be employed under the title 'podiatric surgeon'.
- 4.3 The Council should consider the following when deciding how the annotation is described.
- The annotation must be clear to stakeholders and must not mislead them about the qualifications, skills or experience of the podiatrists whose entry on the Register is annotated.

² http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/london/hi/tv_and_radio/newsid_8400000/8400189.stm

- It must be flexible, to reflect the fact that we will annotate both the Certificate of Completion in Podiatric Surgical Training and the comparable qualification being developed by NHS Education for Scotland.
- The annotation must be consistent with other annotations on our online Register.
- The annotation must be recognised by employers, the profession and service providers.

4.4 In light of the feedback we have received and to ensure consistency with other annotations, the Executive proposes that the annotation should be described as 'podiatric surgery'. This verb title most clearly relates to the area of practice that is described. The annotation will appear on both registration certificates and on the on-line Register (where supporting information will explain the annotation in more detail).

4.5 The Council is invited to discuss the proposal set out in paragraph 4.4 above and agree that the annotation 'podiatric surgery' should be used.