

Education and Training Committee 25 November 2009

Consultation on an amendment to the Health Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules Order of Council 2003 – key decisions

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

We consulted on a proposed amendment to the Health Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules Order of Council 2003 in order to set the registration cycle for hearing aid dispensers.

We suggested that, dependent upon the passage and timing of the necessary legislation, the end date of the renewal cycle for hearing aid dispensers should be 31 July in even numbered years.

Decision

The Committee is invited to:

- discuss the key decisions document; and
- agree and recommend to the Council the text of the key decisions document (subject to any minor editing changes) for publication on the HPC website.

Background information

Paper considered by the Council on 9 July 2009:
Enclosure 8 at http://www.hpc-uk.org/aboutus/council/councilmeetings_archive/index.asp?id=417

Resource implications

The approach to setting the registration cycle for hearing aid dispensers takes into account resource implications.

Financial implications

None

Appendices

- Consultation on an amendment to the Health Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules Order of Council 2003 – key decisions

Date of paper

10 November 2009

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Introduction

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We suggested that, dependent upon the passage and timing of the necessary legislation, the end date of the renewal cycle for hearing aid dispensers should be 31 July in even numbered years.

Background

The Hearing Aid Council (HAC) is the statutory body responsible for setting standards of professional training, performance and conduct for individuals and companies involved in the assessment of hearing loss and subsequent sale of hearing aids. The HAC holds a register of hearing aid dispensers.

The Department of Health has recently consulted on an Order under section 60 of the Health Act 1999 about the regulation of private hearing aid dispensers. Under this Order, the HAC will be abolished and responsibility for the registration of hearing aid dispensers will be transferred to the Health Professions Council. Assuming the Order is approved by Parliament, we currently anticipate that a new part of the Register for hearing aid dispensers will open in April 2010.

Registration with the HPC is renewed every two years. Each profession has a two year cycle and renews its registration on the same date, no matter when an individual first applied for registration with us.

We consulted last year on the registration cycle for hearing aid dispensers, based upon the Register for hearing aid dispensers opening in April 2009. However, the legislation to transfer hearing aid dispensers from the HAC to the HPC was delayed. The delay to the legislation has also affected the two year registration cycle. Consequently, we ran a second consultation on a revised registration cycle.

Consultation responses

The consultation document was sent to a variety of different stakeholders and was available to download from our website. We received three responses to the consultation. The organisations who responded were Hidden Hearing, the Board of Community Health Councils in Wales and the British Society of Hearing Aid Audiologists (BSHAA).

All three respondents supported the proposed amendments to the registration cycle for hearing aid dispensers.

We would like to thank all those who responded to this consultation for their time and comments.

Previous consultation

We received six responses to the consultation that took place last year, based upon the Register for hearing aid dispensers opening in April 2009.

Two responses were submitted by individuals who supported the proposed amendments.

Four organisations responded: Hidden Hearing, the Board of Community Health Councils in Wales, BSHAA and Amplifon.

All four organisations supported the amendments.

BSHAA also stated that they hoped that the 'transfer from HAC to HPC registered will be achieved speedily and efficiently; as early in 2009/10 as possible in order to avoid further HAC costs and the potential fees for dispenser fees to be applied for part 2009/10'.

Hidden Hearing said that 'the decision regarding the actual month of renewal and whether this should be odd or even dated years, must be decided when the actual transfer date of HAC Register is known.'

Our decision

We are pleased that respondents to the consultation agreed with the proposed amendment to schedule five of the Health Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules Order of Council 2003 in order to set the registration cycle for hearing aid dispensers. We have decided that, assuming hearing aid dispensers join the HPC Register in April 2010, the end date of the renewal cycle for hearing aid dispensers will be 31 July in even numbered years.

The Rules will now be amended in line with the consultation proposals so that the necessary amendments can come into force (subject to parliamentary approval) at or around the same time as The Health Professions (Hearing Aid Dispensers) Order 2009.