

Introduction

Over the coming months the HPC will undertake a Consultation Process to establish the detailed workings of the Health Professions Order 2001. It is assumed that the process will be completed by 31st March 2003 with the ending of the First Transitional Period.

However, by the start of the Second Transitional Period the HPC must have established formal relationships with a wide range of individuals who will undertake work on its behalf.

The range of individuals will be referred to as “**Partners**” in the rest of this paper.

In some cases the work of the Partners will be almost identical to that they previously undertook for the CPSM and the HPC during the First Transitional Period. However, in many areas it will be substantially different.

The Partners are as follows:

- Education and Training Institute Visitors
- Legal Assessors
- Medical Assessors
- Overseas Assessors
- Assessors for grandparenting
- Assessors for knowledge of English
- Other professional advisors for investigation, health and conduct and competence committees

In addition, the OIC gives the HPC a new option of using the services of a range of Partners. They are as follows:

- Mediators
- Screeners
- Registered Medical Practitioners for all Practice Committees

The following paper identifies a range of issues and some initial options that HPC must resolve to enable it to successfully recruit, train, deploy and manage Partners.

The draft timetable for this process indicates that HPC must start the process to start to recruit, train, deploy and manage Partners before the end of the consultation process. It is therefore important to note that because HPC is considering how it could recruit Partners where it is not certain that they will be used, for example Screeners, that this should not be construed that HPC has made the decision to use them.

Rather, it is sensible contingency planning to enable a seamless transfer between the First and Second Transitional Periods.

Decision

The Council is requested to ask the Chief Executive working in cooperation with the Statutory and Non-Statutory Committees to review how HPC could recruit, train, deploy and manage the Partners that it shall or may need following the end of the First Transitional Period and to present any recommendations to the Council on 9th October 2002.

Issues to be resolved

Timetable

It has been assumed that the formal appointments of Partners will not be confirmed until after the Privy Council approves the HPC Rules. This is currently assumed to be by 1st April 2003. However, to have in place a small cadre of suitably qualified and trained Partners the process will have to start six months before in October 2002. The proposed timetable is as follows:

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Job Descriptions agreed | 8 th October 2002 |
| • Recruitment Advertisements | 1 st November 2002 |
| • Interviews | Mid January 2003 |
| • “Shadow Appointments” | 1 st February 2003 |
| • Training | Mid March 2003 |
| • Formal Appointments | 1 st April 2003 |
| • Organise a “Kick Off” meeting | April 2003 |

Number of Partners

The dilemma facing the HPC is how many of each type of Partner will be required. In some cases, for example Education and Training Institute Visitors, it will be similar to the numbers used by CPSM and HPC during the First Transitional Period. However, where the function is new or where the workload is higher it will increase.

However, if HPC under-recruits it will not be able to deal with the work in a timely and efficient manner. On the other hand, if HPC over-recruits, then resources will be wasted and the goodwill of Partners compromised.

It is therefore recommended that recruitment and training be undertaken in small incremental steps. Any increase in demand should be closely monitored and if detected the recruitment and training process should be reactivated in a timely manner, for example on a six monthly cycle.

Job Description

To enable the recruitment and/or retention of suitable Partners Job Descriptions should be agreed.

- Job description for each type of Partner
- Person specifications

Recruitment Process

The Health Professions Order 2001 requires HPC’s recruitment process to be guided by the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OIC Ref 17(2)(c) page 37, 14(1) page 35 and 19(5) page 38). A range of issues require clarification:

- Selection of advertising media
- Candidate information pack
- Selection criteria including weighting
- Ensuring representation from all sectors of society
- Need for process to be contracted out by HPC to third party

Interview Panels

A range of issues require clarification. They are as follows:

- Composition of Panels
- Training requirements
- Interview brief
- Location of Panel meetings to be held in the four Countries
- External input including Professional Human Resources to ensure probity

Training

It should not be assumed that because individuals had successfully participated in CPSM process that they can transfer directly to the new HPC processes without additional training. Once appointed Partners will have to be updated periodically.

- Course material
- Location
- Need for process to be contracted out by HPC to third party
- Budget

Conversely, HPC should not duplicate training in areas where it has already been delivered satisfactorily (eg for the Commission for Health Improvement's reviewers).

Fees and Expenses

The level, if any, of fees paid to Partners will be confirmed as part of the Consultation Process. Issues such as where HP Council members undertake identical tasks as Partners, should they receive the same fee as Partners if the fee is lower, will also be resolved.

Internal HPC Infrastructure

The HPC will use during the First Transitional Period processes that were inherited from the CPSM. It used only a minimum amount of Information Technology and was essentially a paper driven system. However, due to the breadth of the tasks where Partners may be working for HPC and the increased requirements to undertake functions in the four countries the use of IT needs to be investigated and if required investments made.

- Booking system for Partners
- Selection and booking of venues for meetings outside London
- Partners report systems and documentation
- IT capital and operating expenses budgets

Post 1st April 2003 Issues

It is assumed that the relationship will be an ongoing process and will require monitoring.

- Review need for Annual Conference
- Annual appraisals of Partners – "Quality Control"
- Update training
- Statistical reports

Professional Bodies

The Consultation Process will resolve how the Professional Bodies will work alongside and assist HPC undertake its work. However, it is assumed that the recruitment, training, deployment and management of Partners will be similar whatever the outcome.