

Professional Liaison Group: health, disability and registration. Revised workplan

Executive Summary and Recommendations

Introduction

The first meeting of this PLG was on October 29th. This PLG was set up to advise the Council on meeting the Standards of Proficiency for specific professions, with specific impairments or health conditions.

The group discussed the issues around the completion of health references, and were given background information about the current processes. The group strongly advised against issuing blanket statements regarding specific disabilities because:

- they felt that many people would not ‘fit neatly’ into the categories identified;
- they felt that we should concentrate on individuals, not impairments; and
- they raised the issue that the DVLA model could be subject to legal challenge.

The group felt, nonetheless, that there was the need for information for doctors and applicants and also for education providers around the health reference and our standards. This information could speed up the process for applicants who met our standards, aid admissions staff in thinking about adjustments to their courses, and aid doctors in providing only relevant information.

They therefore suggested that they draft more general guidance for the Council, giving anonymised examples.

Since the PLG was set up to advise the Council on guidance of a different kind, their workplan has been revised for the Council’s discussion and re-approval.

Decision

The Council is asked to agree the following revised workplan for the PLG, in the light of the discussions at the meeting.

Background information

None.

Resource implications

None.

Financial implications

None.

Background papers

See the minutes of the first PLG meeting on 29th October 2004. Agenda item 11, enclosure 7.

Appendices

None

Professional Liaison Group: health, disability and registration

Revised workplan

Mission statement

To advise the Council on two documents to provide additional information around applying to be registered.

The first document to provide additional information for applicants to approved programmes and education providers:

- information on meeting the standards of proficiency;
- anonymised examples of adjustments made to courses to accommodate applicants with disabilities.

The second document to provide additional information to applicants to the Register and doctors on the health reference. This document to include:

- information on the purpose of the health reference;
- guidance on the types of information required; and
- anonymised examples of applicants to the Register who have been registered.

About this guidance

Both of these documents would need to be approved by the Council, and then be the subject of a consultation.

The first of these documents would provide useful information to both applicants and programme providers, outlining our approach and suggesting ways that applicants can still meet the Standards of Proficiency when adjustments are made to the programme they wish to follow.

The second would inform applicants to the Register and doctors about our standards, and about fitness to practise. It would provide the information needed so that doctors could reach a professional, informed decision regarding someone's fitness to practise, thereby streamlining the process. It would also provide a source of information for applicants who might be concerned that their health would prevent them becoming registered.

This information should ideally be Crystal-marked by the Plain English Campaign, to ensure that information about our standards is accessible, clear and easily understood.

Terms of reference of the PLG

The professional liaison group will:

- discuss and revise draft documents;
- call upon advice and input from groups / individuals as needed; and
- make recommendations to the Council in the form of draft guidance documents.

Plan of activities

The group will meet periodically from October 2004. The group will present draft documents to the Council for approval in July 2004.