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MINUTES of the fifteenth meeting of the Registration Committee of the Health Professions Council held on Wednesday 28 January 2004 at Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BU.

PRESENT :

Prof. R. Klem (Chairman)
Miss P. Sabine
Miss M. Crawford
Dr R. Jones
Mr I. Massey
Mr G. Sutehall
Dr A. Van der Gaag

IN ATTENDANCE :

Miss L. Pilgrim, Secretary to the Committee
Dr P. Burley, Director of Education and Policy
Miss C. Harkin, Manager, U.K Registration
Miss S. Dawson, Manager, Grandparenting & International Registration
Mr J. Bracken, Bircham Dyson Bell

ITEM 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 Apologies were received from :- Prof. N. Brook, Mr P. Frowen, Mr C. Lea, Miss E.Thornton, and Prof. D. Waller.

ITEM 2 APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

- 2.1 The Committee approved the Agenda.

ITEM 3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 NOVEMBER 2003

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2003 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

ITEM 4 MATTERS ARISING

Language Competence

- 4.1 The Committee considered that this issue should be highlighted further by placing articles in the NHS Human Resources Bulletin and by writing to the General Social Care Council, The Allied Health Professions Federation, The Association of Social Care directors in England, the equivalent bodies in the other UK countries and to bodies representing the independent sector.

ACTION: LP

Practice Committee Training Days

- 4.2 The Secretary confirmed that these dates had been circulated to all Committee members and had also been circulated to Council members by the Secretary to Council. To date Miss Sabine, Miss Crawford and Mr Sutehall had attended training days. The Secretary confirmed that the next training days would be held on (a) 5 & 6 February 2004 and (b) 26 & 27 February 2004, but that there were no remaining places on these dates. Further training days were being planned for April 2004 and it was **AGREED** that the Secretary would notify the Committee of these dates as soon as they were available.

ACTION: LP

Applications from Refugees

- 4.3 The International Registration Manager told the Committee that the number of applications from refugees was likely to be small. The Chairman recommended that the Executive would find it helpful to contact bodies across the country which assisted refugees; she also recommended that the Executive contact professional bodies.

ACTION: SD

Guidance Notes

- 4.4 The Secretary confirmed that the comments received had been passed to the Registration department; the Registration department was in the process of re-drafting the notes.

ACTION: CH/SD

Nomination of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

- 4.5 The Secretary confirmed that the appointments of Professor Klem as Chairman of the Committee and Miss P. Sabine as Vice-Chairman had been approved by the Council at its meeting on 11 December 2003.

Return to Practice

- 4.6 The Secretary confirmed that the Council had approved the papers put to it on 11 December 2003. The matter was back before the Committee for discussion of the implementation of the policy, with particular regard to the practical issues. Feedback had been requested and the Committee had details of some of the practical issues that had been highlighted.

The Secretary confirmed that she had contacted a representative from the Department of Health (DH) and would be meeting with her shortly to discuss this issue and hoped to work in conjunction with the DH.

The Committee asked that clarification be sought from the DH as to whether or not they were focusing on the NHS only or would be including Social Services and the independent sector. The Committee also sought clarification as to whether the DH would be looking at all four UK countries or just England.

The Chairman queried whether the DH had quantified the number of health professionals returning to their respective professions and whether those seeking to return were aware of available funding. It was **AGREED** that the Committee would email the Secretary with details of the issues they wanted raised with the DH.

ACTION: LP

Health Reference Form

- 4.7 The recommendation had been sent to all Committee members and had been agreed. The recommendation would be put to the Education and Training Committee (ETC) for approval.

ACTION: LP

International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

- 4.8. The recommendation had been sent to all Committee members and had been agreed. The recommendation would be put to the Education and Training Committee (ETC) for approval.

ACTION: LP

Registration Assessor Review Days

4.9 The Secretary had circulated the dates to all Committee members.

The Committee was given an update on the review days that had taken place. These had been positively received by the Registration Assessors and had been beneficial both for the Assessors and for the Executive. The next Registration Assessor review day would take place on 5 March 2004 and would be for physiotherapy assessors. One or two of the Committee members could attend this day.

There would be a Partners' conference in October 2004; this would replace the next set of Registration Assessor review days. It was hoped that this could be arranged in conjunction with the Council Away Day. The Committee suggested that, as this would mean taking three days out of a working week, it would be helpful to have confirmation of the date for the event as soon as possible.

The Committee asked to have details of the agreement signed by partners; this request was made in respect of the issue of time commitment by partners. The Committee considered that this information would be helpful to those interviewing prospective Partners so that the required commitment could be clarified.

It was **AGREED** that the Secretary would ask the Human Resources department for this information and would relay it to the Committee.

The Secretary would also let the Committee know of any future dates for registration assessor training.

It was **AGREED** that the International Registration Manager would give the Committee feedback, summarising the key issues from these events, following the Registration Assessor review day on 5 March 2004.

The Chairman confirmed that the radiographers had received the correct version of the Standards of Proficiency.

ACTION: LP

ITEM 5 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

5.1 This item had been dealt with under Item 4 above.

ITEM 6 ADMISSION TO THE REGISTER: APPROVED QUALIFICATION FIVE YEARS OR OLDER

6.1 The Committee confirmed its agreement to the requirements to be met by applicants for registration who had not been registered and whose qualification was five years or older. The Chairman noted that similar guidelines to those drafted for applicants returning to practice would apply to those applying for registration whose qualification was five years or older.

Applicants whose qualification was five years or older would be required to undertake a minimum of sixty days supervised practice and additional study to bring skills and knowledge up to current standards.

- 6.2 This recommendation would be put to the ETC for approval.

ACTION: LP

ITEM 7 TEST OF COMPETENCE

- 7.1 The Committee considered the guidelines in respect of the Test of Competence (TOC) and the Period of Adaptation (POA). The Committee considered that the general approach was appropriate. Amendments were discussed and Committee members submitted their comments and amendments to the International Registration Manager for incorporation into the guidelines.

ACTION: SD

ITEM 8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

- 8.1 The Committee agreed the following alternative standards as demonstrating English language competence:

- (a) CIE – Cambridge International Examinations Certificate of Advance English.
- (b) University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, Certificate of Proficiency in English.
- (c) Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority, Honk Kong Certificate of Education Examinations.

- 8.2 It was **AGREED** that this recommendation would be put to the ETC for approval.

ACTION: LP

ITEM 9 REFEREE ASSESSOR FUNCTION

- 9.1 The Committee agreed the proposals put before it. It was **AGREED** that the proposals should be put to the ETC for approval.

- 9.2 The Committee noted that, with the exception of the Speech and Language Therapists, all other professions had appointed a referee assessor. It was **AGREED** that the Secretary would contact the SLT representative to emphasise the need to appoint a referee assessor and to confirm that the appointment was for a six-month period only, and would be reviewed after that time.

ACTION: LP

ITEM 10 HEALTH AND DISABILITY SEMINAR

- 10.1 Miss Crawford reported on progress with preparation for the Seminar which is to be held on 1 March 2004. The programme had been drawn up following discussion between Miss Crawford, as Chairman of the Health Committee, and the Chairman of the Registration Committee. It was noted that the main participants would be representatives from professional bodies, disability groups and Council members.

Dr. Van der Gaag would give a presentation on communicating with people who had communication difficulties and the Council's legal advisor would give a presentation on the relevant Articles of the Health Professions Order together with other relevant legislation.

The professions would have the opportunity to detail the issues that affected them and there would be discussion about generic and profession-specific issues.

The Committee asked that, following the workshop, relevant information be sent to those Council members who had not been able to attend.

ACTION: LP

ITEM 11 REVIEW OF REGISTRATION PROCESS

- 11.1 The Committee agreed that the report was comprehensive and useful. The Committee felt that it would be useful if it received statistical information, for example, (a) the length of time between submission of an application and registration with the HPC and (b) the proportion of applications that were straightforward and those that were not.

- 11.2 The Committee was of the view that the report should go to all Council members and should be put on the website. It was **AGREED** that the Secretary would investigate the most appropriate way to achieve this.

- 11.3 It was **AGREED** that a statistical report would be prepared for the next meeting.

ACTION: LP/CH/SD

ITEM 12 APPROVED QUALIFICATIONS – ARTICLE 12 HPO

- 12.1 The Chairman clarified that there was no automatic registration for Radiographers by the Irish Professional body.

Two issues were highlighted for consideration (a) identification of the relevant regulators in other countries and (b) the preparation of a list of overseas courses which led to qualifications comparable to those obtained in the UK.

Miss Sabine suggested that the Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists would have the relevant information for Podiatry..

- 12.2 It was **AGREED** that a paper would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting.

ACTION: LP

ITEM 13 REDUCED FEES – NEW GRADUATE REGISTRANTS

- 13.1 The Committee noted the recommendations approved by Council at its meeting on 11 December 2003.

The Chairman felt that it would be helpful to have a chart which set out the professional year for each profession and the fee payable for the relevant period.

The Committee noted that guidance notes would be sent out with the Registration form.

ITEM 14 REGISTRATION SEMINARS

- 14.1 The Committee noted the dates of the seminars. The UK Registration Manager outlined the issues to be addressed at the seminars which were designed for those who would be advising new graduates in the UK about the registration process.

ITEM 15 MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 NOVEMBER 2003

- 15.1 The Committee noted these minutes.

ITEM 16 SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING - 19 JANUARY 2004

- 16.1 The Chairman gave a brief outline of an issue that had been raised at this meeting: namely, that there was an increasing tendency among members of certain professions who were working in positions where they were not using a protected title and were not using the core Standards of Proficiency for their professions, not to register with the HPC. The number of professional titles could be increased to cover the groups which were choosing not to be regulated.

The Council had the power under Part 111, section 17(a) of the Order in Council to recommend to the Secretary of State that a profession be regulated, notwithstanding the fact that the profession had not applied to be regulated, if this was felt necessary in order to protect the public.

This was an issue that the Committee would give consideration to in due course.

ITEM 17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17.1 Mr Sutehall noted that the title Medical Laboratory Technician (MLT) was due to be amended to Biomedical Scientist. He queried the mechanism by which the abbreviation, MLT, would be amended on the register.

It was **AGREED** that the UK Registration Manager would investigate the matter and report back to the Committee.

ACTION: CH

ITEM 18 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

18.1 The next meeting would be held on Wednesday, 10 March 2004 at 10 a.m.

It was confirmed that subsequent meetings would be held on the following dates:

1. 14 May 2004
2. 20 July 2004
3. 13 September 2004
4. 4 November 2004
5. 8 February 2005

CHAIRMAN