

Health Professions Council
Council – Away day, 4th October 2006
Review of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics

Executive Summary and Recommendations

Introduction

At its meeting on 6th July 2006, the Council agreed to review the standards of conduct, performance and ethics. The Conduct and Competence Committee is leading the review, with input from the Health and Investigating Committees.

Thus far, the Committees have considered the legal background to the standards, the standards produced by other regulators and a review of recent fitness to practise cases. The Committees have also considered the views of registrants and panel chairs responding to its “call for ideas” and discussed the possible areas in which the standards may need to change.

Meetings will take place on 25th September and 29th September with representatives from patient groups and with professional bodies and unions to invite their feedback on the standards.

As part of the review, the Council is asked to discuss the standards at its away day. The discussion will be structured around small group consideration of discrete areas of the standards, with potential issues or questions identified as a stimulus for discussion.

A copy of the standards is included with this paper and a copy of the workplan originally agreed by the Council is appended.

Decision

This paper is for information only.

Background information

On 20th April 2006 the Conduct and Competence Committee approved the workplan for the review and recommended its approval by Council. The Committee subsequently amended the workplan at its meeting on 19th September 2006, to allow for further consideration of the standards by the fitness to practise committees at their meetings in January 2007.

Copies of the papers considered by the Conduct and Competence Committee are available on the website: http://www.hpc.uk.org/aboutus/committees/conductandcompetence_archive/index.asp?id=260.

Resource implications

None

Financial implications

None

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1: Review workplan

Date of paper

22nd September 2006

Appendix 1

Review of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics: Work plan

1. Terms of Reference

To review the Standards of conduct, performance and ethics to make sure that they:

- (i) assist in HPC's primary role to protect the public;
- (ii) conform to public expectations of health professionals;
- (iii) are suitably generic so that they are relevant to registrants of all 13 professions;
- (iv) are appropriate to the situations faced by registrants; and
- (v) are easily understood by registrants, members of the public and other stakeholders.

The standards are used in fitness to practise proceedings and in making admission decisions about good health and character and the review will ensure that the standards continue to be fit for these purposes.

2. Lead

The Conduct and Competence Committee should lead the review, taking into account the views of the Health Committee and Investigating Committee and members of the Education and Training Committee. They should make recommendations to the Council.

The review will follow the proposed work plan as far as possible. However, the Conduct and Competence Committee will be responsible for any subsequent alteration to the plan of activities and timetable.

3. Plan

The review should take into account the views of all relevant stakeholder groups.

There should be an initial online consultation period during which feedback about the standards is invited from HPCs stakeholders. This will be an online form which asks a small number of questions about the existing standards and invites any comments or suggestions about whether or how they should be amended. The form will be available via a link from the front page of the HPC website and will be publicised via:

- a press release;
- an article in the news letter; and
- a letter to all key stakeholders

The review should also consider and take into account:

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2006-09-22	a	POL	PPR	SCPE workplan - Council away day 04.10.2006	Final DD: None	Public RD: None

- the standards and codes of practice of other organisations;
- any changes in legislation since the original standards were produced;
- information from fitness to practise panellists and a review of the cases heard to date;
- information from the professional bodies; and
- information from groups who have a patient/ public involvement perspective.

The above is not an exhaustive list.

The above approach is suggested as a thorough way of reviewing the standards. The initial consultation will allow the Council to reach a potentially wide range of stakeholders who have an interest in the standards. This will inform the progress of the subsequent review process.

4. Plan of Activities

The following is a suggested plan of activities for the review:

July/August 2006

Initial Online Consultation – approximately 6 weeks

September 2006

Meetings of the Health Committee (7th September 2006), Investigating Committee (14th September 2006), Conduct and Competence Committee (19th September 2006).

Discussion forums with patient / consumer groups and professional bodies

These meetings have been provisionally scheduled for **25th September 2006** and **29th September 2006**.

There will be participation of the chairs of the three fitness to practise committees.

October 2006

Discussion at Council away day – 4th and 5th October 2006 (pending the approval / opinion of the new President)

November 2006

Draft produced and presented at meetings of Health Committee (7th November 2006), Investigating Committee (16th November 2006) and Conduct and Competence Committee (22nd November 2006). Views sought from members of the Education and Training Committee (electronic).

December 2006

Recommendations of Conduct and Competence Committee made to Council for discussion/ approval at meeting – 14th December 2006.

January to March 2007

Public consultation

April 2007

Conduct and Competence Committee – 23rd April 2007. Committee considers draft consultation responses document and makes decisions regarding final draft of the standards.

July 2007

Council meeting 5th July 2007 – new standards ratified (subject to plain english editing).

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