
Chair's Report – 17 July 2025

1. Purpose of Report

For those of you who are new to this report, its purpose is to flag developments at the HCPC from the Chair's perspective and to update on activities of note.

2. Highlights

Professional Standards Authority (PSA) Performance Review (Monitoring) 2024-25

When I arrived at the HCPC in 2019, the organisation did not have the data, mindset or resources to drive continuous improvement, nowhere more so than in Fitness to Practise. Together with the Council, we set about fixing this and empowering our Executive to create a culture that is open, responsive to change and to our stakeholders and in which the whole organisation works together to achieve the best possible outcomes for patients and service users, using our regulatory tools of education and standards. This was not to be an overnight solution, and it is a task that by nature, evolves and continues.

In 2021-22, the HCPC only achieved 13 out of 18 of the Standards for Good Regulation set by the Professional Standards Authority. **The confirmation mid-June that we have met 17 for 2024-25, shows a solid record of progress steeped in public protection.**

On behalf of the Council, I commend the outstanding work across all of the HCPC. Every one of our colleagues has a role to play in this success. This has been a massive, long term, co-ordinated programme. The Council's role is to consider what is being reported, interrogate the data and support the Executive to deliver the optimum result.

At the centre is a smaller group of individuals who all deserve an accolade for driving forward change and improvement. I do not wish to be triumphalist, but before I move on, I would in particular like to give a shout out for one consummate professional who never, ever gives up and is undaunted by the rising tide of demand and complexity in Fitness to Practise: Laura Coffey, Executive Director of Fitness to Practise and Tribunal Services. Laura, Heads of, teams across the HCPC: **THANK YOU.** I hope you take a moment to reflect on your achievement and to feel proud of yourselves, as I am of you.

I also hope that our assessors, the PSA and all our stakeholders realise that we are not resting on our laurels. We cannot afford to because every part of the HCPC, all the time, is contributing to our regulatory performance. We have not yet met Standard 15 in Fitness to Practise timeliness, because it is taking too long to process

cases (there are other factors involved in the timeliness assessment but ‘time taken’ remains dominant).

The HCPC did not meet Standard 15 again this year because it is still taking too long to process fitness to practise (FTP) cases, despite the significant efforts the HCPC has made in recent years. I have said this before – **regulatory reform would help** – but we know it is more complicated than that and we are not waiting for reform, to press on with our efforts to get Standard 15.

However, the HCPC enhanced its controls and strengthened its oversight of high-risk cases managed by its external legal providers, and has met Standard 17, which it did not last year.

I was heartened to see recognition for the HCPC's work on equality, diversity and inclusion: "The HCPC performed strongly against our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Standard. We saw examples of good practice, particularly the development and publication of its diversity data dashboard, which allows users to filter the HCPC's registrant data by a broader range of characteristics".

Splendid work – more to do!

The ‘Plan for Change’ and the imminent new ‘10-year plan’

The UK's health and care sector is undergoing one of the most significant transformations in a generation. With the government's ambitious ‘Plan for Change’ now in motion and with a new ‘10-year plan’ around the corner, we are witnessing a decisive shift in how care is delivered, regulated, and experienced. These reforms are not just about systems and structures—they are about people. And at the heart of this transformation lies a renewed commitment to public protection, patient safety, and professional accountability.

The government's priorities: moving care from hospitals into communities, from reactive treatment to initiative-taking prevention, and from analogue systems to digital-first services, are clear. Regulation will not remain untouched by government either, with a recent ministerial commitment to legislative change in this parliament aimed at reforming the way regulators are able to make decisions and protect the public. These changes are not just welcome, but essential.

Reform on this scale brings complexity. As care becomes more integrated and multidisciplinary, the role of professional regulation must evolve in tandem. As technology, including new opportunities brought about by artificial intelligence (AI), disrupts normal practice, regulators must keep pace. The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), as the UK's largest multi-profession healthcare regulator, is uniquely positioned for this evolution.

We regulate 15 diverse professions, from paramedics and physiotherapists to radiographers and occupational therapists. This breadth gives us a panoramic view of the sector and a deep understanding of the interdependencies that define modern care. It also places a responsibility on us to ensure that regulation is not only robust

but also agile—capable of adapting to new models of care, emerging technologies, and evolving public expectations.

With care workers being upskilled to deliver more health interventions at home, and with digital platforms enabling real-time sharing of patient data, the boundaries between professions are blurring. Regulation cannot fall behind in upholding standards but also in fostering collaboration, innovation, and trust.

At the HCPC, we are already taking initiative-taking steps to meet the challenge. We are strengthening our approach to continuing professional development, sharing our data to inform workforce decisions through our new data hub and supporting the right culture and leadership through our work on sexual safety by working closely with employers, educators, and other regulators.

Public protection is not a static goal. It is a dynamic commitment that must respond to the realities of modern care. As services become more integrated, so too must our approach to regulation. We must break down silos, share intelligence, and act swiftly when concerns arise. We must also support professionals to thrive in a changing landscape—because safe, confident practitioners are the cornerstone of safe, high-quality care.

Also, we need to listen—engaging with patients and communities to ensure that our standards and work reflect what matters most to the public. As we all look to the future, we will be launching a programme of engagement over the next few weeks to co-produce the HCPC's next corporate strategy. The strategy will set out our priorities for the next 5 years and we look forward to working together to help shape them.

The reforms underway in health are ambitious, and rightly so. They reflect a collective determination to build a health and care system that is fit for the future—one that is fairer, more responsive, and more sustainable. As Chair of the HCPC, I am proud of the role we play in this journey. But I am also clear-eyed about the challenges ahead.

Now more than ever, we need a regulatory approach that is active, collaborative, and relentlessly focused on the public protection. Because at the end of every policy, every reform, and every regulation, there is a person—a patient, a service user, a member of the public—who deserves the very best care we can provide.

HCPC Data Hub

The new HCPC data hub, championed by Gareth Davies and his colleagues and loved by pretty much everyone who uses it, has been praised by the Minister for Health and the new Permanent Secretary at the Department. The Council was delighted by the presentation that Gareth and colleagues put on, last time.

New Scottish Patient Safety Commissioner

I am very glad to know that there will shortly be a Scottish Patient Safety Commissioner (expected to start September) and look forward to working in partnership with her in the same way we have south of the border.

HCPC people

New Head of Governance

I had my introductory meeting with Patsy Morrissey, not before, as it turned out, we had already been plunged together into a group discussion planning the agenda and content for this very Council! Patsy has plenty of relevant experience, a great 'can do' approach and it will be a pleasure to collaborate with her as leader of our experienced and capable Governance team.

Conversations with Christine session 13 May

My current next session is on 10 August.

It is worth emphasising that the Council as a whole is looking at how better to connect with the wider organisation and its stakeholders, and there is an engagement plan underway but there is every advantage to each Council member taking opportunities to meet a diversity of HCPC colleagues. I am committed to liberating the talent around and beyond the table so we can learn from each other and strengthen organisational bonds.

Welcome meetings

I met with Helen White, Education and Training Committee (ETC) independent member and Dabbi Taylor, ETC student representative, two new, high quality contributors to ETC's work. They have completely different lived experience and professional credentials, it was easy to see how they will add relevant knowledge and value. Plus, we agreed that the conversation should not be a one-off! Indeed, Dabbi will be sharing his 'HCPC journey' and aims at this Council meeting, together with any reflections on how the meeting unfolded.

Council

Council member reappointments

There are four members of Council eligible for reappointment in 2025 who have confirmed that they wish to be considered for a further term.

Reappointments are regulated by the PSA and the process for reappointment is described in the HCPC's appointment process for Council members and other associated processes.

The reappointments panel met on 3 July 2025; the panel comprised:

- Christine Elliott – Chair of Council and Chair of the Panel
- Lianne Patterson – Council member
- Clare Paddi Salters – Independent Panel Member

In accordance with the process, the panel's reappointment recommendation was submitted to the Privy Council on 7 July 2025. The PSA has also been provided with

the documentation that it requires to provide assurance on the process followed. We expect confirmation from the Privy Council in mid to late August.

Independent committee member reappointment

The first term of appointment of the independent member who serves on both the Performance and Resources Committee and the Remuneration Committee will come to an end on 3 October 2025.

Independent committee member reappointments are not regulated by the PSA and the process for reappointment is described in the HCPC's appointment process for Council members and other associated processes.

In accordance with the process, the Chair of Council has approved the reappointment of Neville Hounscome for a further term of four years with effect from 4 October 2025.

Council Apprentices

Sejal Patel and Alice Gair and I had separate discussions to reflect together after May Council. I know that Sejal also had an excellent catch up with Bernie (O'Reilly, Chief Executive). These discussions reinforce the need to meet people 'where they are' in their professional experience and sometime, personal priorities. This further enriches the consideration and decision making that we do at the Council.

Council efficacy - seminar 8 May

We followed up the debrief and had a thought-provoking, deep dive into cultural and institutional sexism. Guided by Yasir Samir, we thought about the history of misogyny, we remembered and reflected on the narratives that have played out in our own lives, discussed the social, logistical, career, cultural or institutional barriers that women and those who are not cis-gendered men may face and that may be invisible to men.

It will not have escaped your attention that there is a majority of women on the Council (though it was not always so). Therefore, it was and is important to create a space where everyone felt safe and respected for their contribution. There was no judging, lots of active listening and we had a conversation that was at times moving, surprising and always thoughtful and considerate.

We then went on to consider what more we needed to do to ensure that equitable opportunities are available to all at the HCPC, what practical actions the Council can influence, and how we do that both collectively as a Council and individually in our values, behaviours and actions and what we need to do to support registrants, patients and service users.

I came away feeling truly fortunate that I have a group of such gifted, caring and open-minded colleagues to work with.

Stakeholders

Patient Safety Commissioner

My conversation with Henrietta Hughes focused on:

The Patient Safety Commissioner's Annual Report for 2024-25 published (26 June)

It highlights the establishment and achievements of the Patient Safety Commissioner role, emphasising the importance of patient safety principles launched in 2024 to guide healthcare providers. It includes a foreword by Jeremy Hunt MP, Chair of the Patient Safety APPG. The full report can be found [here](#) and highlights include:

- The Publication of the Patient Safety Principles
- The launch of *The Safety Gap*
- The work on Redress
- The progress of Martha's Rule

We also spoke about:

- NHS 10 year plan
- Scottish Patient Safety Commissioner
- HCPC Corporate strategy, which is being co-produced with representative of key patient safety constituencies
- HCPC international assessment model
- Key HCPC stats

GMC Chair

Key topics covered included: the GMC press release on new fitness to practise guidance, the PSA's consultation on their standards of good regulation, consent principles, the HCPC data hub launch and the re-naming of physician associates to avoid in future confusing patients.

Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)

I had my quarterly meeting with the Deputy Director of Professional Regulation at DHSC. It provided me with an opportunity for to discuss with the latest on regulatory reform, the recent consultation from the PSA on their standards, progress with regard to the NHS managers consultation as well as recent HCPC initiatives such as the data hub and next iterations of this work.

New Chair of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)

I had an introductory conversation with the new Chair, who is direct, knowledgeable and impressive as well as being acutely aware of the transformation that needs to take place at the NMC. We had a frank and purposeful discussion; communication lines remain very much open.

3. Regulation

There has been no further news about the regulation of NHS managers.

4. Speaking engagements

We are in planning mode for the (Association for Perioperative Practice) [AFPP annual conference](#) 8 August – have been invited to join a keynote panel, which I am especially glad to do as I spoke at the 60th anniversary conference last year.

I spoke at Healthcare conferences UK on 20 June about sexual safety on mental health wards, thanks to Council member Dr Bekah Eglinton for her input into this.

5. Stakeholders and colleagues

Council Apprentice Alumni

The second Council Apprentice alumni network meeting took place on 20 July 2025. The meeting provided an opportunity for alumni to network with each other, and as such there was no formal agenda. During the session, the alumni reflected on their experiences with the HCPC, including the comprehensive induction programme provided; the importance of mentor and buddy support to support effective participation in meetings; the value of social events in building relationships; and that the HCPC had set a high bar in terms of a safe learning space for those taking their first steps into non-executive governance roles.

As the group of alumni grows, the meeting is likely to find its own style and identity. Thank you to Patricia (Patsy) Morrissey for the summary.