
Chair's Report – 24 September 2026

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

Chief Scientific Officer for Scotland (CSO)

Like Catherine Ross, who is also President of the Science Council, I valued the opportunity to meet in person.

We covered a broad range of topics, including the value of authentic leadership, the importance of building positive organisational culture, and the critical role professional regulation plays in upholding standards and maintaining public confidence.

I recorded an interview with the CSO, and this will be available via social media platforms.

Discussion with Ukrainian allied health professionals

Sonia Kumar, one of our most energetic MPs, is a physiotherapist who has assisted UK practitioners in allied health who wished to support the stretched Ukrainian medical services by providing short term support and training in-country.

Along with Adam Haxell (Strategic Relationships & PA Lead), at the MP's request, I met senior representatives of a non-governmental organisation (NGO) keen to learn how to set up a system of registration that would allow members of the public to have confidence in practitioner credentials. We offered advice and materials, and I was able to make an introduction to a director in a pan-Ukrainian organisation that have done some pro bono work with; it runs a network of 'We Care' centres in local communities.

Dr. Margot McBride

Dr. McBride is an eminent radiographer, currently Research Fellow at the University of St. Andrews School of Medicine. This exciting role includes PhD supervision and introducing research innovation activities focusing on diagnostic imaging.

We discussed a fascinating research paper on service evaluation of the clinical and cost effectiveness of a home-deployed mobile x-ray imaging service in a regional setting, and Dr. McBride explained about the innovative community diagnostic vehicles that offers a fully digital, clinically compliant service at the patient's home. A

key aim is to relieve pressure on acute and community infrastructure, reducing the number of hospital admissions.

Fitness to Practise Performance Excellence Board

Council has extended the Board's remit to enable it to support the senior executive, which has an ambitious group of programmes underway designed further to enhance performance and help deal with the sustained and unprecedented rise in the number of fitness to practise cases. The Board, comprising the Chair, Senior Council Member, Committee Chairs, members of the senior executive and others as appropriate, is open to all Council members. Its fortnightly meetings also aim to provide Council with a further level of assurance given the pace and criticality of the work underway.

Hospital managers

We received a letter of comfort from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) indicating its expectation that funding to begin work on hospital manager regulation would be available from the start of 2027 and continue seamlessly from then. The Department and its Minister have acknowledged in writing that funding for this new and complex form of regulation cannot come from current registrants' fees and must be directly funded by the DHSC.

The Government's intention to regulate was announced in July 2025, so in effect we will be starting some 18 months later than this manifesto commitment. We have, of course, made it clear that we will do our utmost to deliver the barring scheme in the shortest possible time, while maintaining the HCPC's current statutory responsibilities.

Development of New Council Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Council has agreed a new set of indicators, which will be reviewed in due course for their efficacy and usability. A small number of KPIs were referred to the People and Resources Committee for agreement. The outcome of the PRC discussion is summarised in the PRC Chair's report on Council's agenda.

Council Learning and Development

In order to facilitate the transfer of corporate memory, Council has a learning opportunity in October entitled 'The Reunion', at which we will be hearing from former Council members who worked to restore the HCPC during the first four years of my tenure and indeed, preceded me on Council. It should be an instructive and congenial insight into a seminal period in the HCPC's history.

3. Council and Committees

The next meeting of Committee Chairs will take place before September Council.

I had the pleasure of observing part of a People and Resources Committee meeting. Not only was the chairing excellent (John McEvoy), but the Committee also covered a demanding range of topics with expertise and alacrity, very well supported by the

executives' contributions and preparation. The value of having independent members (in this case, Neville Hounscome) on our committees was truly evident as these independents have knowledge outside of the healthcare system that can inform our own thinking.

Annual reviews

The Council members annual review process is underway. The annual review is an opportunity for Council and Committee members to reflect on the previous year and their individual contribution to the Council's overall effectiveness and the delivery of the HCPC's strategic objectives. It also provides time to look forward and identify learning and development opportunities and aspirations for the future, including in relation to reappointment.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The Lay Council member role went live on 1 September 2026, and the successful candidate is also likely to be asked to chair the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

4. Stakeholders and colleagues

Internal

24 July – Catch up with Dr. Iain McGregor, who advises the HCPC Council on technology and innovation. Outside of the HCPC, Dr. McGregor is working on a range of projects with artificial intelligence (AI) agents, and he brings this and much other experience to the role.

10 September – Fitness to Practise Performance Excellence Board.

17 September – Chairs' quarterly meeting, a meeting to ensure that our committee work is coherent and non-duplicative and at which we also consider emerging issues and which of those may need escalating to committees or Council.

External

21 July – Paul McLennan MSP, (Scottish) Health, Care and Sport Committee. An introductory meeting at the MSP's request. We are also due to meet the Cabinet Secretary (Angela Constance) after the summer. Also, we will be taking part in a cross-regulatory conference in Glasgow in March 2027.

We covered the HCPC's background and remit. In particular, we briefed the MSP on our data hub, and explained how through bespoke requests, we publish information relating to workforce issues across Scotland and the wider UK (retention rates, reasons for leaving a regulated profession, education reports on those entering the workforce).

These help workforce planners in Scotland to understand the nature of the professions, and to plan accurately to recruit and retain to the necessary levels.

In Scotland, for example, we see higher than average rates of people taking approved courses but not joining the HCPC register. Through analysis we can see that this is partly driven by high numbers of Irish students, who return home after the course, and this can be factored into plans.

We can also see lower retention rates in some professions across Scotland for younger people, which suggests a possible lack of job opportunities in some areas. We are currently working on a way of tracking registration, qualification and then work location to do more on this and can share with the MSP and the Committee when that is ready.

28 July – HCPC/Professional Standards Authority (PSA) Chair and Chief Executive catch-up. We covered PSA work/updates since last meeting; the PSA Report on the HCPC 2024-25, and other HCPC work. Of particular note outside of the PSA Report on the HCPC were re-stating the HCPC's position on advanced practice and [new resources](#) related to registrants working at advanced levels of practice published since we last met, which were developed with NHSE funding – and were very well received.

Over the past year, we have been continuing our work to support registrants, our staff, and with the wider healthcare system, to promote a culture that actively challenges all forms of discrimination. This has included publishing new resources to help to support registrants and learners if they experience or witness discrimination.

Our recent work builds on previous changes we have made to our standards to strengthen expectations of registrants, which make clear that they should actively challenge discrimination in all its forms.

There has also been mandatory training for all staff on antisemitism and Islamophobia in recent months. The new resources can be found [here](#).

12 August – Belfast meeting with Dr. Catherine Ross, Chief Scientific Officer; Michael Willis, PwC

7 September – DHSC, HCPC Chair, CEO: Hospital manager regulation

7 September – Registry of Ukrainian healthcare professionals, initiated by Sonia Kumar MP

10 September – Dr. Margot McBride

Future meetings and events include:

15 September – Wellbeing at Work conference. I will be speaking and chairing a leadership panel. Focuses will include the impact of the emerging 'solo' economy on health and wellbeing; human relationships, social connectivity and cognitive maintenance in an era of AI.