

**Health Professions Council
Education and Training Committee 12 June 2007**

PRE-REGISTRATION EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR PARAMEDICS

Executive Summary and Recommendations

This paper is about the pre-registration education and training for paramedics; a subject previously discussed by the Approvals Committee on 5 September 2006. On the disbanding of the Approvals Committee, it was agreed that all outstanding work would be considered by the Education and Training Committee.

Currently, the majority of paramedic training is delivered in ambulance training centres as an IHCD paramedic award (awarded by Edexcel). The approval of these IHCD programmes is historical and in February 2004, Education and Training Committee agreed that HPC should visit all IHCD paramedic training centres once the QAA subject benchmark statements had been published. Whilst none of these visits have yet to take place, all the programmes were subject to the audit part of the annual monitoring process in the last academic year. During this annual monitoring process, it was identified that major changes had been made to three of the IHCD paramedic programmes offered by ambulance trusts. Significant variation between the programmes delivered by the various trusts was also identified. In addition, all ambulance trusts in England were reorganised last year resulting in potential major changes to the delivery of all existing IHCD paramedic programmes in England.

On 5 September 2006, the Approvals Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive regarding the HPC approval of IHCD paramedic programmes. The Committee noted that there was some uncertainty about the future of IHCD paramedic programmes and that it might not be an effective use of the HPC's resources to arrange visits to all IHCD programmes at this time. Consequently, the Committee agreed that:

- (1) the Executive should contact the three training centres which had been identified by the annual monitoring assessment process as requiring an approvals visits, to seek clarification of the programmes' future and to arrange visits as appropriate in the light of that information; and
- (2) the Executive should contact all other training centres to gather information about their programmes' future and approvals visits should be arranged as appropriate in the light of that information. The results of the information which was gathered should be reported back to the Committee in spring 2007.

Introduction

Summary of 2006 annual monitoring

1. During 2006 the IHCD programmes were subject to HPC annual monitoring for the first time. Each of the IHCD paramedic training centres were required to complete the audit process.
2. As a result of the annual monitoring assessment days, HPC Visitors recommended that 26 of the programmes continued to meet the standards of education and training and that upon successful completion, students continue to meet the standards of proficiency. Three programmes were found to have undergone major changes.
3. The annual monitoring documentation submitted revealed considerable variation between training centres. While there is an overriding structure governing the curriculum, assessment and quality assurance process, there appears to be variation in the management and delivery of the programmes. Issues include:
 - sizes and location of the centre
 - the internal management structure and staffing of the centre
 - the number of students being trained
 - whether the centre had a working relationship with a nearby HEI

Merger of ambulance trusts

4. On 1 July 2006, the existing 29 ambulance trusts in England were merged into 13 new ambulance trusts. With the exception of London and the Isle of Wight, the remaining 11 ambulance trusts have undergone a major reorganisation which has affected both the current and proposed education and training in each trust.

Recent developments and the status and future of IHCD paramedic training

5. In December 2006, the HPC Executive wrote to each of the new ambulance trusts and the existing services in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to ask them for an update on the status of their existing programmes and their future intentions. The letters had an 81% response rate. Of the 16 ambulance services, we did not receive responses from 3 NHS trusts, despite various reminders. A brief summary of the information provided by each of the ambulance services is attached in Appendix B.
6. Two of the three ambulance trusts that were identified through annual monitoring as having made major changes no longer exist. The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Trust has been merged into the new East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust. The Oxfordshire Trust has

been merged into the new South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust. The Wales Ambulance Service NHS Trust, the third Trust identified through Annual Monitoring as having made a major change to their programme, has been unaffected by the recent mergers.

7. The HPC Executive has recently begun organising approvals visits to the new East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust, the South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust and the Wales Ambulance Service NHS Trust.
8. All of the reorganised ambulance trusts continue to offer IHCD training programmes. Most trusts plan to move all of their training to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and have indicated that they will phase out IHCD programmes over the next 18 months to two years. Given the timescales of approval and the length of Dip HE/Foundation degree programmes, it is likely that IHCD programmes will have to operate for at least the next two academic years (2007/08 and 2008/09) until HEI programmes can produce the number of graduates that ambulance trusts require to maintain the existing workforce.
9. A list of existing paramedic training provided through HEIs and a list of programmes currently undergoing approval can be found in Appendix A.
10. In spring, the HPC Executive spoke with the professional body, the British Paramedic Association (BPA). The BPA confirmed that they are currently working towards making paramedic science a higher education profession and indicated that it hopes to move all paramedic training to Higher Education by 2008.

Conclusions

11. While there is a clear intention to move paramedic training away from the existing IHCD programmes to Higher Education provision, it is unlikely that sufficient training will be available in the near future to ensure that any phasing out of the IHCD programmes will not result in a serious shortage of paramedics.
12. It therefore seems likely that the IHCD programmes will continue beyond the indicated minimum 18 month phase out period. During this time a significant number of paramedics could complete these programmes and gain eligibility to enter the HPC register.
13. As none of these IHCD programmes have previously been visited by the HPC, and as a result of the major reorganisation of the ambulance service, the HPC Executive are unable to give reason for not visiting all IHCD programmes.

Decision

The Education and Training Committee is asked to note the following:

- a) That the Executive is in the process of arranging visits to the Wales Ambulance Service, the South Central Ambulance Service and the East of England Ambulance Service to consider the issues raised during the 2006 Annual Monitoring round.

The Education and Training Committee is asked to agree the following:

- b) That all remaining 13 NHS Ambulance Trusts offering IHCD approved awards be visited by the HPC over the next 12 months, unless they provide written confirmation to the Education and Training Committee that their IHCD programme will cease to enrol students after a specified (to be agreed) date.

Resource implications

The planning and operation of the sixteen visits required has been prepared for and included in the Department's work plan and 2007/08 budget.

Financial implications

The sixteen visits required will be met within the 2007/08 budget for approval visits.

Each visit will cost approximately £1500.

(Visitor fee	£560)
(Visitor travel, accommodation & subsistence	£620)
(Executive travel, accommodation & subsistence	£310)

Appendices

Appendix A: Current Higher Education Paramedic Training Provision

Appendix B: Summary of responses received from NHS Trusts

Date of paper

31 May 2007

APPENDIX A: Current Higher Education Paramedic Training Provision

Currently approved programmes	
University	Programme
Coventry University	FD Paramedic Science Diploma Professional Development Paramedic Science BSc (Hons) Nursing and Paramedic Science
University of Portsmouth	FD Paramedic Science
Sheffield Hallam	Dip HE Paramedic Science
St Georges Medical School	FD Health and Medical Science
University of Central Lancashire	BSc(Hons) Paramedic Science
University of East Anglia	Dip HE Paramedic Science
University of Greenwich	FD Paramedic Science
University of Hertfordshire	BSc(Hons) Paramedic Science BSc Paramedic Science Dip HE Paramedic Science FD Paramedic Science
University of Worcester	FD Pre-Hospital and Unscheduled Emergency Care
Oxford Brookes University	Dip HE Paramedic Care BSc Paramedic Care BSc (Hons) Paramedic Care
University of Northampton	Diploma of Higher Education in Paramedic Science
Programmes undergoing approval	
University	Programme
Teesside University	FD Paramedic Science
Liverpool John Moores University	FD Paramedic Science
Bournemouth University	FD Paramedic Science
University of Central England	FD Health and Social Care (Paramedic Science)
Programmes we understand are in development	
University	Programme
Staffordshire	No approvals visit has been requested
University of Wales Swansea	No approvals visit has been requested
University of Plymouth	Approval visit scheduled for 2007/08
Open University	Approval visit request for 2007/08

APPENDIX B: Summary of responses received from NHS Trusts

Trust	IHCD Provision	Recent Changes	Future Intentions	Approved (A) and Planned (P) HEI Provision	Relationship with HEIs
Yorkshire Ambulance Service	Continue to offer IHCD programme	No changes	No firm decision but current intention is to move towards HEI training.	Sheffield Hallam University (A) Teesside University (P)	Staff provide some teaching for Sheffield Hallam programme. Providing input into the development of the Teesside programme. No current involvement with HEIs.
Scottish Ambulance Service	Continue to offer IHCD programme	No changes	Currently working with Basics Scotland to develop new programme.	None	
Staffordshire Ambulance Service	Continue to offer IHCD programme	No changes	Intend to continue using IHCD but also move toward HEI provision.	Staffordshire University (P)	Working with Staffordshire, Keele, Coventry & Warwick, Worcester and University of Central England.
West Midlands Ambulance Service	Continue to offer IHCD programme	No changes	Working with universities to develop pre-registration and post-registration programmes.	Coventry University (A) Worcester University (A) University of Central England (P)	Trust will have half time salaried tutors in each university by the end of January 2007.
Isle of Wight Ambulance Service	Continue to offer IHCD programme	No changes	No further IHCD programme use after April 2008. Moving towards university based programmes.	Portsmouth University (A)	Currently working with Portsmouth to develop an honours programme.
North West Ambulance Service	Continue to offer IHCD programme	No changes	Move all training to higher education within the next 18 months.	University of Central Lancashire (A)	Working with a range of providers to develop new programmes.
London Ambulance Service	Continue to offer IHCD programme	No changes	Moving towards HEI provision (will maintain technician training with IHCD).	University of Hertfordshire (A) University of Greenwich (A) St Georges/Kingston (A)	Have a number of tutors and lecturers who are joint appointments with providers.
North East Ambulance Service	Continue to offer IHCD programme	No changes	Move all training to higher education within the next 18 months.	University of Teesside (P)	Working with providers on development of programmes.

Trust	IHCD Provision	Recent Changes	Future Intentions	Approved (A) and Planned (P) HEI Provision	Relationship with HEIs
East of England Ambulance Service	Continue to offer IHCD programme	No changes	Moving towards HEI provision but will continue to deliver some local programmes for the next 3-4 years.	University of East Anglia (A) University of Hertfordshire (A)	Actively involved with existing institutions. Working with Essex University to develop new programmes.
South Western Ambulance Service	Continue to offer IHCD programme	No changes	Working with HEI providers to get programmes up and running.	None	Staff currently undertaking professional development.
Welsh Ambulance Service	Continue to offer IHCD programme	No changes	Working over the next 2 years towards a standardised HE curriculum.	University of Wales Swansea (P)	Working in partnership with UWS.
Northern Ireland Ambulance Service	Continue to offer IHCD programme	No changes	Working with HE providers to develop paramedic programmes	None	Working with providers to develop new programmes.
East Midlands Ambulance Service	Continue to offer IHCD programme	No changes	Working with HE providers to develop paramedic programmes	Did not specify	Working with HE providers to develop paramedic programmes
South Central Ambulance Service					
Great Western Ambulance Service					
South East Coast Ambulance Service					
No reply received					