

**Standards of Proficiency PLG**  
19<sup>th</sup> June 2006  
**Introduction to the standards of proficiency**

**Executive Summary and Recommendations**

**Introduction**

At its meetings on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2006, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2006 and 25<sup>th</sup> April 2006 the PLG considered draft revisions of the introduction to the standards.

The revised introduction is attached.

**Decision**

The PLG is asked to discuss and agree the new introduction.

**Background information**

None

**Resource implications**

None

**Financial implications**

None

**Background papers**

None

**Appendices**

None

**Date of paper**

8<sup>th</sup> May 2006

## Introduction of the Standards of Proficiency

### Introduction

This document sets out the **standards of proficiency**. These are the standards we have produced for the safe and effective practice of the professions we regulate. They are the minimum standards we think are necessary to protect members of the public.

You must meet these standards when you first become registered. After that, every time you renew your registration you will be asked to sign a declaration that you continue to meet the standards of proficiency that apply to you.

We also expect you to keep to our **standards of conduct, performance and ethics** which are published in a separate document.

The standards of proficiency in this document include both generic elements, which apply to all our registrants, and profession-specific elements which are relevant to registrants belonging to one of the professions we currently regulate. The generic standards are written in black, and the profession-specific standards are written in blue italics to help you distinguish between them.

The generic standards explain the key obligations that we expect of you. Occasionally, we have pointed out specific elements of those key obligations. We have not attempted to create exhaustive lists of all the areas that each generic standard covers; we have simply highlighted specific elements where we consider this to be helpful.

If you are a student, you may only have practised under supervision and not independently. Nonetheless, you must be confident that you will be able to meet these standards when you begin to practise without supervision.

## **A note about our expectations of you**

The standards of proficiency play a central role in how you can gain admission to, and remain on, the Register and thereby gain the right to the protect title(s) of your profession.

It is important that you read and understand this document. If your practice is called into question we will consider these standards (and our **standards of conduct, performance and ethics**) in deciding what action, if any, we need to take.

The standards set out in this document complement information and guidance issued by other organisations, such as your professional body or your employer.

## **Your scope of practice**

Your scope of practice is the area or areas of your profession in which you have the knowledge, skills and experience to practise lawfully, safely and effectively, in a way that meets our standards and does not pose any danger to the public or to yourself.

We recognise that a registrant's scope of practice will change over time and that the practice of experienced registrants often becomes more focused and specialised than that of newly registered colleagues. This might be because of specialisation in a certain clinical area or with a particular client group, or a movement into roles in management, education or research.

Your particular scope of practice may mean that you are unable to continue to demonstrate that you meet all of the standards that apply for the whole of your profession. For instance, if you work with adults alone, then any standards that relate to how you must work with children will not apply to your day-to-day work. As long as you make sure that you are practising safely and effectively within your given scope of practice and do not practise in the areas where you are not proficient to do so, this will not be a problem. If you want to move outside of your scope of practice you should be certain that you are capable of working safely and effectively, including undertaking any necessary training and experience.

## **Meeting the standards**

It is important that our registrants meet our standards and are able to practise safely and effectively. However, we don't dictate how you should meet our standards. There is normally more than one way in which each standard can be met and the way in which you meet our standards might change over time because of improvements in technology or changes in your practice. As an autonomous professional you need to make informed, reasoned decisions about your practice to ensure that you meet the standards that apply to you. This includes seeking advice and support from education providers, employers, colleagues and others to ensure that the wellbeing of patients, clients and users is safeguarded at all times.

In particular, we recognise the valuable role played by professional bodies in representing and promoting the interests of their members. This often includes guidance and advice about best practice which can help you meet the standards laid out in this document.

## **These standards may change in the future**

We have produced this new version of our standards after speaking to our stakeholders about how the standards were working and how relevant they were to registrants' practice.

We will continue to listen to our stakeholders and will keep our standards under continual review. So we may make further changes in the future to take into account changes in practice.

We will always publicise any changes to the standards that we make by, for instance, publishing notices on our website and informing professional bodies.



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