



The HCPC
A Year in Highlights

Foreword



The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) is a statutory regulator of 15 health and care professions across the four nations of the United Kingdom. Our Year in Highlights report shows the HCPC's work from the 1st of April 2019 through to the 31st of March 2020.

This has been a fundamental year of change for the HCPC. From developing our Fitness to Practise (FtP) approach, to the successful transfer of social workers to Social Work England and creating a temporary register for the NHS amid COVID-19, work has happened at pace. Through this transition, we have kept focused on our core role: to uphold the highest standards in the professions we regulate, providing health and care which the public can access safely and with confidence.

There remains much to do, including achieving all the standards required by the Professional Standards Authority (PSA). However, we believe that with the transformation activities in place, we have established a solid foundation and trajectory for progress.

About the HCPC

The HCPC regulates the health and care professions by setting standards for professionals' conduct, education and training, and proficiency; keeping a register of professionals, known as 'Registrants', who meet our standards; and taking action if those on our Register do not meet our standards.

Our work is underpinned by our core values: transparency, collaboration and responsiveness, and a commitment to offering value for money and a high-quality service to our stakeholders.

The HCPC Register

The HCPC is adapting to become a leaner, more efficient organisation, by transferring regulation upstream where suitable, and laying the foundations from which we can deliver lean and intelligent regulation to health and care professionals.



269,842
Total number of Registrants



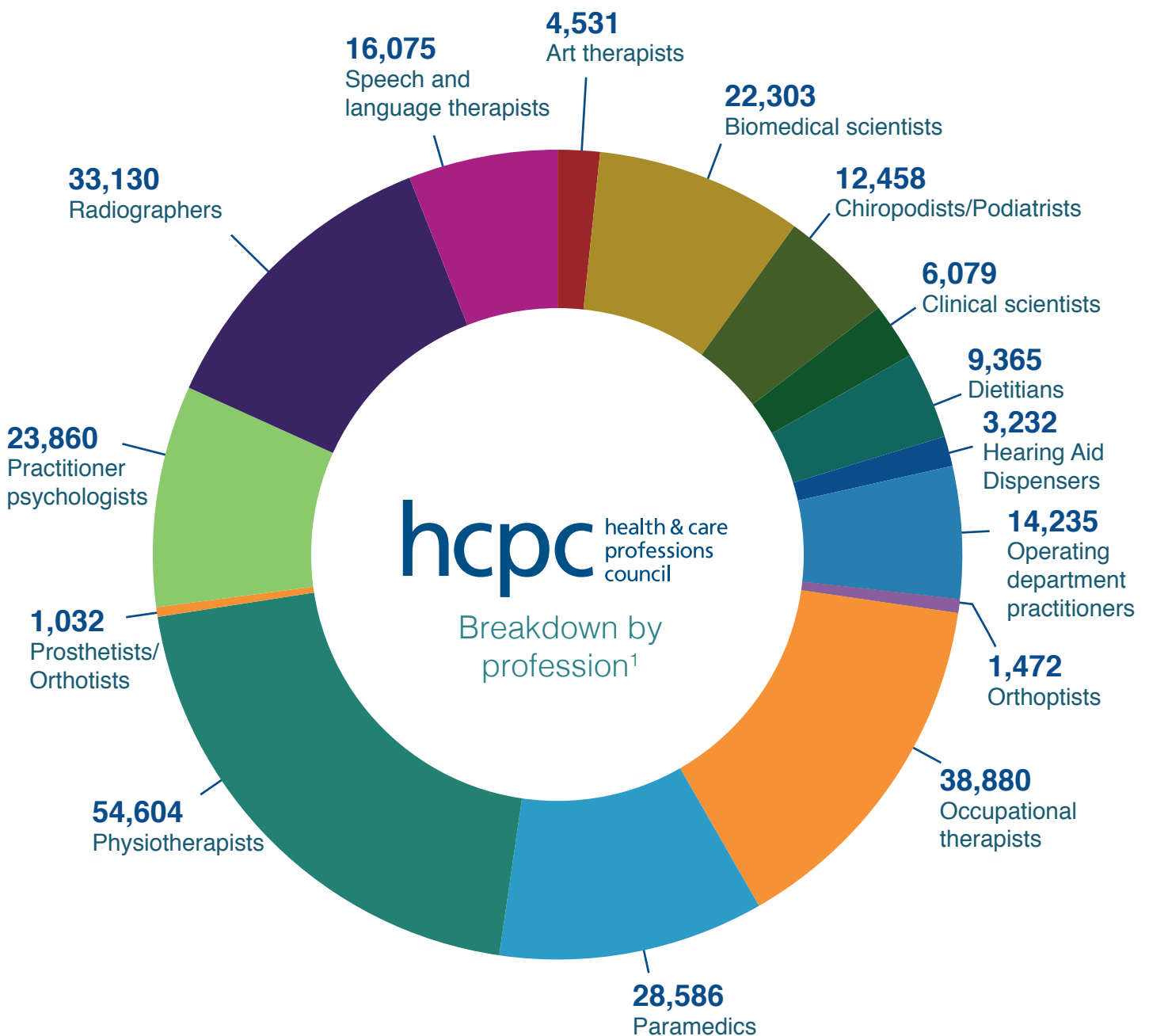
20,950
New Registrants



90,000
social workers
successfully transferred to the newly formed Social Work England



Podiatric surgery brought into the **regulated environment** through register annotation.



1. As of 31st March 2020. To view the composition of the register in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland please visit the Year in Highlights section of the HCPC website.

Response to COVID-19

In March 2020, COVID-19 brought a new set of challenges supporting the NHS, our Registrants and staff.



NHS

The HCPC's work to support the NHS during the first weeks of the pandemic was recognised by the **Secretary of State for Health and Social Care** the Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP, who personally **thanked the organisation for its response**.

The HCPC quickly created a temporary register to enable over **25,000 former Registrants and final year students** to assist the NHS and serve the public at the height of the crisis.



Registrants

To inform Registrants about how to apply standards of conduct, performance and ethics during the pandemic, **nine information sheets** were published on the HCPC's website.

We offered continued support through our online COVID-19 advice hub and a **social media wellbeing campaign** '#HCPCWellbeingTips'.

Registrants will continue to receive our ongoing support as they play vital roles in the recovery of patients suffering 'long COVID', through rehabilitation and therapeutic care.



Employees

To keep staff safe and the HCPC fully operational, teams worked from home. Like many other organisations we are assessing how technology can now be used to facilitate a flexible working culture.



Focus on Professionalism and Standards

The HCPC works with the health and care professions, Registrants and other stakeholders to set and reach the highest standards of care, which the public can have confidence in.

Education

Continued learning and development remains a key factor in attaining high levels of proficiency and professionalism across the professions. Through programme approval, high standards of quality are upheld, enabling health and care professionals to practise safely and effectively.

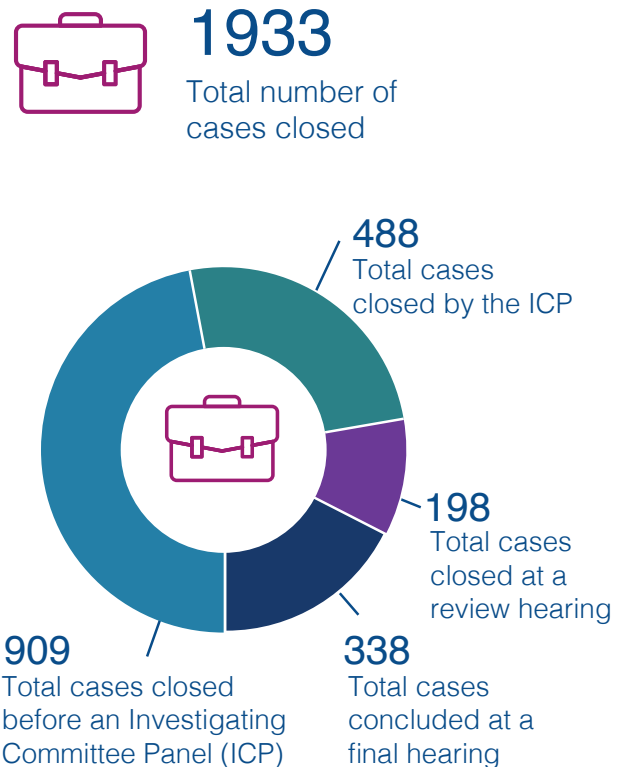
These programmes also allow the health and care professions to maintain and grow the numbers of qualified Registrants available to serve the public. Activity highlights this year include:



Three working group meetings were held to review the approach to **quality assurance** of education and training programmes. This resulted in two work streams to improve the approval and monitoring processes for training programmes, thereby increasing the quality of education for our Registrants.

Fitness to Practise

Registration to the HCPC requires that individuals have a high level of skill, knowledge, character and health to practise their profession safely and effectively. When these FtP standards are alleged to have not been met, we investigate on a case by case basis.



The number of cases which met the Standards of Acceptance/ Threshold Policy, increased by 50% compared to 2018 - '19

Focus on Professionalism and Standards

An FtP Improvement Programme is currently underway. Using data analysis, our approach is increasingly focused on identifying possible FtP issues that might arise and preventing them before they occur, through early intervention.

For example, our data may indicate a number of concerns about Registrants at the same place of employment. We would then approach the employer and work with them to understand the issues and whether there is any support or guidance we can offer to prevent escalation.

Professional Standards Authority standards

As of the 31st of March 2020 the HCPC has still to achieve **6 of the 24² PSA Standards of Good Regulation**.

The HCPC continually assesses its performance against the standards, and documents its improvements. Achievement of the PSA Standards is a strategic objective. The FtP Improvement plan is comprised of three main elements:

1

Enablers

- Replacing the Case Management System (CMS)
- Using the CMS functionality to implement robust Case Planning

2

Process Improvement

- Improving case flow and the quality of decision making
- Improving recruitment and retention through a focus on staff development

3

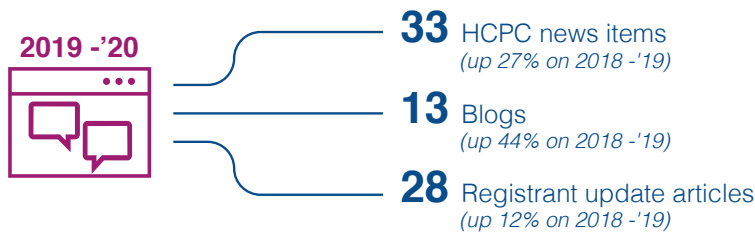
Culture Change

- Developing a learning and growth culture, by listening to the experiences of our stakeholders, and collaborating on solutions and improvements
- Developing a compassionate approach, by being empathetic to Registrants and employees, and remembering that FtP investigations can be an emotionally challenging experience

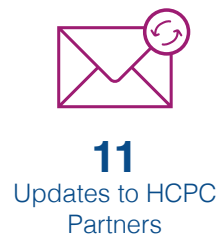
Building Visibility, Engagement and Collaboration

The HCPC is working to be more visible. Our stakeholders offer a rich pool of experience from which we can learn and generate ideas. We aim to inform, to drive engagement, and, where there's opportunity, to collaborate. This year, for the first time we also explored more effective ways to communicate, adopting greater use of social media, videos and animation.

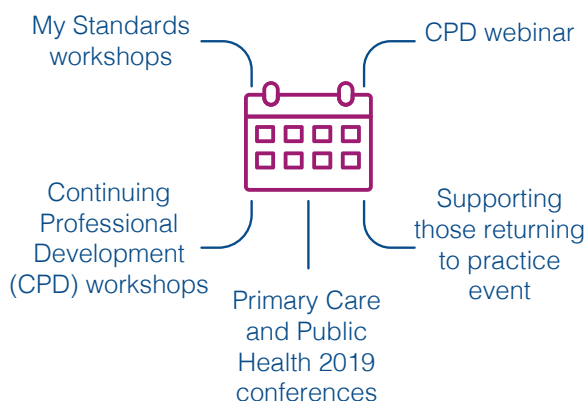
Content published



Newsletters and updates



Events held by the HCPC



Participation in external events



Delivering Responsive and Empathetic Regulation

The HCPC is moving to a prevention-focused regulatory approach, which is also proportionate and risk-based, addressing issues before they arise with the aim of reducing emotionally challenging FtP hearings. We also strive to create an inclusive and caring environment for our employees.

The HCPC has strengthened its **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan** and initiatives, which include developing a strategy for engagement with Registrants and employees.

We have also begun to develop a **Registrant wellbeing strategy**. These strategies will be finalised and implemented next year.

Applying an Intelligent Data Driven Approach

Combining human experience and insight with the intelligent use of data to shape the organisation for the future is an area of focus for the HCPC. Our activity includes developing a new data and insights hub to aid analysis, make us more aware of trend changes, and more agile in our response and processes. These innovations are key to improving stakeholder experience and will help prevent FtP issues.



Fitness to Practise

FtP case classification data has been collected and analysed, to predict resources required and sustain case 'flow'.

We began the development of our new **FtP Case Management System**, which will make case resolution smoother and more efficient. This is due to be completed in April 2021.

Digital Transformation

This year we appointed a new **Executive Director of Digital Transformation**.

Phase 1 of our **Registration transformation and improvement project** is complete, significantly **increasing efficiency**, improving **user experience** and **reducing environmental impact**. Two key improvements include:

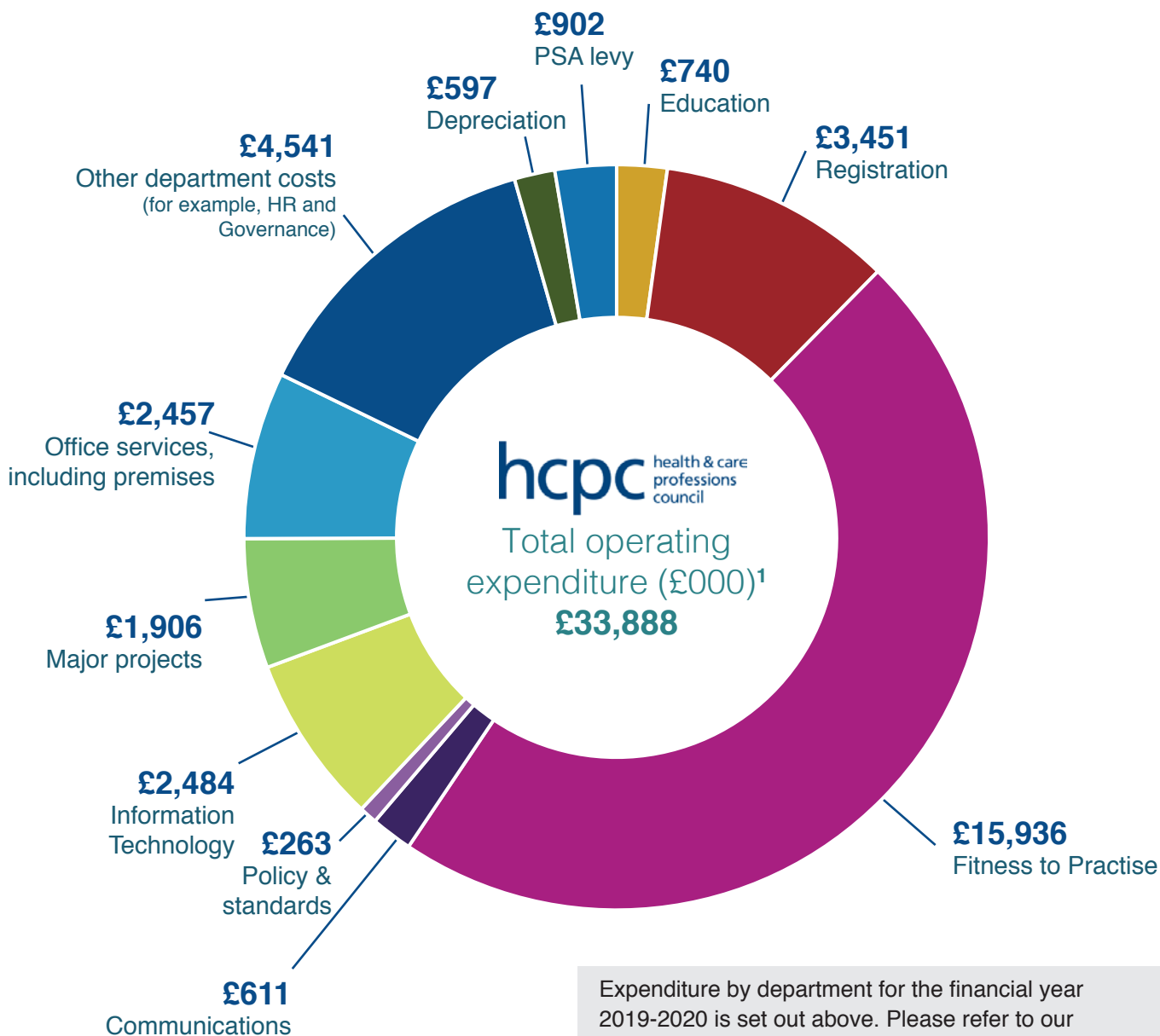
- An electronic payment system, removing the use of cheques and postal orders
- A CPD audit system that operates entirely online

Delivering Efficiency and Value

The HCPC aims to deliver value for all stakeholders and the public purse.

After consultation with stakeholders and a full assessment of efficiencies within the HCPC, an initial proposed fee increase per Registrant of £16 was reduced to £8.12. Mindful of the continued pressure on our Registrants amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the increase has been paused.

To redress the loss of income from the transfer of social workers to Social Work England, we have reviewed our operations and implemented cost efficiencies, such as a reduction in headcount and contract retendering.



Expenditure by department for the financial year 2019-2020 is set out above. Please refer to our annual report and accounts for more detail.

1. Figures rounded to the nearest £000

Into the Future – The Next Five Years



Whilst we continue to execute our Change Plan we also look to the future. Our 2021-2026 Corporate Strategy will form the cornerstone of the future development of the HCPC. The HCPC will form its strategy in collaboration with stakeholders, listening to their thoughts, experiences and ideas for future regulation.

The strategy will focus on six key areas:

1

To promote high quality professional practice

4

To be visible, engaged and informed

2

To continuously improve and innovate

5

To build a resilient, healthy, capable and sustainable organisation

3

To develop insight and exert influence

6

To promote the value of regulation