

CONFIRMED

The Health Professions Council

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MINUTES of the twenty third meeting of the Communications Committee held at **11.00 am on Wednesday 21 May 2008** in the new Council chamber at Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London, SE11 4BU

Present

Miss M MacKellar (Chair)

Mr P Acres

Mr O Altay

Ms C Farrell

Mrs D Haggerty

In attendance:

Dr A van der Gaag, President

Ms N O'Sullivan, Secretary to Council

Ms R Tripp, acting Director of Communications

Mr S Rayner Secretary to Committees

Item 1.08/17 Apologies for absence

- 1.1 Apologies were received from the Chairman, Professor A Turner, the Vice-Chairman, Mr M Woolcock and Mrs M Clark-Glass. Professor S Griffiths had resigned from the Council and was no longer a member of the Committee.
- 1.2 Rule 12 of the standing orders of the Committee states:

"If the Chairman and Vice Chairman are absent from, or otherwise unable or unwilling to preside at, a meeting the members present shall, as the first business of the meeting, elect one of their number to preside at that meeting."
- 1.3 Miss M MacKellar was proposed, and seconded, as Chair for the duration of the meeting.

Item 2.08/18 Approval of agenda

- 2.1 The Committee approved the agenda.
- 2.2 The Committee noted that an updated Media Report had been tabled which included press coverage from April.

Item 3.08/20 Minutes of the Committee of 25 February 2008

- 3.1 The minutes were agreed as a true record of the twenty second meeting of the Committee and were signed by the Chairman.

Item 4.08/21 Matters arising from the Committee of 25 February 2008

- 4.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive asking it to note the actions taken in relation to matters arising from the meeting of 25 February.
- 4.2 The Committee noted the actions.

Item 5.08/22 Director of Communications Report

- 5.1 The Director of Communications gave the Committee an overview of recent developments in the work of the Communications Department.

5.2 Aspirant Groups

On 14 May the House of Lords approved amendments to the Health and Social Care Bill which will lead to the abolition the Hearing Aid Council by April 2009 and the transfer of responsibility for the regulation of private hearing aid dispensers to HPC. The communications campaign for the transfer was going well, particularly because of the collegiate approach of all stakeholders and the likely dramatic fall in registration fees for Hearing Aid Dispensers.

- 5.3 The timing for the take up of regulation for Practitioner Psychologists was currently projected for the spring of 2009.

5.4 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The CPD Manager had spoken to more than two-thousand registrants about CPD; the system of recorded development HPC registrants were required to use in order to keep their skills and knowledge up to date and remain registered. The short guide to CPD had been the most downloaded item on the HPC website over the first four months of 2008.

5.5 The first two professions to be chosen for audit, the Chiropodists and the Podiatrists, were selected by an electronic algorithm designed to make a random selection. The first audit round had been done and results were being compiled.

5.6 Publications

The revised standards of conduct and ethics were being printed.

5.7 Events

On the day of the Committee, a team from Communications was exhibiting at the Primary Care 2008 Conference in Birmingham. The team would also be exhibiting at the UK Radiography Conference on 2 June. Further details were available on the Website.

5.8 There had been positive feedback from participants in Listening Events. The report due to this committee on progress would be produced as soon as the new Events Manager was in Post.

5.9 Website

The HPC website was being re-launched on the day of the Committee. The re-launch was to bring the site into line with the current corporate identity.

5.10 Resources

Events Manager Mr T Heiser and Publications Manager Ms P Richardson had been offered other jobs and had left HPC. Following internal and external recruitment campaigns appointments had been made to both posts. Both appointees brought a high level of experience to the roles.

5.11 The permanent Director of Communications, Ms J Ladds, would return from maternity leave in mid June 2008. The temporary Director of Communications, Ms R Tripp, would begin maternity leave on 23 May 2008. In the interim period Mr M Potter would act as temporary Director of Communications.

5.12 The Committee thanked Ms Tripp for carrying a huge amount of work during the period in which she was Director of both the Communications and Policy Departments.

Item 6.08/23 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) report

- 6.1 A DVD had been developed as part of the CPD campaign. The DVD was designed as a resource for registrants who do not necessarily engage with written material. The DVD was played to the Committee.
- 6.2 The Committee noted that work was being done to make the DVD available on line. A version including British Sign Language was being developed. Copies would be sent to the professional bodies.
- 6.3 The Committee asked for their congratulations to be passed on to the CPD Communications manager and to Ms D Dawkins, who appeared in the presentation. Ms Dawkins' contribution was noted to have been particularly reassuring. The Committee noted that the DVD transmitted the messages on CPD very clearly.
- 6.4 The Committee suggested that a future version of the DVD could include a case study of someone who had struggled with their CPD profile but that had ultimately succeeded and was still on the register.
- 6.5 The Committee noted that CPD audits would produce some data on the risk levels of different groups of registrants (for example those in managed environments versus those in non-managed environments). The data would be analysed and may be used at some point to target high risk groups.

Item 7.08/24 Public Affairs report

- 7.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive introducing two key pieces of work; the Professional bodies mapping document and the Employers Events report.
- 7.2 Professional bodies mapping document

The Communications work plan 2008 identified professional bodies as a key area of work for the Communications Department. The mapping document provided details of engagement work with the professional bodies currently being undertaken by departments across the HPC.
- 7.3 The Committee noted the large amount of work being done with professional bodies.
- 7.3 Employers Events

The report collated feedback from the five Employer Events - events designed to give employers important information relevant their HPC

registered employees' registrations. The Events had generally been very popular and well received. The Cardiff event had been oversubscribed; resulting in a waiting list for delegates. The next round of events was being planned.

- 7.4 The Committee noted the success of the Events. The Committee suggested that future Events could contain feedback from registrants.

Item 8.08/25 Campaigns Report

- 8.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive updating it on current work and the upcoming campaign to raise awareness of HPC amongst the elderly and their carers.

8.2 Older People campaign

The Committee noted the Ipsos MORI research into awareness of HPC amongst older people and the work being done to liaise with interested bodies such as Age Concern and Citizens Advice. The Committee noted that submissions had been received from advertising and design agencies for work assisting HPC with the campaign.

- 8.3 The Committee noted that planning was underway for an HPC seminar on older people which would benefit from, and contribute to, the research being done.
- 8.4 The Committee noted the importance of the position of GPs and their surgeries as one of the main sources of referrers of older people to HPC registrants.

Item 9.08/26 Media Coverage Report

- 9.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive updating it on press coverage since February 2008. The Committee noted that the new Communications Manager, Miss E Gayle, had undertaken a lot of work updating the distribution lists and was working to produce a new media strategy.

- 9.2 The Committee noted that the majority of stories were FtP related.

Item 10.08/27 External Review of Complaints Literature

- 10.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive which had originally been presented to the Fitness to Practise (FtP) Forum on 23 April 2008. The research was commissioned as a scoping exercise on existing research into complaints mechanisms.

- 10.2 The paper was presented in order to show the Committee how policy initiatives were developed and in order to inform the Committee of the research itself.
- 10.3 The Committee noted that a question raised at the FtP Forum about intellectual property had now been resolved.
- 10.4 The Committee noted that further work in this area had been built into the FtP work plan and that recommendations for further research would be submitted to the FtP Forum.
- 10.5 The Committee noted that there was still resistance to a single complaints portal for Health Professionals amongst regulators.
- 10.6 The Committee noted the Complaints Literature report.

Item 11.08/28 Website statistics

- 11.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive detailing statistics from the HPC website for the period 1 January 2008 to 30 April 2008. The Committee noted that the Web Manager was unable to attend to present the figures due to the launch of the new HPC website on that day.
- 11.2 The Committee requested that the methodology for displaying the figures be reviewed. The Committee requested that, if graphs and charts are to be used, they could be produced on the same page as the supporting figures.
- 11.3 The Committee noted the website report.

Action: TG to review the methodology for the production of website statistics for October meeting

Item 12.08/29 Annual review of action points 2008

- 12.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive asking it to note the actions taken in relation to matters arising from meetings between April 2007 and the end of March 2008.
- 12.2 The Committee noted the annual review of actions.

Item 13.08/30 Date and time of next meeting

- 13.1 Subsequent meetings of the Committee would be held at 11.00am on:

Thursday 16 October 2008 (followed by discussion event)
Wednesday 21 January 2009
Monday 4 May 2009

- 13.2 Mr P Acres will be unable to attend the meeting of 16 October 2008.
- 13.3 The Committee was reminded that the meeting of 16 October 2008 would be followed in the afternoon by the discussion event.

Chair:

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Date:

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