

Council, 24 September 2014

Policy and Standards report

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

The report provides an update about the activities of the Policy and Standards Department.

Decision

The Council is requested to discuss the report.

Background information

None

Resource implications

None

Financial implications

None

Appendices

None

Date of paper

11 September 2014

Policy and Standards Department – Council meeting, 24 September 2014

The following provides an update about the work of the Department.

Public health specialists from non-medical backgrounds

- The Department of Health (DH) consultation on the regulation of public health specialists was published on 5 September 2014 for a period of six weeks.¹ A draft response to the consultation will be prepared for the Council's meeting on 16 October 2014.
- Two other amendments to the Health and Social Work Professions Order 2001 ('the Order') are also proposed. The first would remove the requirement for chairs of registration appeals panels to be members of the Council. Partners would instead perform this role. This change is consistent with the Council's policy of separation between its oversight and strategy role and operational decision making.
- The second change would bring the Order in line with recent changes proposed to the legislation of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). Changes would clarify the law about the ability to strike-off registrants in lack of competence and health cases where they have been subject to a substantive suspension order for two years or more.

Review of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPE)

- At the time of writing, the Professional Liaison Group (PLG) had met twice. Three further meetings are planned to December 2014. This work is progressing to timetable. The PLG has considered 'thematic' papers on topics including social media; collaborative approaches to care; interprofessional working; and raising concerns and dealing with mistakes.

Duty of candour

- The SCPE PLG has agreed that the SCPE should be redrafted for consultation to include a dedicated standard about reporting concerns, dealing with mistakes and handling complaints. This will incorporate the principles underpinning the 'professional duty of candour' proposed in the Francis Inquiry, including requirements for registrants to be open and honest about mistakes with service users and their carers; consider making an apology where appropriate; be proactive in putting matters right wherever possible; and respond constructively and honestly to anyone who complains about the care they have received.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/public-health-specialists-regulation>

- The Professional Standards Authority (PSA) has been commissioned by the DH to report on the regulators' progress in implementing a professional duty of candour. As part of this, the Executive recently responded to a request for information from the PSA.

Review of standards of proficiency

- The last consultation which forms part of the current review – practitioner psychologists – runs until 17 October 2014. The standards for hearing aid dispensers and for paramedics were published and effective from 1 September 2014.
- A review of the standards of proficiency for social workers in England is planned to take place from summer 2015, timed to follow the conclusion of the programme of visits to transitionally approved pre-registration social work programmes.

Review of the standards of education and training (SETs) and guidance

- At its meeting in September 2014, the Education and Training Committee discussed and agreed a paper on reviewing the SETs and its supporting guidance. The review will take place from September 2014 and will comprise of a variety of activities to gather the feedback of stakeholders; commissioned research; a Professional Liaison Group (PLG); and a public consultation. Revised standards and guidance are expected to be published in May 2017 and will be effective from the 2017-2018 academic year.

Research

- As part of the SETs review, research has been commissioned which will look at the extent of interprofessional education on approved programmes. Keele University will carry out this work.
- At its meeting in September 2014, the Education and Training Committee agreed a brief for research looking at 'preparation for practice'. This also forms part of the review of the SETs. A copy of the research brief is included to note at this meeting.
- Research is being commissioned to inform whether changes are necessary to the standards of continuing professional development, audits and process. At the time of writing, bids from seven organisations were being considered.