



HCPC  
Corporate Plan  
2023-2024

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# Message from our interim Deputy Chief Executive and Registrar

We are now entering the third year of our five-year Corporate Strategy. This is an important year of transition for the HCPC as well as the health and care sector. Whilst many of the challenges from the pandemic have been overcome, we are still learning to live with Covid-19 and its consequences, and many challenges lie ahead including around workforce and addressing the backlog for patients.

Over the last 12 months we have achieved 80% of the project milestones from last year's plan. While we acknowledge there is still more to be done, we have made important advances in streamlining and improving our fitness to practise (FTP) process, advancing our online services and improving user experience of our registration services, and sharing our data to benefit the wider health and care system.

We have structured our Corporate Plan for 2023-24 around three key themes:

1. improving the experience of registrants and others who engage with the HCPC;
2. contributing to sector wide workforce planning and resilience;
3. driving forward efficiencies and innovation in how we work.

These three themes bring together elements of the six priority areas in our Corporate Strategy, and are underpinned by our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), whilst public protection remains at the heart of everything we do.

As with other organisations, we have had to navigate the economic pressures of the last year and, while we want to continuously innovate and improve, we must remain financially diligent. We have consulted on a fee change and have had to take difficult decisions and prioritise projects in order to create a Corporate Plan which is affordable and continues to improve how we regulate.

Workforce planning will be particularly important for the health and care sector over the next year and beyond, and the HCPC is keen to play its part. Workforce pressures can exacerbate waiting times, create backlogs and can compromise patient safety. To this end, last year we launched a Consultation on preceptorship, to help us support and retain health professionals. We will continue collaborating with Health Education England (HEE) to engage stakeholders across the 4 UK nations and 15 professions to build on existing examples of good practice in preceptorship. As part of this work we have also published data on our retention rates, to aid employers, professional bodies and others responsible for workforce planning.

We are continuing to engage with NHS England on its long term workforce plan, as well as with Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) on its programme of reform for the regulation of health and care professionals. DHSC have published draft legislation for the General Medical Council, and the HCPC are next in line for much needed reform to our legislation, along with the Nursing and Midwifery Council. We are clear that regulatory reform has the potential to bring real benefits to patients and service users and will continue to engage closely with the DHSC, professional bodies, unions and other key stakeholders as this work progresses.

Our work to improve and innovate could not be achieved without the hard work and dedication of the HCPC team. I look forward to working with them this year to deliver this plan, and ensure that the public can access high quality care safely and with confidence.

*Andrew Smith*



Andrew Smith,  
Interim Deputy CEO & Registrar

# Who we are

The HCPC was established under section 60 of the Health Act 1999. As a regulator of health and care professions in the UK.

- Arts therapists
- Biomedical scientists
- Chiropodists / podiatrists
- Clinical scientists
- Dietitians
- Hearing aid dispensers
- Occupational therapists
- Operating department practitioners
- Orthoptists
- Paramedics
- Physiotherapists
- Practitioner psychologists
- Prosthetists / orthotists
- Radiographers
- Speech and language therapists

Our role is to protect the public. We achieve this by:

- setting the standards for education and training, professional skills, conduct, performance and ethics and continuing professional development for 15 health care professions;
- keeping a Register of professionals who meet these standards;
- approving education programmes that professionals must complete prior to registration; and
- taking action when registrants do not meet our standards.

Our vision, purpose and values underpin everything we do

## Our Purpose

*To promote excellence in the professions we regulate and champion high quality care that the public can access safely and with confidence*

## Our Vision

*To be a high performing, adaptable and caring regulator that ensures public protection through strong, evidence-based regulation*

Our values:



### Fair

being honest, open and transparent



### Compassionate

treating people with respect, empathy and care



### Inclusive

collaborating with others and championing diversity



### Enterprising







seeking opportunities to be creative and foster innovation to improve our performance

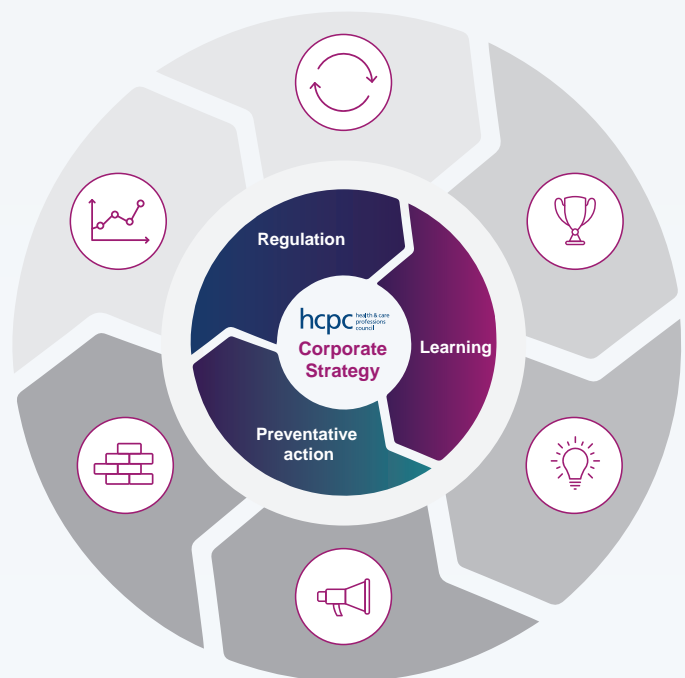
# Our Corporate Strategy 2021-26

2023-24 is the third year of our five year strategy.

The five-year strategy has been co-created with our stakeholders - patients and service users, our registrants, partners, professional bodies, education providers, trades union and employers - listening to them across the regions and professions and working with them collaboratively.

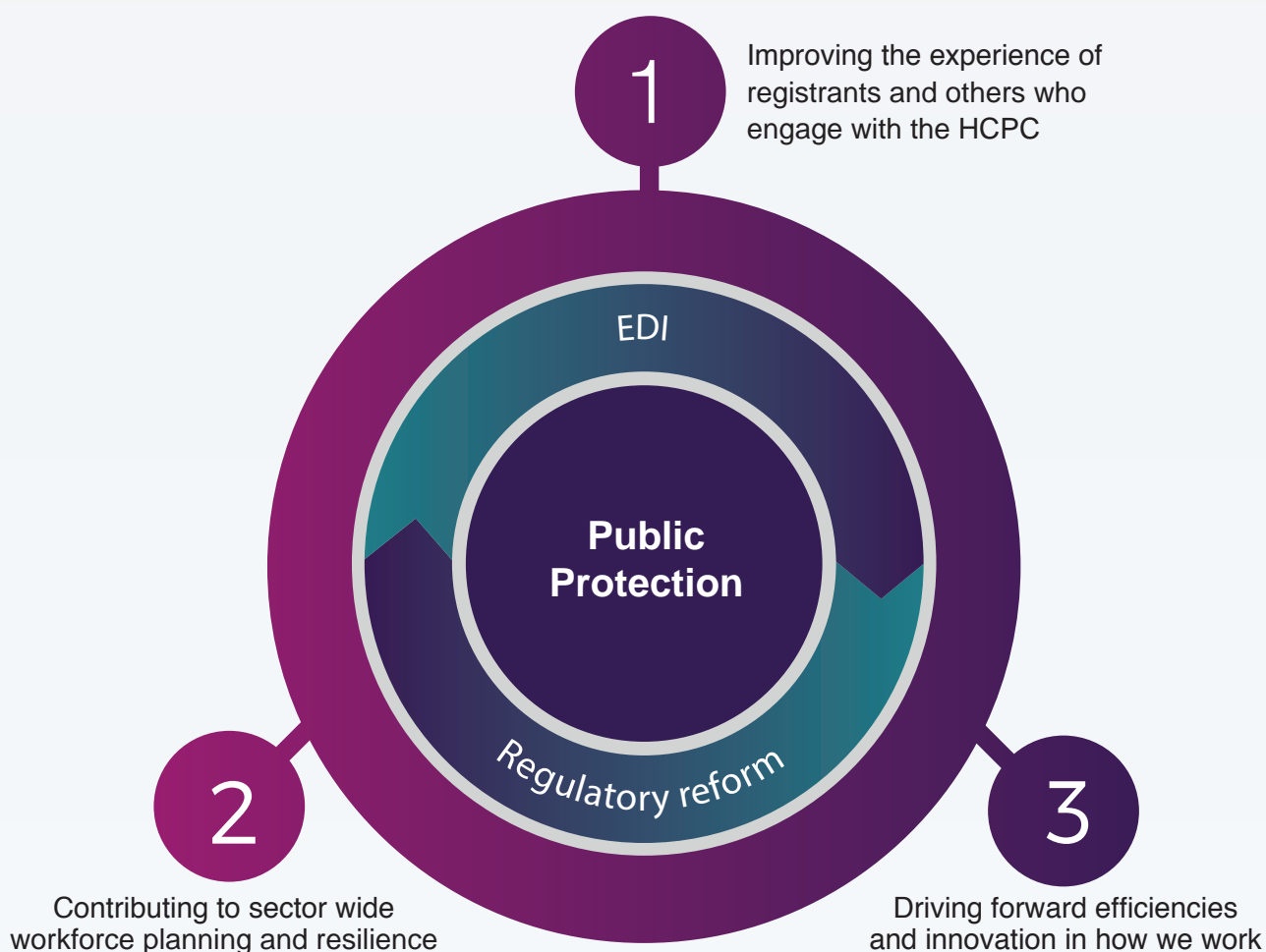
To deliver HCPC's core work of promoting public protection and effective regulation, we have developed six priority areas of work, our aims for these areas of work and where we expect to be at the end of the five year strategy period in 2026.

-  Continuously improve and innovate
-  Promote high quality professional practice
-  Develop insight and exert influence
-  Be visible, engaged and informed
-  Build a resilient, healthy, capable and sustainable organisation
-  Promote the value of regulation



# Corporate Plan commitments 2023-24

Our work to progress our strategic aims in 2023-24 is aligned to three key themes which support our primary purpose of protecting the public. These are:



Public protection is at the heart of everything we do. Ensuring that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is also a core consideration and will be integral to our work as a regulator under each of the three themes.

In 2023-24 we will work closely with the DHSC and our other stakeholders on regulatory reform. Regulatory reform will span several years but will bring real benefits to patients, service users and the people on our Register.

# 1

## Improving the experience of registrants and others who engage with the HCPC

In order to be viewed as a kind and compassionate regulator and to exert our influence in the interest of public protection we need to ensure our interactions with our registrants, as well as others who engage with the HCPC, are positive and productive.

Over the last year, we have launched a registrant support line and a lay advocacy service to support people during the fitness to practise (FTP) process. In the next 12 months we will drive further improvements through the delivery of our registrant communication strategy.

Our registration services are a key part of our engagement with the people on our Register. We want to ensure our approach is customer focused while remaining true to our core purpose of public protection.

Effective engagement and communication will also enable us to articulate the benefits of regulatory reform and regulation in general to all our stakeholders.

### In 2023-24 we will:

- Improve experiences of our fitness to practise process by shifting the focus of our investigation work to earlier in the process, which has shown in pilot to reduce the time FTP cases take overall.
- Transform our registration service operating model to enable a greater focus on good customer service for registrants and applicants.
- Make it easier for registrants to manage their registration through mobile-compatible online services.
- Seek to reduce the impact of FTP processes on registrants and other participants through our new dedicated registrant support line, and by continuing to run our lay advocacy service.
- Ensure our standards and guidance reflects registrants' current practise and the situations they work in. In 2023-24 we will review our Standards of Conduct Performance and Ethics and supporting guidance on areas such as social media and the duty of candour.
- Strengthen the range of voices informing our regulatory policy development by better engaging with service users and patients.
- Support our four country approach to UK regulation by making enhancements to our Welsh language accessibility as required by changes to the Welsh Language Scheme.

# 2

## Contributing to sector wide workforce planning and resilience

Workforce planning will be particularly important for the health and care sector over the next year. In order to play our part in finding solutions to this challenge, the HCPC last year launched a preceptorship programme and shared data on the retention of the health and care professionals we regulate for the first time.

This year, data and analysis will continue to play an important role in achieving our aims under this theme as we develop our strategic data partnerships with Health Education England and the Higher Education Statistics Agency to improve our forecasting of new graduates and international registrations for the future workforce.

As well as welcoming new professionals to our Register, our work this year will focus on supporting current registrants to continue to contribute to the UK workforce, through our registrant health and wellbeing strategy and professional outreach work.

Learning from the insights from our data, and sharing this learning with our stakeholders, will be key to progressing this area of our work. For example, we will do further work to understand how long people stay on our Register, examine factors influencing FTP outcomes and publish dashboards on registration renewal rates.

### In 2023-24 we will:

- Share insights from our data with shareholders, through the publication of profession specific data dashboards which enable greater visibility of the makeup of our Register.
- Continue to pursue strategic data partnerships with key stakeholders to enable us to better forecast workforce supply through new graduates and international registration.
- Review our English Language Requirements for registration to ensure that applicants to join our Register who qualified outside of the UK meet requirements for communication.
- Working closely with education providers, commence a review of our Standards of Education and Training to ensure that the registrants of the future continue to join the workforce with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.
- Undertake research into the experiences of new registrants entering the workforce, which will inform our work to support registrants to continue to meet our standards and stay on our Register.
- Continue our work on advanced practice regulation to ensure that emerging roles and innovation in how health and care is delivered continue to be safe and effective.
- Support workforce retention through the implementation of our registrant health and wellbeing strategy and our professional liaison outreach service.
- Support emergency workforce provision by the continuation of our temporary covid register.

# 3

## Driving forward efficiencies and innovation in how we work

This year we will persevere in our work to continuously improve and innovate, as we also begin to realise the benefits from work we have already completed over the past two years by using technology and new ways of working to create efficiencies.

This year our plan includes moving more of our registration processes online by enabling mobile and tablet friendly access to our registration systems.

Last year we undertook a Digital Transformation Strategy refresh, which we will begin implementing this year.

Work under this theme will also involve promoting sustainability in our organisation by determining our baseline and developing our sustainability action plan. We also intend to engage with the NHS as well as other health and care regulators to promote environmentally friendly and sustainable practice.

### In 2023-24 we will:

- Enhance our online application and renewal functionality for registrants and applicants enabling greater self-service and reducing manual and paper-based inefficiency.
- Review how we work with our Partners to optimise and streamline our processes and quality assurance.
- Deliver the third year of our People Strategy, focusing on improving our ability to attract and retain talent.
- Strengthen our financial management capabilities by modernising our financial IT systems.
- Deliver against our Digital Transformation Strategy – including enhancing user experience through system improvements.
- Improve our sustainability and further reduce our office footprint.



# Regulatory Reform



Regulatory reform is a far-reaching programme of work to modernise and improve the legislative framework across all professional healthcare regulators. It will have a significant, organisation-wide impact on the way the HCPC operates in the future.

We warmly welcome the DHSC's confirmation that it intends to consult next on modernising the regulatory regime for both the HCPC and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). Between ourselves and the NMC we regulate over a million health and care professionals, and a modern legislative regime will make a huge difference to the HCPC's ability to regulate fairly, proportionately and efficiently.

We look forward to working closely with the DHSC, NMC, professional bodies, unions and our other stakeholders to ensure the much-needed changes to our legislative framework

can be brought into effect as soon as possible, and that we can continue to fulfil our role of protecting the public in the increasingly complex and changing health and care sector.

As we enter into the next stage of this work, we will need to scale-up our resource to ensure that we can effectively deliver the organisational change and benefits for our stakeholders that will follow from regulatory reform. We have developed the 2023-24 Corporate Plan with this in mind, however, we may need to deprioritise other areas of development work and our commitments this year may need to be revisited.

# Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)



We are ensuring that Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is at the heart of everything we do as a regulator. From meeting the Professional Standards Authority's (PSA) EDI Standard for the first time, completing our review of the Standards of Proficiency and launching a consultation on the Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics, all of which incorporate our EDI commitments, 2022-2023 was a landmark year in our EDI improvement journey.

In 2023-2024, we will continue our focus on this area in all of our work.

Over the course of the year, we will continue to collect registrant EDI data to build up an accurate picture of who our registrants are to inform the HCPC's policies and processes, as well as embolden us to tackle inequality and discrimination. This year we plan to collect even more registrant EDI data during registration and renewal, which will enhance the quality

and accuracy of the data we hold. Currently, we have 49% of registrant EDI data, with 50% of professions still due to renew. We hope to collect much of the remaining data over the course of this year and will have EDI data for 80% of the Register by March 2024.

We will create an internal EDI dashboard so that we're able to more easily track the demographics of our registrants, and how EDI characteristics impact things such as retention rates and FTP referrals and outcomes.

As part of our commitment to improving workforce resilience, we will review our registration policies including international routes to registration and English language requirements for entry to our Register.

Our 2023-2024 EDI Action Plan sets out in more detail how we intend to implement this important work to achieve our vision for the coming year.

# Our work in 2023-24

This Corporate Plan sets out the major milestones that we aim to achieve within the next 12 months. We will also continue to work with and engage our stakeholders to get their feedback on how successfully we are delivering and implementing the key work areas identified within our strategy.

As a regulator of 15 professions essential to the UK health and care system, we also deliver excellent regulation while we undertake this development. Our core regulatory activity in 2023-24 will include:

## Our core regulatory activity in 2023-24 will include:



We anticipate that we will receive **22,100** new registration applications



Efficiently renewing **201,250** registrants as part of the two-year cycle



Carrying out **100** education programme assessments and approvals



We expect to list  
**380**  
Substantive Final Hearings



Responding to  
**640**  
policy and ethical enquiries  
regarding our standards



We expect to receive  
**1,400**  
new FTP concerns



Undertaking  
**5,200**  
CPD audits

Undertaking all this activity would not be possible without our dedicated employees and partners, each one of whom has an important role to play in making our strategy a success and ensuring we deliver our regulatory purpose of protecting the public and promoting high quality professional practice across the 15 professions we regulate.

# Reporting our progress

We will report against our progress in achieving these commitments on a regular basis to our Council as part of the Chief Executive's organisational performance report. Key milestones have been developed for the year to enable the Council to hold the Executive to account for delivery. We will monitor risks to the delivery of the strategy through our Strategic Risk Register.

We will report on how successful our delivery of the Corporate Plan has been at the end of 2023-24, and we will take this opportunity to engage with our stakeholders on the impacts of the strategy and the alignment of common priorities in future years.

