

Bulletin: Issue 30

Meeting of Council: 18 November 2009

GCC Strategic Plan 2009-2014

Background

At its meeting on 18 August 2009, Council agreed a draft Strategic Plan for consultation. The consultation document was sent to 57 individuals and organisations; eight responses were received.

Outcome

General Council agreed the Strategic Plan subject to minor amendments.

In reaching their decision, Council members had carefully considered all of the consultation responses in detail and noted that there was no disagreement with the Strategic Plan's stated aim, values and strategic objectives. Further, there was one suggestion for improving the focus of the GCC's aim and one issue was raised regarding openness and transparency, other than that comments concerned the details of how the GCC intends to deliver its strategic objectives.

Government follow-up on lay majority

Background

During the review of healthcare regulation that resulted in the White Paper - *Trust, Assurance and Safety – The Regulation of Health Professionals in the 21st Century*, the previous Council had agreed that it would wish to move to a lay majority of one, once the necessary change had been made to the legislative framework. The Department of Health (DH) has recently advised the GCC that this change would be included in a Section 60 Order that is currently being drafted, subject to the agreement of the new Council.

Outcome

Council members reviewed the matter and decided that the DH should be notified that, in common with other health regulators, the GCC wishes to retain parity of Council membership between lay and chiropractic members.

Pool of members for the Investigating Committee

Background

Council members agreed at their previous meeting that the capacity of the Investigating Committee should be increased by moving to a pool of individuals with a committee quorum of three, as is already the case for the Professional Conduct Committee and Health Committee. The required amended Rules came into force on 1 November 2009.

The seven current members of the Investigating Committee who have already been through the full appointment process have confirmed that they wish to retain their appointments.

Each of the Chiropractic Professional Associations agreed to publicise to its members the opportunity to apply for appointment. Thanks to their efforts, by the closing date of 22 October 2009, 33 applications had been received and following short listing by a panel comprising the Chair of Council, the Chief Executive and an independent assessor, 20 individuals will have been interviewed by 25 November 2009.

Outcome

Members noted that the interview panel's recommendations for appointment, with copies of relevant CVs, will be provided by means of a written resolution in early December 2009.

Terms of reference and membership of non-statutory Fitness to Practise Committee

General Council agreed the Terms of Reference for the Fitness to Practise Committee, whose purpose is to

provide strategically focused advice to Council to:

- Assure and advise the Council on the effective delivery of its fitness to practise responsibilities, and
- Advise the Council on the development and improvement of those responsibilities.

Its membership will comprise: three members of Council, one of whom will chair the Committee, Chief Executive, Executive Officer (Regulation) and one lay member nominated by the Communications Advisory Group.

Following a ballot, General Council agreed that the following Council members will join the Committee: Professor Alan Breen (Chair); Mr David Plank (lay member); and Mrs Judith Worthington (lay member).

IpsosMORI repeat survey of public awareness and perceptions of chiropractors

Council agreed that the results of the 2009 survey, which is a repeat of a baseline survey undertaken in 2004, were encouraging and statistically significant. In particular, members noted that:

- More than a third (37%) of the public knows that chiropractors treat back or spine pain/problems. This has increased from under a fifth (18%) in 2004
- Over a third (36%) believes the chiropractic profession is regulated. This has increased from 28% in 2004. 11% believe that it is not a regulated profession (down from 15% in 2004)
- 78% have never visited a chiropractor (85% in 2004).

Council further noted that:

- As in 2004, there is broad awareness and understanding of chiropractic. More mature, affluent, people in South England (excluding London) appear to be most well-informed. Young people, and the less affluent, and those in urban areas (e.g. London) are the opposite. Those who have consulted chiropractors three times or more will have a better understanding about the profession and chiropractic
- The survey is a tool that provides a 'snap-shot' of public perception and awareness; it does not explain why people think as they do or attribute causes for any variations between the 2004 and 2009 surveys.

Date of next meeting: 17 February 2010