



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE GENERAL CHIROPRACTIC COUNCIL
HELD ON 29 MARCH 2017
44 WICKLOW STREET, LONDON WC1X 9HL**

OPEN SESSION

Present:

Roger Dunshea (Acting Chair of Council)
Steven Gould
Tom Greenway
Gareth Lloyd
Julie McKay
Liz Qua
Julia Sayers
Carl Stychin
Gay Swait
Phil Yalden

Apologies

Sophia Adams Bhatti

In attendance:

Rosalyn Hayles, Chief Executive and Registrar
Penny Bance, Director of Education, Registration and Standards
Paul Ghuman, Deputy Chief Executive (Director Resources & Regulation)
Jamie Button, Registrations Manager, in attendance for item for item C-1703/9
Richard Kavanagh, Business Information Officer, in attendance for items C-1703/8 and C-1703/9

C-1703/1	<p>Apologies and declarations of interest</p> <p>Apologies were received from Sophia Adams Bhatti. No declarations of interest were made.</p>
C-1703/2	<p>Draft minutes of the meeting of the meeting of 5 December 2016 and matters arising.</p> <p>The minutes of 5 December 2016 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. There were no matters arising.</p>
C-1703/3	<p>Chair's report</p> <p><u>Appointments to Committees</u> The Acting Chair said that all Council appraisals for 2016 had now been completed. In light of three members of Council leaving or having left recently, the Acting Chair would be reviewing the membership vacancies on Council Committees over the next few weeks and would be in touch with individual members.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Carl Stychin for agreeing to act as interim Chair of the Education Committee and said that the recruitment process had begun for the role of Chair of the Education Committee.</p>

C-1703/4	<p>Chief Executive's report</p> <p>The Chief Executive & Registrar introduced the executive report, which outlined the delivery of the GCC's statutory functions in the period since Council last met.</p> <p>In response to a query about why approximately 70% of 2015/16 CPD summary submissions had been queried, the Director of Education, Registration and Standards explained that the higher number was a result of the GCC checking all CPD submissions rather than just an audited sample, as in previous years. The Director of Education, Registration and Standards said that the CPD guidance for registrants was reviewed annually and that this would continue to happen. It was also noted that the process had also identified some very good CPD submissions and that this should form part of the feedback to the profession about the outcomes from the exercise. The Acting Chair of the Education Committee said this topic would also be discussed at the Education Committee, given the number of CPD summaries that had not been straightforward.</p> <p>Council asked the executive to consider whether all applicants for registration/restoration should be asked to sign an undertaking confirming that they have not practised during any period of non-registration, rather than just those applicants in relation to whom the GCC has identified a concern that they have been practising while unregistered. It was agreed that this proposed change would be considered.</p> <p>It was also agreed that the newsletter should outline the reasons for any significant changes to Registrations forms, in due course.</p>
C-1703/5	<p>Review of strategic objectives with regard to regulatory collaboration</p> <p>The CER introduced this paper which asked that Council consider amending the GCC document 'Our Mission, Vision and Strategic Aims' to include reference to collaborative working with other UK healthcare regulators and care professionals, following a regulatory roundtable event held in December 2016.</p> <p>Council agreed this proposal.</p>
C-1703/6	<p>Update on Council appointments processes</p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) provided an update on the process for Council appointments, saying that the GCC was currently recruiting for five new members of Council. He said that interviews would commence in the next few weeks and then final approval of selected members would be sought from the Privy Council. He expected this process would be completed within the next 6-8 weeks.</p>
C-1703/7	<p>2016 Communications Report and 2017 Communications Plan</p> <p>The Director of Education, Registration and Standards provided an update on communications and engagement activities in 2017.</p> <p>She explained that the paper was in two parts – part one providing information on the work that had been carried out in 2016 and part two covering core work and the individual projects referred to in this business plan for 2017.</p> <p>She said that, in 2016, the focus had been on the Code and the CPD scheme and review of the degree recognition criteria. The new Code had become effective in 2016 and there had been a communications and engagement programme to launch and promote the new Code and accompanying Guidance documents. The CPD</p>

	<p>scheme was being reviewed and the GCC was trialling the proposed new components of a future CPD scheme. New Education Standards had also been drafted.</p> <p>The GCC had responded to the Welsh government consultation on the Welsh Language scheme (WLS) and had been in discussion with other regulators about the proposed new standards.</p> <p>The GCC continued to produce the monthly newsletter and she said the GCC would look at the possibility of producing specific thematic newsletters this year.</p> <p>Council members said it would also be good to have communications addressed on all Council papers and to continue to list the communication points for the newsletter at the end of the meeting.</p> <p>Patient leaflets had been updated and were available for downloading on the GCC website and a new leaflet entitled 'The GCC at a Glance' had also been produced.</p> <p>The Director of Education, Registration and Standards said that in 2016 members of the executive team had attended several meetings and events across the UK and internationally including the IAMRA conference, the WFC Education Conference and the annual ICRC forum.</p> <p><u>Communication and Engagement activities in 2017</u></p> <p>The Director of Education, Registration and Standards said there were a range of activities planned for 2017, including a review of the CPD scheme, publication and implementation of the Education Standards and new Quality Assurance processes.</p> <p>Work would continue on the WLS and the GCC would continue to work with the other regulators in order to be fully compliant when the new Standards were applied.</p> <p><u>Research</u></p> <p>A survey of new registrants was planned in the summer in order to further the GCC's knowledge and understanding of the profession and another survey would also be sent to the profession in regards to the use of x-rays. Research into student professionalism and preparedness for practice were also planned for 2017. Council agreed it would be helpful for this research to be highlighted in the relevant newsletters.</p>
C-1703/8	<p>Review of online register</p> <p>The Registrations Manager introduced this paper, which notified Council of the work planned to review the online register. He explained that the online register, data fields for which were last revised in August 2013, contained both mandatory and optional published material. Mandatory information included registrants' names, registration numbers, gender, chiropractic qualifications and registered addresses. Non-mandatory data published included registration start dates, practising statuses and email addresses, as well as additional practice addresses and phone numbers.</p> <p>Following the lead of other regulators, the GCC would review the data fields published in its online register and, as part of that process, would seek views from the profession, patients and the public about what information they thought the register should include, over and above the mandatory information. A report with a recommendation would be brought to Council in June and any changes made would be implemented by September 2017.</p> <p>The Registrations Manager also said that the GMC was currently exploring the possibility of a shared online register portal for all regulators, allowing members of</p>

	<p>the public the facility to search for any regulated healthcare professional via one website. If this were to go ahead there would be a cost implication for the GCC.</p>
<p>C-1703/9</p>	<p>Performance reports</p> <p><u>Financial Summary</u> The DCE introduced the performance report and firstly the financial summary for the period to the end of February 2017.</p> <p>He reported a net positive variance on income of £71k to-date which includes a positive variance on annual retention income of £65k, and a positive variance of £7k on the Investment Portfolio.</p> <p>He said FtP and staffing costs had been lower than forecast which subsequently resulted in expenditure lower than forecast by £86k. The DCE said one Test of Competence (ToC) had taken place so far in 2017 and that there was a £1,684 surplus in relation to the costs of that ToC, but that there would be other ToC related costs throughout the year.</p> <p>Professional and legal fees had been slightly higher than forecast and the overall surplus as at 28 February was £158k.</p> <p><u>KPI</u> The DCE said that the GCC were still not hitting the target of determining 90% of IC cases from receipt of complaint to determination by the IC within nine months and that the percentage was currently 55%. He also said there had been a change to the procedures operated by the FtP staff during 2016 with witness statements and expert reports now being obtained upfront, and that this change to procedures had impacted this KPI. He said that another factor affecting this KPI was that some cases were linked or were of a more complex nature, and given the small size of the overall caseload, such cases could have a 'skewing' effect on the overall KPI for the entire year. The DCE suggested that it may be appropriate to review the KPI as it applies to cases generally, as well as how it applies to cases concerning website advertising specifically to make the KPI more useful and informative. His suggestion was that a revised KPI could be considered by the Audit Committee in May and approved by Council in June.</p> <p>This proposal was agreed by the Council.</p> <p><u>Business Plan</u> The DCE said the review of the governance manual was nearing completion and that the manual would be reviewed by the Audit Committee in May and then provided to the June Council meeting for approval. He also said the case management system had now been implemented.</p> <p><u>Annual Registration report</u> The Registrations Manager introduced the 2016 Registrations report. He said the year and figures had been fairly typical, but noted that there had been a slightly smaller increase in registrants. He noted that there had been a reduction in the number of registrants paying the non-practising fee following communication efforts around the simplicity of the restoration process. He noted that the number of overseas registrants sitting the new ToC was similar to the numbers who had previously taken the test when it was run by the Welsh Institute of Chiropractic.</p> <p><u>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion report</u> The Business Information Officer introduced the EDI report, noting that this followed on from Council's agreement, in November 2015, of the EDI strategy. Since that date the GCC had been working to achieve the six objectives of the EDI strategy in</p>

	<p>the areas of governance, policy, data collection, staffing, communications and accessibility.</p> <p>The annex showed the work that would be carried out by the GCC, including Council training, work on the Welsh Language Standards and review of HR/staff policies. Council agreed that training should also be extended to the sub-committees such as the PCC and IC.</p> <p>The Business Information Officer also said that Council would need to reviews its EDI strategy in early 2018.</p> <p><u>Annual FtP statistical report</u></p> <p>The Business Information Officer introduced the Annual Fitness to Practise report, which provided an analysis of FtP activity for 2016. He noted that a number of complaints received relating to advertising claims had been excluded from the 'complaints received' section and were covered instead under the 'Advertising allegations' section.</p> <p>He reported that complaints had continued to fall in 2016, continuing a trend that began in 2013, with a total of 37 complaints having been received in 2016. He said that the majority of these complaints (68%) had been received from either patients or relatives of patients. He said that, of the 43 cases determined by the IC in 2016, 15 were referred to the Professional Conduct Committee (PCC) and 70% of those were determined within 9 months of receipt of the complaint. 11 hearings were determined by the PCC in that year and one chiropractor was removed from the register.</p> <p>He said that one organisation had made 300 complaints about advertising claims made by chiropractors on their websites and that another three complaints had been made by other members of the public.</p> <p>It was noted that the report highlighted a much higher proportion of complaints made against men than women. The Business Information Officer suggested that before drawing any conclusions about what that difference might mean in terms of professional behaviour, it would be valuable to gather data around the types of complaint involved (and their outcomes) as well as about the complainants.</p> <p>Council said it would be helpful not only to have annual data in the report but to also provide cumulative data, in order to enable valid comparisons to be made as well as to enable identification of any emerging trends. This was noted by the Business Information Officer.</p> <p>Council also agreed that the key points from the reports should feature in future newsletters.</p>
C-1703/10	<p>Audit Committee report</p> <p>The Audit Committee (AC) Chair provided Council with an update of the recent Audit Committee meeting. She said the primary purpose of the last AC meeting had been to agree the scope and items for the 2017 external audit. She also said that a review of the effectiveness of the external auditor had been carried out, following the re-tendering process which occurred in 2016.</p> <p><u>Strategic Risk Register</u></p> <p>The AC Chair reported a reduction in many of the scores in the strategic risk register and said she expected that the risk around failure to uphold stakeholder confidence would be reduced further once a new Chair of Council had been recruited.</p> <p>She said an FtP assurance audit taken place and that the Committee had been</p>

	<p>satisfied with the outcome from that audit. She reported a vast improvement in the recently published 2015/16 PSA performance review, where the GCC had met all but one of the standards. She did note that, as the Committee had not seen the finalised PSA review or the GCC's action plan in response to the review until the day before the AC meeting, approval of the action plan would need to follow the Council meeting.</p> <p>The AC Chair said she had discussed with the executive the potential value of Council members being provided with training from the external auditors on understanding financial accounts and risk. The external auditors were able to provide such training.</p>
C-1703/11	<p>AOB</p> <p><u>Work plan 2017</u> Council discussed the 2017 work plan. The Standing Orders were on the work plan for the March meeting, but would be considered alongside the governance manual at the June meeting, as the two documents needed to be aligned.</p> <p>The Communications items to be shared in the newsletters were noted.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Julie McKay and Sophia Adams Bhatti for their considerable contributions to Council. He also thanked Grahame Pope for his excellent leadership of the Education Committee. The Council greatly appreciated the experience and expertise all three had brought to the Council.</p>
	<p>Date of next meeting: 15 June 2017</p>