

September 2009

Registration of Public Health Practitioners

A report on the results from the extensive consultations concerning the regulation of public health practitioners was made to the UKPHR Board in May 2009. Over the summer considerable work has gone into the collation of the numerous helpful and constructive comments received, including a re-drafting of the standards for registration. Our thanks go to every individual, group, and organisation that contributed. A full report of the consultation is available on our web site (www.publichealthregister.org.uk/Practitioner+regulation).

In re-drafting the standards for registration of public health practitioners we have attempted to accommodate all of the comments received whilst ensuring an emphasis on the need for:

- simplicity
- robustness
- capability for cost-effective implementation
- clear focus on public health practice, linked to the assessment of risk
- feedback from practitioners and employers as to what would work.

The re-drafted standards will be circulated and available on our web site for final comment during October 2009.

The UKPHR Board remains committed to ensuring that a coherent regulatory pathway for public health practitioners is achieved. This commitment was re-stated at the September 2009 Board meeting.

While the four UK Departments of Health also remain committed to the development of specialists and practitioners who contribute to public health delivery, over the course of the past few months they have indicated their desire to carry out a review of the regulatory frameworks applied to public health professionals. This has been led by the DH England as professional regulation is not a devolved matter. This review is to ensure that current policy, particularly that adopted over the last 5 years regarding the regulation of healthcare professionals, has been considered for the full range of public health professions.

The DH reported at the UKPHR September Board that this review would be due to report in December 2009. In light of this development the UKPHR has been advised by the UK Departments of Health not to implement the route to practitioner registration until the review has reported. This would enable all concerned to consider the findings of the review carefully before moving forward. The UKPHR recognises the significance of this regulatory review and wishes to support the UK Departments of Health in this development through providing as much input to the review as is possible.

We are conscious that the work to date has raised expectations within the public health practitioner workforce for the early implementation to a regulatory pathway for those currently out-with a registration framework. However, this must be balanced against the needs of the regulatory review. The UKPHR has therefore agreed to move forward over the next 3 months in areas that will support and not prejudice the outcomes of the review, including the finalising of the regulatory standards and a mapping of these against existing frameworks for public health practitioner development. This will enable us to make rapid progress once the review findings have been reflected upon in the New Year.

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