



**Council**  
**22 November 2023**  
**Chief Executive and Registrar's Report**

<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Purpose</b>	For noting
<b>Issue</b>	A review of activities and performance since the last Council meeting not reported elsewhere on the agenda.
<b>Recommendations</b>	To note the content of the report.
<b>Financial and resourcing implications</b>	These are set out in the paper.
<b>Equality and diversity implications</b>	The paper sets out what we have done since the previous Council meeting on matters related to equality, diversity and inclusion.
<b>Communications implications</b>	None.
<b>Annexes</b>	A. Business Plan Monitoring Report 2023-24 B. Finance Report
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## Key messages from this paper:

- The report sets out the activities undertaken by the team since the previous Council meeting not reported elsewhere on the agenda. Headlines include:
  - The 2023 Convention, in which GOsC was a partner organisation, was held on 20 and 21 October. The Convention was a success and the GOsC involvement has been seen as overwhelmingly positive.
  - Our 2023-24 performance review year continues with the main fieldwork of the targeted audit of fitness to practise decisions being completed. We are looking forward to engaging with PSA on any findings.
  - We will be presenting at the PSA Research Conference in November 2023.
  - We have responded to a number of external consultations including those run by: the Department of Health and Social Care, Department of Work and Pensions and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.
  - DJS have been appointed as the organisation to undertake the Registrants and Stakeholder Perceptions Survey.

## Introduction

1. This report gives an account of activities of note that have been undertaken by the Chief Executive and Registrar and colleagues since the previous Council meeting, which are not reported elsewhere on the agenda.

## Convention 2023: 30 years of recognition

2. On behalf of the GOsC, it was a privilege to be able to attend Convention 2023, organised by the Institute of Osteopathy (iO) and this year marking 30 years of recognition. The multi-partner event, including GOsC as one of the partners, officially opened on Friday 20 October and concluded on the evening of Saturday 21 October with the iO gala dinner and awards ceremony.
3. There were almost 400 delegates on Friday and Saturday attending the keynote talks and presentation/discussion sessions. Keynote talks were delivered by Simon Fielding, the first GOsC Chair who was influential in achieving the passing of the Osteopaths Act 1993, Professor Dr Frank Willard, Professor of Anatomy, and Renzo Molinari, Principal of the Molinari Institute of Health (UK).
4. Across both days, the sessions were themed in the areas of education, practice, research and regulation. Over 300 people attended the gala dinner and awards ceremony. The delegates were a diverse community from osteopathic students to osteopaths from around the globe including the UK, Europe, Australasia, America, Japan, and Korea.

5. In my view the profession came together and demonstrated unity and collaboration. A recognition that as a profession we are stronger together than apart. Osteopathy is a broad community and we all, as individuals and organisations, have a responsibility to maintain that coalition and to respect differences of views as we face future challenges together.
6. It was a pleasure to share a presentation stage with Dr John Gimpel, President of the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners as we discussed our thoughts about regulation and what that looks like from our respective sides of the pond.
7. But the convention was not just about the formal sessions, as the informal gatherings were equally of value. I took such an opportunity with Paul Orrock, Chair of the Osteopathy Board of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), Cathy Woodward, Executive Officer, Osteopathy at AHPRA and Matiu Taingahue, Chair of the Osteopathic Council of New Zealand over coffee at the end of the first day of convention. It was a delight to meet international colleagues in-person, rather than just through an online Teams call.
8. GOsC involvement across the two days was in the form of:
  - The event launch
  - Participation in a mentoring training session being run by Glynis Fox, President of the Institute of Osteopathy
  - Presentation on 'UK Regulation: Looking to the future'
  - Interactive workshop on 'Professionalism'
  - Participation in an international panel discussion on regulation
  - Hosting a GOsC stand to facilitate and engage with attendees
  - Attendance at the gala dinner and awards ceremony.
9. As we marked 30 years of recognition, I was pleased to be able to welcome some former colleagues to the convention so we could thank them for their past endeavours. I was delighted that Madeleine Craggs, the first Chief Executive and Registrar was able to attend, alongside Gillian Sellars, the first Head of Registration. We were also able to welcome back Tim Walker, former Chief Executive and Registrar and Nigel Clarke, who succeeded Simon Fielding as Chair of the GOsC.
10. Feedback on the convention has been overwhelmingly positive and in particular about the GOsC involvement not just in terms of our presentations, but more so relating to our availability and willingness to engage with osteopaths at the GOsC stand. Our interactions with osteopaths were all positive and I would like to thank Liz Niman, Head of Communications, Stacey Towle, Senior Communications Officer, and Fiona Browne, Director of Education, Development and Standards, for their work in this regard.
11. I would specifically like to note how our Communications colleagues encouraged and persuaded attendees to record some short 'talking head' video clips which

we have used on social media to boost our recruitment campaign for osteopath vacancies on the Investigating Committee. This approach, which saw osteopaths making an appeal directly to osteopaths, appears to have landed positively.

12. I would like to thank Caroline Guy, Simeon London, Dan Bailey, Harriet Lambert and Laura Turner, who at various points over the two days visited the stand and were engaged with other osteopaths.
13. Finally, sincere thanks should be noted to colleagues from the partner organisations whose work made the event such a success. Partner organisations were: Institute of Osteopathy, National Council for Osteopathic Research, University College of Osteopathy, Osteopathy Europe and the Osteopathic International Alliance.

### **Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (PSA)**

#### *PSA Performance Review*

14. Members will recall that the PSA changed their approach to the annual performance reviews, moving to a three-year cycle which included one periodic review (more in-depth) and two monitoring years (lighter touch).
15. We have been in discussions with colleagues from the PSA about our 2023-24 performance review year, which will be our periodic review following two monitoring review years. As part of the review there is one targeted audit activity, which is around the quality of early stage decision-making within Fitness to Practise. The main part of the audit has been completed and we look forward to engaging with the PSA over their findings.
16. In October 2023, PSA published a self-evaluation of the new performance review approach following completion of the first year of the new cycle. The self-evaluation can be read here: [PSA self-evaluation](#). The PSA have reported the following:

'Overall, we consider the first year of the new process to be successful. We have either achieved or partly achieved nearly all the key benefits, though it is too early to tell how far we have succeeded in reducing the overall burden of the process. The key risks have not, as far as we can tell, materialised to an extent that we could not mitigate.

We have identified significant improvements over the old process, particularly in relation to how long it takes to publish our reports and the contribution of stakeholders to our reviews. Our increased engagement with regulators has facilitated these improvements and gives us a platform for our further development work.'

### *PSA Business Plan and levy*

17. PSA are currently consulting (open until 24 November) on their Fees proposal for 2024-25. This sits alongside the PSA Business Plan for the same period. The Fee proposal is for a 5% increase, which for the GOsC would take our annual levy payment to around £15k. We will budget accordingly and we will respond to the consultation before the 24 November deadline.

### *PSA Research Conference*

18. The PSA will be running a Research Conference on 14 November. We will be presenting at the conference as part of a joint submission with the General Chiropractic Council (GCC) on our patient work with the GCC and Community Research.

### *PSA draft guidance – pre-consultation review*

19. The PSA enabled regulators to have early sight of some guidance which will be issued for consultation after the Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates Order (AAPA Order) has been laid in Parliament in December 2023. The two pieces of guidance are:
- Guidance for regulators on the rulemaking process
  - Accepted outcomes in Fitness to Practice guidance

## **Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)**

### *Legislative reform*

20. Members will know that we submitted our response to the consultation on regulating anaesthesia and physician associates earlier in the year. The AAPA Order, which would bring anaesthesia associates and physician associates under the regulation of the General Medical Council, also outlines the template for reforming the legislation of the remaining healthcare regulators.
21. Following an analysis of the consultation responses DHSC made revisions to the Order and provided regulators with a narrow three-week window to raise only those matters which were seen as significant to the draft Order. After reviewing the revisions we took the position not to respond as our comments would not have met the threshold of significance.
22. We understand the plan, to lay a Statutory Instrument by the end of this year in order to facilitate the regulation of the anaesthesia and physician associates in 2024, remains on track; however, as we keep noting there is no further insight into when any changes to the GOsC legislation may happen.

### *Mandatory Reporting Duty – call for evidence*

23. In May, Government published its Response to the final report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). A headline recommendation was for the government to introduce a statutory duty on people working in regulated activity in relation to children, or in a position of trust, to report child sexual abuse when they either receive a disclosure of child sexual abuse; or witness a child being sexually abused; or observe recognised indicators of child sexual abuse. They also recommended that failure to report CSA when it has been disclosed or witnessed should be a criminal offence.
24. Alongside the Government response, Government launched a call for evidence on mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse. The call for evidence was open until mid-August and the GOsC Fitness to Practise team responded.

### **Department of Work and Pensions**

25. In September 2023, the Professional Standards department responded to a public consultation from the Department of Work and Pensions which was considering whether, as part of the move to a more multidisciplinary workforce to deliver work and health conversations, there should be a further extension of the professionals who can sign fit notes.
26. While our role is not to promote/lobby for the profession, we felt it was important to respond to part of the consultation to emphasise that osteopaths are statutorily regulated health professionals able to work autonomously, take detailed case histories, devise a diagnosis and management plan based upon clinical examination, the best available evidence and patient preferences, and deliver this in partnership with patients.

### **Chief Executives of the Regulatory Bodies (CEORB)**

27. Since the previous meeting of Council, Bernie O'Reilly has been appointed as the new Chief Executive and Registrar of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). I met with Bernie for an introductory meeting and look forward to working alongside him over the months ahead.
28. Ian Brack, Chief Executive and Registrar of the General Dental Council (GDC) stood down from post on 6 November. Ian was a valued colleague and chaired the two Chief Executive committees with aplomb. We wish Ian well for the future.
29. With Ian's departure, the Chief Executives of the Regulatory Bodies (CEORB) group and the Chief Executives Steering Group (CESG) needed a new Chair. I am pleased to advise that Nick Jones, Chief Executive and Registrar of the General Chiropractic Council was elected.

## Updates relating to devolved nations

### Scotland

30. The Patient Safety Commissioner for Scotland Bill passed its stage 3 debate on Wednesday 27 September, with a unanimous vote of 144 votes for, none against and no abstentions. There will be a few weeks before Royal Assent is granted, after which work on implementation can begin.
31. This will include minor technical work to bring certain parts of the legislation into force, while recruitment of the Commissioner will be taken forward by the Scottish Parliament. As such the timetable for appointment of the Commissioner is not yet known.

### Wales

#### *Welsh Language Scheme update*

32. The GOsC's Welsh Language Scheme will cease to exist on 6 December 2023, when the Welsh Language Standards come into effect. In preparation for the standards, we have focused our resources on the translation of documents, forms and website text, to ensure Welsh-speakers can access the information they need from 6 December. We have also been reviewing and, where relevant, creating Welsh versions of other resources including GOsC's Visiting an Osteopath animation.
33. Internally, we have been having discussions across teams about the processes needed to ensure the standards are met as part of our business as usual activities. This includes correspondence with Welsh speaking patients, osteopaths and members of the public; facilitating hearings and meetings in Welsh where needed; and incorporating questions into our consultations that seek out views on how our policy decisions may impact on opportunities to use the Welsh language.
34. Our spend on this work so far amounts to just under £15,000 and we expect this to increase slightly before the end of the year, as we seek to finalise other relevant work including the installation of a Welsh message as part of our automated phone system.

#### *Education Workforce Council (EWC)*

35. Education Workforce Council (EWC) is the independent, professional regulator for the education workforce in Wales, covering teachers and learning support staff in school and further education settings, qualified youth/youth support workers, and work-based learning practitioners.

36. We have been asked by the EWC to attend an annual training day in April 2024 to help strengthen their knowledge to undertake their strategic governance roles.

*Northern Ireland:*

37. It has been almost a year since we visited Northern Ireland and met with osteopaths in-person. We are planning another visit in the coming months in order to ensure that we remain in contact with osteopaths in Northern Ireland and that we understand the issues which are relevant to their practice.

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

38. Since the previous report to Council we have provided training to our non-executive selection panels and we have held an all staff training day which focused on our new organisational values, how we embed them and their link to creating an inclusive environment.
39. Members of Council may have read online the Whistleblowing concerns which have been raised against the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) which include, among other issues, details of concerns around speaking up and discrimination. An independent KC has been appointed to investigate the concerns. While it would be inappropriate to comment on this matter, in due course when the investigation has concluded, we will consider any learning for our own context arising from any findings identified by the NMC.

### **Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)**

40. The GOsC Registration team considered a consultation being run by the AHPRA on a review of the criminal history registration standards. A response was prepared to the consultation and submitted. This consultation has resulted in the Registration team considering what information we publish on our public website and whether there are enhancements we may make.

### **Registrants and Stakeholder Perception Survey**

41. Following an open tender panel, I am pleased to report that DJS have been appointed to undertake the Registrants and Stakeholder Perceptions Survey. The quality of the tenders was high and we would like to thank Dan Bailey for his involvement in the tender panel.

### **Building Trust in Regulation – Research**

42. The GOsC and the Open University (OU) have agreed to advertise for a co-funded PhD researcher to submit potential proposals on:



- Study of trust in regulation and regulatory processes and functions (including education, standards, continuing professional development and Fitness to Practise) with patients and/ or with registrants.
  - Improving the information (readability, content, accessibility, usability) presented by the GOsC for the public about the regulation of osteopaths to support public trust and engagement.
  - Evaluating co production tools for registrants/patients/public in collaborative consultations.
43. This exploratory research has the potential to inform the implementation of our new strategy, which will take effect from 1 April 2024. For a small sum (£10k per year), we will have the researcher work with us for one day a week while they will also be working in partnership with the OU. The OU will provide academic expertise while we will provide practical application of the research to inform our strategic goals and the implementation of our statutory duties from the research proposal.
44. If a successful proposal is received and agreed by both GOsC and OU, contracts will be signed in mid-2024 and the research itself will start in September 2024. If no successful proposal is received, or circumstances change which would mean we did not feel this was the right approach for us, we will not incur any costs.

### **Staff changes**

45. Rachel McCoubrey, Senior Registration Officer, will be leaving the GOsC in December 2023 to take up a position as Inspector of Oral Health (Dental) within the Care Quality Commission. This is an exciting career opportunity for Rachel who is herself a registrant with the General Dental Council, and we wish her well for the future. We are currently recruiting a replacement for Rachel.
46. Rachel Heatley, Senior Policy Officer, will be reducing her hours at the GOsC from 5 days a week to 1 day per week as she had the opportunity to study for a Masters in Psychology. We are thrilled for Rachel and equally delighted that she wished to remain working at GOsC during this period.
47. We have recruited Paul Stern who will job-share with Rachel and Paul commenced work in November.

### **External meetings – bringing insight into our business**

48. Since the previous meeting we have participated in several external events with stakeholders and partner organisations which ensure that we are able to bring insight to our work. These meetings, which have not been referenced elsewhere in the report, include:
- Chief Executives of the Regulatory Bodies forum
  - Phil Harper, Department of Health and Social Care
  - Nockolds Corporate Complaints Forum

- Directors of Fitness to Practice Forum
- Nick Jones, Chief Executive and Registrar, General Chiropractic Council
- Osteopathic Development Group
- National Council for Osteopathic Research
- Inter-regulatory forums – multiple
- BCNO Graduation ceremony
- Maurice Cheng, Chief Executive, Institute of Osteopathy
- Glynis Fox, President, Institute of Osteopathy
- Katie Griffiths, Head of Marketing and Communications, Institute of Osteopathy
- Michael Evans, IT Consultant
- Andrew Harvey, Chair of the Professional Conduct Committee
- Dr John Gimpel, President of the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners
- Osteopathic Alliance
- Matthew Fox, NHS England, National Regulatory Repository for Healthcare Trusts and Systems
- Sharon Potter, Acting Vice-Chancellor, University College of Osteopathy
- NHS England Workforce Training and Education directorate – annual Wellbeing event (online)
- Student presentations
- Registrant sessions
- Meetings with osteopathic educational providers
- Focus groups c24 patients to discuss the Duty of Candour jointly with the General Chiropractic Council

### **Business Plan monitoring**

49. The Business Plan monitoring report for 2023-24 is attached at Annex A.

### **Financial report**

50. Maxine Supersaud, Head of Resources and Assurance, will speak to the Financial Report which is attached at the Annex B.

**Recommendations:** To note the content of the report.