

GENERAL OSTEOPATHIC COUNCIL
Minutes of Part I of the 64th meeting of the Education Committee (EdC)
which took place on Tuesday 14 June 2011 at
Osteopathy House, 176 Tower Bridge Road,
London SE1 3LU

Chair: Professor Ian Hughes

Present: Ms Paula Cook
 Professor Adrian Eddleston
 Dr Jane Fox
 Professor Bernadette Griffin
 Mr Robert McCoy
 Mr Liam Stapleton
 Professor Julie Stone
 Ms Fiona Walsh

In Attendance: Mr Tim Walker, Chief Executive and Registrar
 Ms Fiona Browne, Head of Professional Standards
 Mr Marcus Dye, Professional Standards Manager
 Ms Kellie Green, Regulation Manager
 Mr Will Naylor, Quality Assurance Agency
 Ms Dayna Sherwin, Professional Standards Assistant

PART I (*items which will be reported to the Public Session of Council at its next meeting*)

ITEM 1: APOLOGIES AND INTERESTS

1. No apologies received.
2. Members were requested to advise of any interests held at the time when the item was to be discussed.

ITEM 2: MINUTES

3. The Committee made the following amendments to the Minutes:
 - A change should be made to the second recommendation below paragraph 16 as follows: Replace the '17' with '16' so that the sentence reads 'Agreed: The Committee agreed to incorporate the three points highlighted at paragraph 17 into the covering letter accompanying the response.'
 - Tim Walker should be listed as sending apologies for the meeting.

Agreed: The Education Committee agreed the Minutes of the Education Committee held on 16 March 2011 subject to the amendments listed above.

ITEM 3: MATTERS ARISING

4. No matters arising from the last meeting were raised.

ITEM 4: CHAIR AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS DEPARTMENT ACTION AND REPORT

5. The Chair announced that it would be the last Education Committee meeting for Committee member Paula Cook. He thanked her for her thoughtful contributions and unique insight and wished her every success as she takes up her place to study medicine at Barts and The London Medical School in September.
6. The Head of Professional Standards presented the department report. The members had no additional comments to make.

Noted: The Committee noted the report.

ITEM 5: QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

7. Following development in conjunction with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and the Osteopathic Education Institutions (OEIs), Council agreed to consult on a revised GOsC Review Method Handbook and Annual Report template. The consultation took place between 19 February and 18 May 2011.
8. Will Naylor, Assistant Director, Reviews Group, QAA presented the findings of the consultation report. A number of suggested actions was presented to the Committee at Annex B of the paper and the Committee agreed these subject to the following discussion:
 - Should information about patient numbers be added into the Annual Report? One of the aims of the consultation had been reducing unnecessary regulatory burden. Changes should not be introduced now without a firm basis. It was suggested that the Annual Report should include a question exploring the processes in place to ensure that students see a minimum of 50 new patients. It was suggested that the numbers requirement could be reviewed as part of the pre-curriculum content review.
 - It was also agreed that a 20% change in patient or students numbers should trigger a reporting requirement from the institution. The actual numerical changes should also be requested. This should be reflected in the Course Handbooks and future drafting of general RQ conditions.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the publication of the consultation report analysis.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the actions to be taken as a result of the consultation report as outlined in Annex B, subject to amendments.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to the publication of the revised GOsC Review Method Handbook and the issue of the revised Annual Report template.

ITEM 6: STUDENT FITNESS TO PRACTISE UPDATE

9. The Committee noted the steps taken to disseminate the Student Fitness to Practise guidance to a variety of stakeholders.
10. The Committee considered the Scoping report for the Guidance for OEIs about the Management of Health Impairments and Disability for OEIs and discussion included the following:
 - Initial discussions with OEIs had noted that it would not be appropriate to provide an exclusive list of disabilities or health problems considered to be incompatible with independent osteopathic practice. Would it be permissible to draw on case studies to illustrate what could be achieved (or what was less likely to be achieved?) Should pitfalls – where particular courses of action had not met the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 or equivalent legislation be elaborated?
 - P11 – The statement about the scope of practice of physiotherapists should be checked for factual accuracy.
 - The beginning of the draft proposed guidance should emphasise that on transition into independent practice, responsibility for ensuring that appropriate support was in place rests with the practitioner. It was recommended that 'practice' is changed to 'independent practice' in paragraph 4 of Appendix 3 to highlight this.

Noted: The Committee noted the dissemination of the Student Fitness to Practise Guidance for OEIs and the Fitness to Practise Guidance for osteopathic students.

Agreed: The Committee endorsed the scoping report and the progress of Guidance for OEIs about the Management of Health Impairments and Disability for the OEIs.

ITEM 7: EDUCATION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

11. The Head of Professional Standards presented the report which set out the achievements of the Education Committee during the period under review.

12. The report also incorporated the work of Education Committee sitting as the Revalidation Standards and Assessment Group.
13. The Committee considered the report and discussed the following:
 - Additional wording should be added to paragraph 1 to highlight that much of the Education Committee communication has been undertaken by email with associated benefits of reducing costs and reduction of impact on the environment.
 - It was suggested that a report on the Return to Practise process that two members of the Committee undertake as assessors be reported on. Subsequent consideration of this was given and it was decided that this was not a task of the Education Committee as an entity in its own right, so should be reported elsewhere.
 - It was suggested that in addition to the achievements mentioned, the support from GOsC staff should also be acknowledged. It was recommended that an additional paragraph 25 be added to the report reflecting this.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Education Committee 2010/11 Annual Report and commended it to Council.

ITEM 8: STREAMLINING RQS

14. The Professional Standards Manager confirmed that three recent RQ decisions had been delayed for a variety of reasons including a need for a number of revisions following discussion with the Department of Health (DH) and its lawyers, and the Privy Council. These amendments had necessitated repeated requests to both Education Committee and Council for approval of changes to RQs for minor matters not affecting the quality of the education.
15. The Professional Standards Manager provided a verbal report on a meeting which took place on 9 June 2011 between DH lawyers, a representative from the Privy Council and DH policy official, and the GOsC's Professional Standards Manager and Head of Regulation to explore improved ways of working. During the meeting a number of actions were agreed which would help to reduce the timescales taken for RQ Orders to be processed at our end. These actions included:
 - a. That the GOsC would use the DH/Privy Council template to draft GOsC RQ requests in the future
 - b. That the Head of Regulation (the GOsC's in-house lawyer) would consider the draft RQ Orders prior to these being considered by the GOsC Education Committee and before they are issued to Committee/Council. This would help to identify any inconsistencies and drafting errors at an early stage.

- c. That we would provide advance warning to the Privy Council/DH of the RQs which were forthcoming to allow time for these to be scheduled in.
- d. That a 'latitude clause' could be added to Committee and Council papers to state that the RQs are approved subject to Privy Council amendments. This clause would allow the GOsC Executive staff to negotiate minor drafting changes with the DH/Privy Council. Only where drafting changes amend the meaning of the conditions/Order would Committee/Council need to reconsider formally. Council would need to agree to this proposal.
- e. That the Council, if it wished, could delegate its powers to the GOsC Education Committee to review the drafting of RQ conditions/Orders that have been returned by the Department of Health/Privy Council for amendment. This would ensure that amendments could be dealt with more quickly and would not have to be circulated twice for agreement.
- f. That the GOsC would consider including in its submissions to the Law Commission removal of the need for Privy Council oversight of the Recognition process. Both the Department of Health and Privy Council would only consider it necessary to retain this oversight if it strengthened patient safety. The GOsC will be liaising with the Law Commission on its review of legislation which offers an opportunity to request changes. The Corporate Plan also states that we will conduct a major review of QA processes beginning in 2012. These suggestions could be incorporated into both of these streams of work.

16. It was agreed that a written update would be provided to Education Committee and Council.

Noted: The Committee noted the steps being taken with DH to streamline the RQ process.

Noted: The Committee noted that a written note of the meeting would be circulated to all Education Committee Members and Council.

ITEM 9: OSTEOPATHIC PRACTICE STANDARDS

- 17. The Professional Standards Manager presented an update on the Osteopathic Practice Standards (OPS) outlining that the final text was agreed by Council on 12 April 2011, that the consultation analysis and response has been published; and that the new OPS will be published on 31 July 2011 and will take effect on 1 September 2012.
- 18. The Committee discussion included the following:
 - The need to do something more to implement the OPS rather than simply sending in the post was required to effectively implement the standards.

- Some concern was expressed about the proposed 'bringing to life' of the 'Critical Cs' course again. It was suggested that caution should be exercised in relation to the Council's role – particularly as the Council did not accredit CPD courses at present. The GOsC should not be seen as being prescriptive about this – tying in to the less prescriptive nature of the OPS.
- How could the implementation programme tie into specialist guidelines on consent.
- Other members thought that other areas should be included – such as issues around boundaries.
- It was suggested that although the course had opened a debate and had been a catalyst providing a positive message, it was thought that the wording changes regarding them should not be downplayed as it is important to highlight that past issues with them have been addressed.

Agreed: The Committee endorsed the implementation requirements of the Osteopathic Practise Standards.

ITEM 10: CARE QUALITY COMMISSION

19. The Head of Professional Standards presented a paper concerning the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the relationship to osteopathy.
20. Members of the Committee thought it was important to continue to be aware of the external landscape in relation to osteopathy to ensure that osteopaths who wished to engage with the NHS were not disadvantaged.

Noted: The Committee noted the requirements of the Care Quality Commission and the relationship to osteopathy.

Noted: The Committee noted that the wider quality framework will be taken into account as we further develop our thinking about revalidation post pilot.

ITEM 11: FITNESS TO PRACTISE REPORT

21. The Regulation Manager presented an analysis of cases that have been considered by the Fitness to Practise Committees between 1 January 2010 and 31 May 2011 identifying trends and issues arising from these cases.
22. The Committee discussed the report and made comments including the following:
 - The percentage of cases was small and so it was difficult to draw statistically significant inferences at present.
 - It was highlighted that these statistics were available to the Committee. More detailed information around particular topics such as taking case histories were published in *The Osteopath* and the Fitness to Practise bulletin. These were useful ways of helping osteopaths to reflect on their own practice.

- The high incidence of poor record keeping was notable and possibly significant. The Regulation Manager explained that poor record keeping was often discovered when other matters were being investigated.
- Members thought that the findings should be shared with the OEIs, for example, clinical evaluation and treatment provision / plan.
- It was confirmed that complaints referred by the Registrar were often convictions or cautions.

Noted: The Committee noted the findings that had emerged from the cases analysed for the Fitness to Practise report.

ITEM 12: QAA IPG – REDUCING THE REGULATORY BURDEN

23. The Professional Standards Manager provided a brief verbal update meeting about the QAA / Professional and Statutory Regulatory Body sub group of the UKIPG on 20 April 2011.
24. The Higher Education Better Regulation Group (HEBRG) was continuing to develop Principles for Better Regulation of Higher Education in the United Kingdom. These principles had been produced to reduce the regulatory burden on Higher Education institutions in terms of the collection of data. Regulators and Higher Education Institutions will be encouraged to sign up to them at some point in the future.
25. These principles were circulated to Committee members for information purposes but will come back to Education Committee at a future meeting for consideration.

Noted: The Committee noted the oral update regarding reducing the burden of regulation.

ITEM 13: APPRAISALS

26. The Chair advised non-Council members that Jane Quinnell would be in contact with them regarding their appraisals with relevant forms, dates and information.

ITEM 14: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Revalidation Pilot Training Workshops

27. Members would be able to attend Revalidation Pilot Training Workshops as observers in September 2011. Further information would be discussed at the Revalidation Standards and Assessment Group meeting on 28 June 2011.

Good practice seminar for OEIs

28. Members were invited to attend the Good Practice Seminar for OEIs on 27 September 2011 focusing on the assessment of clinical teachers, led by Dr John Patterson, an assessment expert.
29. Further information would be circulated shortly.

ITEM 15: DATE OF NEXT MEETING

30. The date for the next meeting will be Thursday 22 September 2011.