



Policy Advisory Committee

10 October 2017

Professional standards projects update

Classification	Public
Purpose	For noting
Issue	Update on values and boundaries projects.
Recommendation	To note the professional standards projects update paper.
Financial and resourcing implications	<p>Costs for the research into boundaries project paper are accounted for in the 2017-18 budget in the sum of £7,000. We have agreed to share half of the costs of this project with the General Chiropractic Council.</p> <p>Costs for the values projects are accounted for in the 2017-18 budget. We have agreed to share the costs of the project with the General Dental Council and so this project is costing less than £10,000.</p>
Equality and diversity implications	Equality and diversity issues are an integral part of the literature review and will be reported on as part of the literature review. The values project seeks to explore how matters important to individual patients are made explicit as part of the consultation to better support the implementation of standards. Our approach to recruiting patients for the workshop sought to ensure that a diverse range of patients were involved in developing our thinking.
Communications implications	These projects are periodically reported on to our stakeholders.
Annex	None
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Background

1. We have two policy projects which focus on 'upstream' regulatory activities:
 - a. Research into boundaries
 - b. Values standards and regulation into context. Both these projects were first introduced to the Committee during October 2016.
2. The GOsC Corporate Plan 2016-19 states that our aim as a regulator is: 'To fulfil our statutory duty to protect public and patient safety through targeted and effective regulation, working actively and in partnership with others to ensure a high quality of patient experience and of osteopathic practice.'
3. This paper aims to provide an update on these projects for the Committee ahead of further more detailed consideration at its next meeting in March 2018. It also provides an opportunity to ask any questions should they wish to do so.

Discussion

Research into boundaries

4. An invitation to tender for a comprehensive literature review to enhance understanding of communication and miscommunication in manual therapies was advertised during July-August 2017 and interviews with prospective research teams took place on 11 September 2017. This literature review is commissioned by both the General Osteopathic Council and the General Chiropractic Council.
5. The invitation to tender provided prospective research teams with information regarding the issue that we wish further exploration on:
 - As regulators, we are interested to ensure that we provide all support, guidance and resources or other policy interventions to both support effective and positive communication and reduce miscommunication and the negative impact of miscommunication in the context of touch for the benefit of patients and practitioners.
 - We advertised for a full review of the literature about the particular challenges of communication in the context of touch to assist us to identify challenges, to begin to explore policy options and agree next steps within our sectors, since touch is an important part of manual therapy both diagnostically and therapeutically. Yet the context of touch also provides potential for misinterpretation and perceived or real breaches of professional/practitioner boundaries.
 - We are interested through this work to understand the key messages from the literature which explore how touch is given and received between patient and practitioner and any implications for practice, for what we do as

a regulator, what others in the sector, educators, professional bodies and smaller groups do and for practitioners themselves.

6. The tender provided prospective research teams with information regarding what we know as regulators: we know that a significant proportion of patient concerns/complaints relate to communication matters and some of the possible impacts of breaches of boundaries on patients.
7. Prospective tenderers were informed that we are interested to understand the key messages from the literature which would:
 - Explore how touch is communicated and received by both patient and practitioner, in the context of touch based therapies.
 - Inform thinking about our over-arching goal to promote positive patient consultations and to reduce the negative impact of miscommunication as far as possible both through regulatory activities, but also through engagement and education throughout our respective sectors.
 - Explore any potential implications for those involved in education and practice including:
 - The GOsC and GCC
 - Educators, professional bodies and other groups
 - Practitioners
8. The funds for the literature review were up to a maximum of £7,000 (including full economic costs and VAT and any other project expenses).
9. A research team from the University of Huddersfield has been appointed to undertake the literature review on 18 September 2017.
10. The final literature review is expected to be available towards the end of 2017.

Values standards and regulation into context

11. The Values standards and regulation into context project is a collaborative project involving the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC), the General Dental Council (GDC) and the [Collaborating Centre for Values Based Practice](#) (as well as practitioners and patients). The objective is to understand the relationship between values and the implementation of standards and particularly, how to make values within a consultation more explicit to support the implementation of standards.
12. As part of this project on 11 July 2017, [Community Research](#) was commissioned to run a workshop with osteopathic and dental patients and practitioners.
13. The collaborative workshop with patients and practitioners was designed to inform this wider project by:

- Gathering stories of positive (and negative) experiences of consultation.
- Understanding the diverse range of individual values that are present within the consultation and impact on shared decision making.
- Understanding the actions required to achieve a positive experience of the consultation, alongside the barriers.
- Identifying potential solutions that will support shared understanding and decision making, including potential question areas that will help make explicit patient and practitioner values.
- Beginning to develop a toolkit of resources to support shared decision making.

Recruitment of Participants

14. GOsC and GDC were responsible for recruiting practitioners. In total six osteopaths and five dentists attended the workshop. The length of time that they had been practising varied and they were recruited from across England.
15. Patients were recruited to match a pre-agreed specification, reflecting a range of demographics. In total 25 patients attended (12 dental patients and 13 osteopathic patients). Dental patients were recruited from the GDC's online patient and public panel. Osteopathic patients were recruited purposively to ensure the required mix by demographics and life-stage.
16. The specification was designed to be broadly reflective of the UK population as a whole, with reference to the following criteria: gender, age group, ethnic background, working status, social grade/status.
17. In addition, recruitment sought to ensure a mix of participants by recent dental or osteopathic experience i.e. all patients had to have attended a dental or osteopathic appointment within the past six months.

About the workshop

18. There were three tables of dental practitioners/dental patients and three tables of osteopaths/osteopathic patients. The discussion content at all tables followed the same agenda which was designed to ensure that participants were given an opportunity spontaneously to discuss their experiences of a positive consultation, prior to listening to a presentation to help participants understand the diversity of values and how Values Based Practice works as a partner to evidence-based practice to support shared decision making. This presentation was given by Bill Fulford and Stephen Tyreman from the Collaborating Centre for Values Based Practice.
19. Participants then took part in group discussions and an interactive 'fruits, pests and roots' exercise. The exercise was designed to uncover:

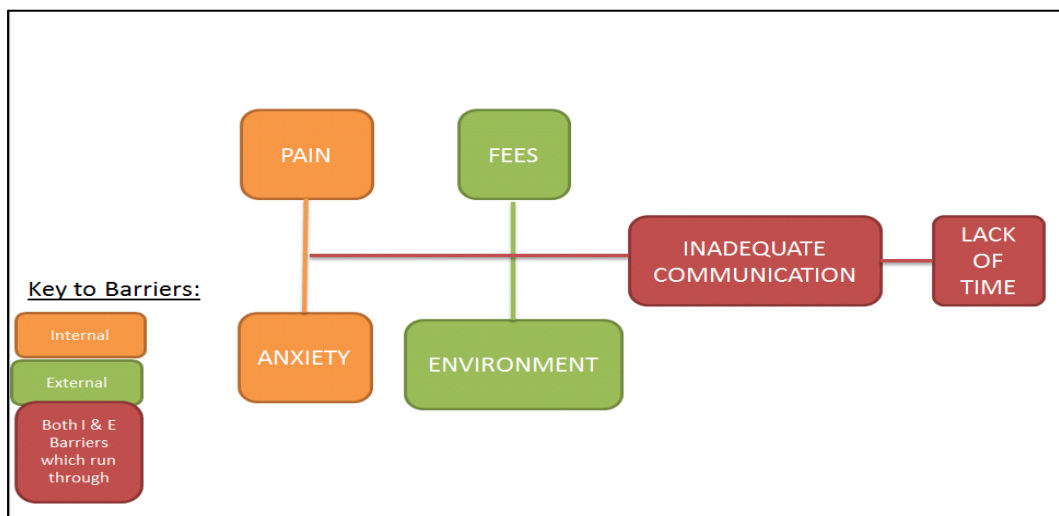
Shared Decision Making

- COST**
 - Lack of shared ownership about improving
 - Lack of confidence in practitioners/treatment
 - Build trust
 - Body Language
 - Internal agreement about shared ownership/responsibility of PC problem
- BENEFIT**
 - Lack of communication
 - Lack of understanding
 - Patient Retention
 - Pre-assessment form questions relevant to patients Values / beliefs
 - Setting an informative context
 - Comfortable environment
 - Pre-assessment questions
 - Being transparent
 - Body Language
 - Predictions about shared ownership
 - Be Functioning pragmatics
 - Lack of VALUES**
 - Lack of shared ownership about improving
 - Lack of shared ownership about improving

20. The final session of the workshop was dedicated to building questions that would be useful in establishing a patient's and practitioner's values within a consultation.

21. The workshop identified that there are a number of common barriers to achieving a positive consultation, as demonstrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Barriers to effective dialogue in consultations



22. While, patients and practitioners found it relatively easy to identify the barriers to a positive consultation, they found it more difficult to identify actions that would overcome these barriers. Suggestions tended to focus around:

- Addressing issues relating to the logistics and environment of the consultation.
- Improving communication skills – including the use of “teach back” type methods promoted by the NHS in Scotland.
- Establishing and managing patient expectations.
- Reporting and acting on patient feedback.
- Encouraging patients to take ownership of their treatment and after-care.
- Providing more information sources and promoting greater transparency.

23. These suggestions have been modelled in Figure 3.

Next steps

24. The values project steering group is due to meet on 28 September 2017 to discuss next steps in terms of the workshop report produced by Community Research and begin to scope out a further half day workshop that will sought to develop a toolkit of resources that can then be piloted with patients and practitioners.

Recommendation: to note the professional standards projects update paper.

Figure 3: patient – practitioner dialogue model