

I read with interest the articles and letter in the SCST Journal and also the comments made on the SCSTNI website regarding State Registration of our Profession.

It is most disappointing to learn again of the delay in proceeding with State Registration. This is a totally unacceptable situation and I feel that it is imperative that all of us within the profession take individual action to lobby all of the influential sources that we possibly can. To do this effectively however it is important that we all understand why we need to be State Registered with the Health Professions Council and in fact there are many other important reasons including those listed in the SCST article of July 2007 that should be taken into consideration when penning your letter to your MP or other influential bodies/contacts. I have listed these in no particular order –

Protecting professional title - this means that once state registered only those people who meet the legally recognized standards can practice in the UK and use your title.

Independent regulation - Regulation is statutory (set by law) - however regulation itself is run independently. The Health Professions Council is made up of members of the professions that they regulate plus members of the public. These are elected by the registrants.. The independence from Government is one of the most important and strongest features of State Registration with the HPC.

Professional input - You can have direct input on the standards that regulate you ! These include the standards of education and training , assessing courses, assessing applications and the standards of proficiency.

Protection against rogue practitioners - Upholding your Profession's reputation .The damage that can be done in the Public's view by just one person who does not uphold high standards could be huge, Prosecuting such people does not only protect the public but also the registrants who do practice safely and effectively and who uphold the highest standards of practice.

Recognising the professions-By having your profession , its standards and the entry routes protected and recognised by law , we can have proper professional relations with other medical such as medical practitioners and nurses. Defined standards of conduct, performance - The HPC have set standards of conduct, performance, and ethics to all registered health professionals - We need to be in the same boat!

Dealing with ill health and practice - The Health Professions Order - the piece of legislation that created the HPC states that registrants must be of good health and character in order to practise. The order has also created ways for the HPC to deal with registrants whose ability to practise safely is affected because of their health Any complaints will be dealt with by a Health Committee specifically designed to deal with Registrants health as fairly as possible. While the Committee can strike registrants off or suspend or caution them, they can also (for example) limit their practise until they are well enough to practise fully again. As a result, modernised legislation means that the HPC deal fairly with registrants health issues.

Defined standards of proficiency - By publishing the standards of proficiency for all professions , there are clear standards laid out for each profession , which focus on their expectations of our skills , knowledge and understanding Professional and consistent assessment of international applicants- More and more Health professionals from other countries are looking for employment in the UK. By being registered the HPC will make sure that anyone who practises in the Profession , no matter where they trained, meet our standards of practise.

Working in the EEA- Once registered with the HPC your chances of registering with other EEA regulatory organizations is markedly improved which will help if you are wishing to work abroad.

It is important to know all of the facts to help push forward State Registration and it is critically important that as Members of our Professional Organization - SCST - we all make our voices and opinions heard as loudly as possible.

regards,
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