

Communications Committee – 22 June 2011

Transfer of regulatory functions from the General Social Care Council

Executive summary and recommendations

### **Introduction**

This paper is intended to provide an update to the Communications Committee on communications activities to date in relation to the transfer of regulatory functions from the General Social Care Council (GSCC). It sets out the communications work plan as part of the overall project plan and updates the Committee on work that has been undertaken so far.

### **Decision**

The Committee is invited to discuss the attached documents.

### **Background information**

See introduction to paper.

### **Resource implications**

All communications activities associated with this project will be accommodated through the project plan budget.

### **Financial implications**

As above.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Selection of social work media coverage
- Appendix 2: Position statements
- Appendix 3: Examples of social work parliamentary activity
- Appendix 4: Written submission to the Health and Social Care Public Bill Committee
- Appendix 5: Joint communications plan for the transfer of social workers in England

## Transfer of regulatory functions from the General Social Care Council

### **Introduction**

This paper is intended to provide an update to the Communications Committee on communications activities since the last Committee in relation to the transfer of regulatory functions from the General Social Care Council (GSCC).

### **Background information**

Since the last Committee in February 2011, the Government has announced a pause to the passage of the Health and Social Care Bill through Parliament. This has impacted on the proposed transfer date and we currently we expect the date of the transfer of social workers in England to be 1 July 2012.

### **Communications activities to date**

Top level communications activities have been incorporated into the HPC project plan and progress is monitored and reported through the project group. The Director of Communications sits on the project group and attends meetings on behalf of the communications team. A comprehensive external and internal communications strategy has been written which identifies key issues and messages, key audiences, objectives, risks and mitigations and sets out detailed plans for communications activities.<sup>1</sup> All members of the communications team are involved in this project and meet every other week to review progress.

Set out below are some of the activities which we have undertaken since the last Communications Committee on 17 February 2011.

### **Liaison with the GSCC**

The Director of Communications has met with the GSCC's Public Affairs and Media Manager to update on key areas of work and discuss communication work associated with the transfer. They have also collaborated on the joint communications plan for the transfer of social workers in England, which is appended to this paper. Other members of the HPC's communications team, namely the Media and PR Manager, Stakeholder Communications Manager and Events Manager have also met and liaised with the GSCC's Public Affairs and Media Manager regarding position statements and social work events.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 5 – Joint communications plan for the transfer of social workers

## **Media**

The Media and PR Manager and the Communications Officer (Media and PR) are monitoring social work media activity on a daily basis.<sup>2</sup> We will continue to monitor coverage and develop messages and relevant position statements throughout the transfer. To date, position statements on student registration and voluntary registers have been written and published on the website.<sup>3</sup> We are also working on a position statement in relation to fees and assessed and supported first year in employment.

The Media and PR Manger and Communications Officer (Media and PR) are developing relationships with the professional media. We continue to be in regular contact with reporters from Community Care, particularly responding to requests for information. A number of articles have appeared in Community Care relating to the HPC, including: 'Tribunal judge criticises GSCC overseas social worker rules' in March 2011, and 'Delayed demise of GSCC may cause registration confusion' in May 2011.

We also published a response the Munro review of Child Protection in May 2011.<sup>4</sup> Our response to the Munro review welcomed the report and the reforms recommended to the child protection system in England. It also stated our commitment to working closely with the College of Social Work in order to drive continuing professional development (CPD) forward. This response was picked up by Community Care magazine.

The Media and PR Manager is currently undertaking preparatory work in readiness for the launch of the consultation on the Standards of proficiency for social workers in England. This work includes writing a press release and identifying topics for articles and news stories.

## **Parliamentarians**

The Health and Social Care Bill had its second reading in February 2011 and a Public Bill Committee was then formed to discuss issues present in the Bill. We submitted written evidence to this Committee.<sup>5</sup> Our submission examined the implications of the relevant sections of the Health and Social Care Bill and provided information on the transfer of regulatory functions from the GSCC, focussing on registration costs, student registration, standards of proficiency, name change, UK wide registration and the appeals system. We also provided written briefings on a range of issues for the Department of Health to brief the Minister in advance of the Committee and attended the Committee itself when sections relevant to the HPC were discussed. Our briefings for the Department of Health in advance of the Committee focussed on the following topics:

- HPC's accountability to Parliament;
- HPC's approach to continuing professional development;

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 1 - Selection of media coverage

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 2 – Position statements

<sup>4</sup> For details of the Munro review please see: <http://www.education.gov.uk/munroreview/>

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 4 – Written submission to the Health and Social Care Public Bill Committee

- HPC's approach to explaining the transfer and new process to social workers, employers, the public and educators;
- HPC's approach to quality assurance of education;
- HPC's approach to service user involvement;
- the FTP process;
- information about registration fees;
- skills and experience on the HPC's Council; and
- renaming the HPC.

The Stakeholder Communications Manager and Communications Officer (Stakeholder) continue to monitor social work related information in Parliament through our Dods monitoring subscription.<sup>6</sup>

In response to questions asked by Lord Hunt in Parliament we have written to him seeking a meeting and will continue to monitor parliamentary activity and organise meetings, where relevant and appropriate, with MPs and Peers prior to the Bill being debated in Parliament again. E-Politix.com continues to be an important communication channel and we continue to publish regular articles and information on this website.

## **Stakeholders**

Since February 2011, the Chair and Chief Executive have attended a number of meetings with key stakeholders, including government departments, the British Association of Social Workers, Social Care Association, General Social Care Council, Skills for Care, Northern Ireland Social Care Council, Care Council for Wales, Scottish Social Services Council and the Association of the Directors of Adult Social Services Workforce Network amongst others. We also have continued representation on the Social Work Reform Board and the Social Work Regulation Oversight Group.

The Stakeholder Communications Manager has identified relevant communication contacts in a range of stakeholder organisations and is beginning a programme of meetings over the next few months.

Our Stakeholder Communications Manager and Events Manager are beginning to plan employer events targeted specifically at social workers, details of which will be reported to the Communications Committee once finalised. As part of this work we will develop a list of employers and have incorporated various activities into the workplan including an introductory letter with information about the HPC, employer events, attendance at relevant conferences and articles in relevant professional journals.

## **Events**

The Events Manager continues to research and update our list of potential social care events where the HPC could have a presence at appropriate stages during the transfer. This could involve taking a stand, giving a presentation or holding a

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<sup>6</sup> See Appendix 3 – Examples of social work parliamentary activity

joint workshop with the GSCC at the events. We will also be planning social worker specific Meet the HPC events prior to the opening of the Register.

In March 2011 we held presentation slots at the UK Standing Conference of Stakeholders in Social Work Education in Birmingham, and attended GSCC social work conferences in London and Leeds. Members of the communications team attended the GSCC conferences, along with the Chair and Chief Executive of the HPC, where they provided support and participated in the afternoon workshops.

We attended the Community Care Live conference in May 2011, which was held in London. Here we assisted The College of Social Work in running an advice clinic in order for attendees to discuss aspects of regulation with the HPC. We also held a joint presentation and workshop session with the GSCC on the changing face of social work regulation. Community Care Live is a two-day conference and exhibition aimed at social care professionals and attracts over 2,000 delegates, most of them practising social workers, and over 80 exhibitors.

Looking ahead we are considering how we could potentially participate in the National Children and Adult Services (NCAS) conference in October 2011 and the Community Care Live conferences in November 2011 and May 2012.

## **Web**

New pages have been developed for the social workers professional liaison group (PLG) and for frequently asked questions (FAQs). The FAQs have been written by the policy department and are currently being updated by the policy team. We expect to publish these on the website in June 2011. Webpages relating to social workers will be monitored and updated as the transfer progresses.

## **Publishing**

Since February 2011 the Publishing Manager has published two articles in HPC InFocus informing and updating registrants on the transfer of social workers in England to the HPC. Issue 33 was published in February 2011 and included an article on the Health and Social Care Bill which provided registrants with an overview of the Bill including information on our name change to the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). Issue 34 was published in April 2011 and included an update on the progress of the PLG and the next steps for the production of the standards of proficiency for social workers in England.

## **HPC employees**

Since February 2011 the Communications Officer (Publishing) has published two articles in HPC Update relating to the transfer of social workers in England. Issue 12 was published in February 2011 and included an update on the progress of the social workers PLG. Issue 13 was published in April 2011 and included an article providing employees with an overview of the recently published Command Paper entitled 'Enabling Excellence'.

Employees are briefed in the all employee meetings on key activities being undertaken, including the final meeting of the professional liaison group (PLG),

progress of the legislation and the publication of frequently asked questions (FAQs) on the internet. They are also briefed on key parliamentary, stakeholder and media activity via Issues Brief, our weekly internal update on news and issues relevant to our external stakeholders.

In February 2011 employees were briefed by department by the Chief Executive and Director of Human Resources regarding the transfer of regulatory functions from the GSCC to the HPC and how this may affect employees.

The Chief Executive has also held optional briefing sessions open to all employees on the Health and Social Care Bill in order to discuss the key aspects of the Bill and what they mean for the HPC.

### **Next steps**

We will continue to carry out the various activities set out within the communications workplan for the transfer of social workers in England and update the workplan accordingly.

Over the coming months our focus will be on the passage of legislation, the launch of the consultation on the Standards of proficiency for social workers in England, stakeholder visits to communications contacts within relevant stakeholder organisations and updates to the dedicated social worker webpages.

## Appendix 1 - Selection of social work media coverage

### March 2011

- 18 March 2011 [www.communitycare.co.uk](http://www.communitycare.co.uk)  
**Tribunal judge criticises GSCC overseas social worker rules**  
The General Social Care Council has been criticised by a tribunal judge over its strict policy on preventing overseas social workers from practising without the right qualifications
- 22 March 2011 Children & Young People Now (Social Work Now)  
**New standards on the way**  
The latest on registration and conduct from the General Social Care Council
- 28 March 2011 [www.communitycare.co.uk](http://www.communitycare.co.uk)  
**Battle begins over name for social work regulator**  
'To call the body anything other than the Social Work and Health Professions Council will be regarded as an insult to social workers' says BASW – the College of Social Work

### April 2011

- 21 April 2011 Community Care  
**GSCC closure delayed as part of NHS 'listening exercise'**  
The abolition of the General Social Care Council has been put back until July 2012

### May 2011

- 05 May 2011 Community Care  
**Delayed demise of GSCC may cause registration confusion**  
Further delays to the closure of the General Social Care Council could lead to confusion and problems in registration renewals for social workers, experts have warned.
- 05 May 2011 Professional Social Work  
**In conversation with... Penny Thompson**  
Penny Thompson the Chief Executive of the General Social Care Council outlines the changes in store for social workers once the regulator's functions are transferred to the Health Professions Council in 2012.
- 26 May 2011 Community Care  
**Further health bill delay risks confusion for social workers**  
The government's health legislation faces being further delayed until the autumn risking confusion for social workers re-registering next year.

- 26 May 2011 Community Care

**Assessed first year for NQSWs to be tested from summer**

The Social Work Reform Board is likely to begin trialling models for an assessed first year in employment for newly qualified social workers this summer.



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# New standards on the way

The latest on registration and conduct from the General Social Care Council

## REGISTRATION & TRAINING

**W**hen the General Social Care Council's functions transfer to the Health Professions Council, social workers will not only have a new regulator, but a new set of basic standards for the profession.

These new Standards of Proficiency will replace the Code of Conduct for Social Care Workers, which is the baseline for the profession. The new standards are being developed by the HPC's professional liaison group, which includes representatives from the GSCC, Association of Directors of Children's Services and the Joint University Council social work education committee.

Sherry Malik, the GSCC's director of strategy, has been among those around the table and says she is confident the result will be good for social workers.

"This is something the profession needs," she says. "The standards are being developed with the HPC with the right kind of experts having a good debate.

"What will come out of it will be a set of proficiency standards that will nicely tie into the professional capabilities framework that the Social Work Reform Board has just put out for consultation. I'm confident it is not going to create something completely different and confusing for social workers."

Malik acknowledges that some social workers and students might be worried about the change, given that the Code of Practice was such an important part of their work and studies. "I know the code of conduct is integral to a lot of people working at the moment," she says. "But it is a code designed for social care workers and the standards will be specific to social work. It's another step forward in the professionalisation of social work."

The standards will comprise 15 generic standards that the HPC uses to regulate professions under its remit, which include physiotherapists, occupational therapists and paramedics, as well as standards specific to social work.

The GSCC registers social work students, but the HPC does not. Malik confirms that this is an issue still being discussed. "Registration of students makes it clear that this is a profession they're going into with set standards," she says. "They're going to be working with vulnerable people on placements and it's important they know that there are consequences if you don't meet those standards."

She urges social workers and students to contribute to the consultation on the professional capabilities framework and share their views on the draft proficiency standards when they are published.

The standards are due to become mandatory when the HPC takes over, which is expected at the beginning of April 2012.

## CONDUCT

**Falling to act on or report information relating to a child or young person's safety can have dire consequences as shown by a recent case.**

Earlier this year, a social worker was suspended for two years by the GSCC's conduct committee after she failed to respond to "alarming information" about a young child, who was later murdered.

She was told the child had been injured non-accidentally and locked in a cupboard, but dismissed the information as "tittle tattle".

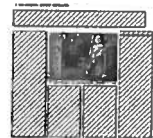
### Breach of policies

In an "unambiguous breach of established child protection policies and procedures", she did not inform anyone in social services and later concealed information from the police.

The Code of Practice stresses the need to take complaints seriously and respond or pass them on to the appropriate person.

"It is advisable for social workers to err on the side of caution," says GSCC director of regulation Michael Andrews.

"Any intelligence relating to the safety and security of a service user should be taken very seriously. Reporting information of this nature safeguards service users and protects the social worker."



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## Tribunal judge criticises GSCC overseas social worker rules

Daniel Lombard

Friday 18 March 2011 16:53

The General Social Care Council has been slammed by a tribunal judge over its strict policy on preventing overseas social workers from practising without the right qualifications.

Judge Carolyn Singleton said experienced practitioners from abroad wishing to practise in the UK faced being unfairly rejected under the current system.

She said the GSCC itself had admitted to fears "that they were missing out on experienced people".

Singleton, of the First Tier Tribunal (which has taken over the appeals role of the now defunct Care Standards Tribunal), called on the regulator to review its policy in the light of an appeal by Sally West, an Australian national, against the GSCC's decision to refuse her application for registration.

The GSCC refused her application on the grounds that she did not have a degree in social work accredited by the Australian Association of Social Workers, and as such did not meet the GSCC's requirements.

However, West had been employed in the social welfare sector for 15 years, with a degree in psychology and a diploma in social welfare. She said she had experience of child protection work and felt "very strongly that she had the skills and expertise to perform the role of social worker".

Her appeal against the refusal of her registration was dismissed by the tribunal because she did not satisfy the requirements laid out in the Care Standards Act.

However, Singleton urged the GSCC to carry out a review of its policies in this area.

"A more flexible approach to applications for registration may have the result of producing fairer conclusions and fewer opportunities for good people to 'slip through the net'," she said.

Ed Mitchell, a solicitor and editor of *Social Care Law Today*, said the criticisms could leave the GSCC facing a High Court claim for judicial review.

"One ground for judicial review is 'fettering discretion' which means applying an inflexible policy and that is what the tribunal thinks the GSCC did in this case," he said.

Michael Andrews, director of regulatory operations at the GSCC, said it was pleased that the tribunal upheld the decision, "which demonstrates that we are complying with our legal duties under the Care Standards Act" when considering overseas-qualified practitioners.

He added that the GSCC would consider the comments from the tribunal to see whether any improvements to its approach could be made.

The Health Professions Council (HPC), which takes over the regulation of social workers in England from 2012, said in response to the judgement: "The HPC will, in the future, make a decision based on demonstration of meeting the standards of proficiency - which can be through a combination of education, training and experience.

"All applicants applying for registration via the international route will be subject to verification of their identity, qualifications and employment.

"This may involve the HPC contacting regulatory authorities, professional bodies, education providers and past employers in order for them to verify the information provided by applicants as part of their application. The HPC may also ask an outside agency to conduct these checks on our behalf."

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[Two-year delay on conduct case leaves social worker in limbo](#)

### Battle begins over name for social work regulator



By Daniel Lombard, workforce editor, on March 25, 2011 1:00 PM | [No Comments](#) | [16 TrackBacks](#)



What's in a name? Some might say the leadership of the regulator taking over social work in England next year is the biggest issue at stake.

But the proposal to change the name of the Health Professions Council is already being hotly contested.

The government has said it should become the Health and Care Professions Council, to reflect its new remit when it takes over from the General Social Care Council.

This decision, outlined in the Health and Social Care Bill, has been rejected as "absurd" by BASW - the College of Social Work, led by Hilton Dawson (pictured).

Their preferred title? The Social Work and Health Professions Council.

To call the body anything other than the Social Work and Health Professions Council will be regarded as an insult to social workers," BASW - the College of Social Work says in its formal response to the bill.

The association has strong concerns that the focus of the body, which currently regulates 15 professions such as clinical scientists, dietitians and hearing aid dispensers, may be too strongly geared towards healthcare.

However, to fully recognise all of the professions it regulates, it would have to change to something vying for the longest title in the world.

Fancy registering with the Biomedical Scientists, Physiotherapists, Operating Department Practitioners, Radiographers, Paramedics and Social Workers Council?

Not forgetting the proposed new strapline to the body: "regulating health, psychology and social work professions" (as revealed by the HPC's chair, Anna van der Gaag).

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## GSCC closure delayed as part of NHS 'listening exercise'

Kirsty McGregor  
Thursday 21 April 2011 17:21



The abolition of the General Social Care Council has been put back until July 2012.

The handover of the regulation of social workers in England from the GSCC to the Health Professions Council was originally planned for April 2012, as outlined in the Health and Social Care Bill.

But the Department of Health has put the passage of the Bill on hold for three months as part of an "NHS listening exercise", intended to address strong opposition to plans to reform the NHS.

Social work leaders have generally welcomed the delay, claiming it will allow more time to put in place wider reforms to the profession, which will affect regulation.

The GSCC is urging social workers and students to continue registering and re-registering as usual until the HPC takes over. A statement on the GSCC's website said: "You will need to complete the renewal form and send it back to us within the time limit specified in your reminder letter. If you fail to do so you will be removed from the register and will not be able to practise as a social worker."

Hilary Tompsett, chair of the Joint University Council's social work education committee, said the extra time would allow the Social Work Reform Board to further clarify the professional capabilities framework and arrangements for post-qualifying training.

"Although it is important to keep people abreast of the changes, it may give a bit more time for all the bits of the jigsaw to be in place," she said.

"It always was a very demanding timetable when such fundamental reforms were going on with the reform board."

A spokesperson for BASW - The College of Social Work agreed that it could be "helpful" to have more time. But she added: "If this drags on, it may start to cause concern."

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## WORKFORCE

# Delayed demise of GSCC may cause registration confusion

## Three-month hiatus due to "pause" in the passage of Health and Social Care Bill

kirsty.mcgregor@rbi.co.uk

Further delays to the closure of the General Social Care Council could lead to confusion and problems in registration renewals for social workers, experts have warned.

The government has confirmed the handover of regulation of social workers in England from the GSCC to the Health Professions Council will be delayed from April 2012 to July 2012, because the Health and Social Care Bill, which legislates for the changes, is on hold for three months as part of its "NHS listening exercise".

Melanie Henwood, an independent social care consultant and former vice chair of the GSCC, said there could be some advantages to the delay, including a smoother handover between the two regulators.

But she warned against further delays beyond July 2012: "This would add to public confusion and could lead to social workers failing to renew their registration on time."

"It is also important for the staff and conduct panel members working for the GSCC that they have clarity about the timetable they are working to," she added.

"Further uncertainty would be disruptive and could create capacity issues, making a managed handover to the HPC more challenging to deliver."

A spokesperson for BASW – the College of Social Work – agreed that it could cause concern if the delay was to "drag on".

The GSCC is urging social



Thompson: Delay will enable the GSCC to complete its objectives

workers and students to continue registering and re-registering as usual until the HPC takes over. The GSCC's chief executive Penny Thompson said: "It's important that social workers understand that the GSCC will continue to be the social work regulator until July 2012 at the earliest. The three-month delay will give us an excellent opportunity to fulfil our objectives and facilitate an efficient and effective transfer to the HPC."

Hilary Tompsett, chair of the Joint University Council's social work education committee, said the additional three months would allow the Social Work Reform Board to further clarify the professional capabilities framework and arrangements for post-qualifying training.

Many in the sector have refuted suggestions that the delay indicates any significant reconsideration of government policy.

However, Ray Jones, professor of social work at Kingston University, London, argued that there was an emerging trend towards valuing specialist social care bodies.

He said this was exemplified

by a recent recommendation by MPs to split Ofsted into two inspectorates, separately overseeing children's social care and education.

"Within that context, the merger of the GSCC's regulatory responsibilities with the HPC seems to stand out against a trend," said Jones.

"The delay may offer some opportunity for reflecting further on whether it's sensible to have social work merged into a regulatory authority which is largely focussed on health professions."

A spokesperson for the Department of Health said: "We have taken the opportunity of a natural break in the passage of the Bill to pause, listen, reflect on and improve our plans to modernise the NHS. The transfer of the function for the regulation of social workers to the HPC will now take place in July 2012. This is because the transfer relies on legislative changes being made as part of the Health and Social Care Bill 2011."

The DH spokesperson added that the GSCC and HPC would continue to liaise with the Social Work Reform Board.

## CONDUCT

## Social worker stole from families

A social worker who stole nearly £9,000 worth of furniture, appliances and clothing intended for vulnerable families has been struck off the register in Scotland.

As team manager at Aberdeenshire Council, Jennifer Stephen of McGregor Crescent, Peterhead, was responsible for buying items, including essential household appliances, for families on low incomes and equipment for children with disabilities in north-east Scotland.

But it emerged that, between September 2005 and August 2008, Stephen induced colleagues to sign off purchase orders for a number of goods, which she then had delivered to her own home.

When Grampian police visited the house after a complaint from the council, they found a tumble drier, washing machine, sofa, Wii Fit games console, electric guitar and gym equipment intended for service users, according to the *Aberdeen Press and Journal*.

Stephen was sacked by Aberdeenshire Council after an internal inquiry and, at Peterhead Sheriff Court on 3 February, admitted defrauding the authority of £8,885. She was jailed for 28 months.

A conduct sub-committee of the Scottish Social Services Council removed Stephen from the register at a hearing last week. ● A care home worker in Scotland has been suspended following allegations of possessing drugs at work.

Police were called to the Pitkerro Care Centre, Dundee, to investigate the claims last week.

It is understood the employee in question was not directly responsible for providing care to service users.



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# in conversation with...

## ... Penny Thompson

The chief executive of the General Social Care Council outlines the changes in store for social workers once the regulator's functions are transferred to the Health Professions Council in 2012

### What changes can social workers expect once regulation of the profession moves from the General Social Care Council (GSCC) to the Health Professions Council (HPC)?

Social work will continue to be a regulated profession, where social workers are called to account for their practice. The big difference is they will be regulated by a generic regulator, the HPC. Instead of the Code of Practice, social workers will sign up to proficiency standards, which will be very similar in intent to the code. Registration will be every two, rather than every three years, and the fees will increase from £30 a year to £76 because the HPC is independent – although had the GSCC stayed, fees would also have increased.

### Will social workers still be expected to complete post-registration training and learning (PRTL)?

Currently we expect 15 days PRTL to be completed over three years but the HPC will not calculate it on any time basis. Some social workers have concerns that removing the time requirement could mean employers are less inclined to release them for training, which would be concerning. The HPC will select random sample records so social workers will still need to keep a record of PRTL. The HPC will continue to approve social work training.

### Will social workers be subject to conduct procedures under the new regime?

No. The HPC operates a fitness to practise model, which is the direction the GSCC would have gone in. One of the main differences with fitness to practise is it allows the panel to impose a broader range of sanctions (the GSCC can admonish, suspend or remove someone from the register). Having a generic regulator will be different but we will have the College of Social Work, which will be a

professional leader and have a championing role. It's not appropriate for the regulator to also be the voice for the profession.

### What would you say to social workers who believe that the GSCC's abolition will diminish the status of social work?

We need to look at what else is happening. There is the Social Work Reform Board (SWRB) and the College of Social Work and we must see that as positive. But I do understand that people will have concerns about the diminution of social work that could be inferred from this change. The HPC has been seen as a health regulator. Social workers have told us they feel this is a big change at the very point they feel they are getting recognised. But the SWRB is an opportunity that should not be lost.

### Do you support BASW/CoSW's amendment to the Health and Social Care Bill calling for the HPC to be renamed the Social Work and Health Professions Council?

We are very keen that social work should appear in the name. When you are regulating so many professions it's not possible to have each one in the organisation's name. But social workers will represent the biggest number of professionals registered by the HPC and that needs to be recognised.

### PENNY THOMPSON FACTFILE

Penny Thompson is the chief executive of the GSCC. She trained as a social worker in Sheffield and has over 20 years experience in social care and local government, including as chief executive of the London Borough of Hackney, and social services director of Sheffield City Council. Penny enjoys art, music, theatre, walking and travel.

### What has been the GSCC's biggest achievement?

Making social worker a protected title has given the profession proper standing. We've registered more than 100,000 social workers, including 18,000 students. We have made 278 decisions in conduct cases, including 107 removals and we have also developed the post-qualifying framework.

### Are you concerned at suggestions the HPC will not be registering students?

We have been working with the HPC and the departments for education and health and it's been agreed that the HPC will take on the student register. We are really pleased and most social workers and higher education institutions agree it's a really important move. Students have direct contact with service users so it's important in terms of public protection, as well as in students signing up to the ethics and standards of social work from the beginning.

### So what can social workers expect now?

The handover to the HPC will be at the end of March 2012. Until then the GSCC is still the regulator so if social workers have a change of circumstance, or if they have concerns about a colleague, they must get in contact. If you are a social worker nothing has changed and you will be told about any changes in good time.

### What is next for Penny Thompson?

My focus over the next year will be on continuing to deliver improvements while the GSCC is regulator, so we leave a good legacy, and treating staff with respect and care as they look to new futures. It would have been very easy for their heads to go down at this point but I'm very grateful for the way they responded. A percentage of staff will move across to the HPC and others will take other jobs. It's going to be a tough year, of course it is.

You are in: News

## Further health bill delay risks confusion for social workers

Mithran Samuel  
Thursday 26 May 2011 15:53

The government's health legislation faces being further delayed until the autumn risking confusion for social workers re-registering next year if it puts back the abolition of the General Social Care Council.

Deputy prime minister Nick Clegg said today that the Health and Social Care Bill would be sent back to a committee of MPs for a line-by-line examination in light of government plans to make substantial changes in response to heavy criticisms.

There is unlikely to be sufficient time for MPs to scrutinise the bill before the summer recess, meaning it would be pushed back to at least October, reports The Guardian.

The news follows the original "pause" in the passage of the legislation, resulting from the creation last month of the NHS Future Forum to consider objections to the bill.

The Department of Health did not confirm whether the bill would be recommitted to the committee stage in the Commons, with any decision pending the report of the NHS Future Forum. A spokesperson added: "We are currently listening on our plans to strengthen the NHS and awaiting the report from the NHS Future Forum."

However, Clegg is quoted by The Guardian as saying: "I think we will need to send the bill back to committee. I have always said that it is best to take our time to get it right rather than move too fast and risk getting the details wrong."

Were the bill to be delayed until October, this could push back plans to transfer responsibility for social work regulation from the GSCC to the Health Professions Council. This had already been put back by three months to July 2012 because of the government's original "pause" in the legislation.

While the GSCC said the original delay may "facilitate an efficient and effective transfer to the HPC", independent consultant and former GSCC vice-chair Melanie Henwood warned that a further delay could cause problems for social workers looking to re-register next year.

"This would add to public confusion and could lead to social workers failing to renew their registration on time," said Henwood last month. "It is also important for the staff and conduct panel members working for the GSCC that they have clarity about the timetable they are working to. Further uncertainty would be disruptive and could create capacity issues, making a managed handover to the HPC more challenging to deliver."

BASW - The College of Social Work also warned last month that a further delay would "cause concern".

However, the HPC said it still expected to assume responsibility for the social work register next July.

NHS leaders also raised concerns today over the potential delay, with the bill promising a total overhaul of the health service by scrapping primary care trusts and transferring commissioning responsibility to consortia of GPs and responsibility for public health to councils, and injecting more competition into health provision.

"We have to get these reforms right and we need to ensure they have a proper political mandate, said NHS Confederation chief executive Mike Farrar. "But the government must also have an eye to how long the legislative process will take. The NHS is under enormous pressure and we need the clarity quickly in order to make it easier for the NHS to deliver financial stability and high quality services for patients."

The delay also has implications for the long-term reform of adult social care funding.

With the Dilnot Commission on care funding set to report in early July, former Association of Directors of Adult Social Services president Richard Jones had warned that its recommendations could be overshadowed by the original delay to the bill.

A further delay, pushing the bill's return to Parliament beyond the summer, could work in Dilnot's favour by creating space for his recommendations to have a fair hearing and possibly influence the bill, a scenario that Adass may favour.

In his speech today to University College London Hospital, Clegg also called for closer working between GP commissioners and social services.

What do you think? Join the debate on CareSpace

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**durrants**  
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## Assessed first year for NQSWs to be tested from summer

The Social Work Reform Board is likely to begin trialling models for an assessed first year in employment for newly qualified social workers this summer.

The reform board has asked Skills for Care and the Children's Workforce Development Council to test possible models for the assessed and supported year in employment (ASYE) over the next year. It is hoping to pilot a single system throughout England from September 2012.

Reform board members will next week decide whether to

press ministers for the assessed year to be made compulsory.

Currently, NQSWs can begin practising on the most complex cases as soon as they pass their degree. In an interim report in 2009, the Social Work Task Force found too many NQSWs "were being thrown in at the deep end, leading some to burn out and eventually leave, exacerbating the problem of high staff turnover".

However, the ASYE, one of the taskforce's recommendations, would support graduates during their first year of practice,

through protected caseloads and guaranteed supervision.

"It would require legislative change," Moira Gibb, chair of the board, said at *Community Care* Live. "We will go to [the government] later this year with the costings and implications."

Skills for Care and the CWDC intends to consult employers on the current programmes of support for NQSWs. "Between this summer and probably spring next year, there will be detailed work going on with employers to help us test and develop models of

assessment, including cost implications," said Graham Woodham, Skills for Care's regional development manager.

His counterpart at the CWDC, national programme manager Rebecca Leete, added: "The intention is that this will be a consistent national framework for England."

The Health Professions Council will next year take over social work regulation, but details of how the ASYE will be linked to registration are yet to be decided.





## Appendix 2 - Position statements

### **February 2011 (updated as appropriate)**

#### **HPC position on student registration**

Following its meeting in February 2011 the Council considered a Paper on the content of the Health and Social Care Bill 2011 and the subsequent command paper 'Enabling excellence'. The Council discussed the provisions which would, if passed, allow the HPC to set up voluntary registers for currently unregulated groups.

### **May 2011**

#### **The Health Professions Council responds to Professor Munro's report**

Anna van der Gaag, Chair of the Health Professions Council comments on Professor Munro's report, 'The Munro review of child protection: a child-centred system'.



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### HPC position on student registration

Following its meeting in February 2011 the Council considered a Paper on the content of the Health and Social Care Bill 2011 and the subsequent Command paper 'Enabling Excellence'. The Council discussed the provisions which would, if passed, allow the HPC to set up voluntary registers for currently unregulated groups.

A voluntary register can only be established after the HPC has:

- undertaken an impact assessment; and
- consulted on its proposals

The Health and Social Care Bill, if approved by parliament, would also allow the HPC to set up voluntary registers for students. The General Social Care Council (GSCC) currently maintains a voluntary register of student social workers. The Bill makes no specific provision for the registration of student social workers and the HPC has no powers to establish a voluntary register of students until the legislation is approved by Parliament and comes into force.

Prior to the opening of the Register, the Government will publish a transfer order which will cover practical matters related to the transfer of regulatory functions from the GSCC to the HPC. During the scrutiny of the Bill on Tuesday 29 March 2011, Paul Burstow, Minister of State for Care Services indicated that the voluntary register of social work students currently held by the GSCC will transfer to the Health and Care Professions Council, pending full consideration of the best approach to assuring the safety and standards of student social workers.

The HPC currently does not register students but uses its statutory powers for approving and monitoring higher education programmes to ensure that only those who meet its exacting ethical and competence standards graduate with qualifications that allow them to join the Register. These statutory powers include the requirements for criminal conviction checks, health declarations and standards of practise placements.

The HPC will review its approach on this topic, considering the issues across all of the professions it regulates and for student social workers in England. We will undertake a preliminary impact assessment and publicly consult with stakeholders in the autumn of 2011. The outcome of the consultation will inform our final impact assessment. We anticipate reaching our conclusions in spring 2012 and, amongst other considerations, these will include deciding whether and on what basis we would maintain the current register of student social workers held by the GSCC.

.Ends

<http://www.hpc-uk.org/aboutregistration/aspirantgroups/>

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- HPC position on voluntary registers
- HPC Position on the statutory regulation of Herbalist and Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioners
- Health and Social Care Bill
- The regulation of healthcare scientists
- Command Paper Response 'Enabling Excellence'
- HPC position statement on Revalidation
- Competency and language skills of health professionals from the European Economic Area (EEA)
- Health Professions Council response to CHRE performance review report 2009/10
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## The Health Professions Council responds to Professor Munro's report

Anna van der Gaag, Chair of the Health Professions Council commented:

"The Health Professions Council (HPC) welcomes Professor Munro's report, 'The Munro Review of Child Protection: A child-centred system'.

This report signals significant and wide ranging reforms to the child protection system in England. The HPC welcomes these recommendations both in relation to the systemic and professional improvements which they describe. We support the premise that the social work regulator has a strong and important role to play in relation to continuing professional development (CPD) and that CPD will be one of the ways in which the expertise of the profession can be improved.

Meeting CPD standards is a mandatory requirement for all our professions. We define it as a range of learning activities through which professionals maintain and develop throughout their career to ensure that they retain their capacity to practice safely, effectively and legally within their evolving scope of practice. Currently we audit a small percentage of CPD profiles randomly selected when each of our professions renew their registration.

We are committed to protecting the public and ensuring that professionals are meeting standards for their professional skills, and will continue to work closely with the College of Social Work to drive CPD forward."

- Ends -

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## Appendix 3 - Examples of social work parliamentary activity

**March 2011**

### **Lords Written Answers: Health and Care Professions Council**

Question: Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will ensure that the proposed Health and Care Professions Council will require all students to register with the council before they begin practice placements with service units.

Answer: Earl Howe: The General Social Care Council currently maintains a voluntary register of social work students, while, as part of its approval process, the Health Professions Council ensures that students in the professions it regulates are subject to assurance systems, including criminal record checks and fitness to conduct procedures, overseen by the providers of education.

Further consideration is being given to which model of assurance is appropriate for social work students.

Question: Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: To ask Her Majesty's Government how they will ensure that the transfer of social worker registration to the proposed Health and Care Professions Council will not affect the movement of social workers between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Answer: Earl Howe: The regulation of social workers is fully devolved to Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

We have made provisions in the Health and Social Care Bill which will enable the Health Professions Council (HPC) to recognise or assess training or experience gained in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales as sufficient for admission to its register as a social worker in England.

We have also provided in the Bill that individuals registered with one of the care councils of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, who are working in England as a social worker on a temporary basis, will not have to register with the HPC.

Question: Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: To ask Her Majesty's Government how they will ensure that the proposed Health and Care Professions Council has sufficient social work expertise on its council and within its staff.

Answer: Earl Howe: It will be for the Health Professions Council (HPC) to determine how it secures the skills and expertise it needs to take on the regulation of social workers.

The HPC is an experienced regulator of 15 professions. It is working closely with the General Social Care Council (GSCC) to ensure a smooth transfer of functions

and has established a professional liaison group, which includes representatives of the social work profession and employers and educators of social workers, to consider the professional standards of practice for social workers, which will be consulted on later in the year.

The precise details of any staff transfers from the GSCC to the HPC are for those bodies to determine.

### **Parliamentary Written Answers: General Social Care Council**

Question: Tessa Jowell: What estimate his Department has made of the level of savings which will accrue from the abolition of the General Social Care Council

Answer: Mr Simon Burns: The Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General, my right hon. Friend the Member for Horsham (Mr Maude), issued a written ministerial statement on 16 March 2011, Official Report, column 9WS, updating Parliament on progress on Public Bodies reform. That statement also announced that Departments estimate cumulative administrative savings of at least £2.6 billion will flow from public bodies over the spending review period.

The Department is currently working with its executive non-departmental public bodies (ENDPBs), to agree business plans and budgets for 2011-12 onwards. This process has not been concluded, therefore we are not in a position to provide savings estimates for individual ENDPBs.

However from a baseline of 2010-11 plans, the Department has reduced annual grant in aid contribution to its ENDPB core services by £67 million.

This is our best current estimate of planned savings to emerge from these reforms. They are dependent upon individual timetables for implementation and linked to the wider modernisation of the health system. The savings in many instances also require the passage of the Health and Social Care Bill and the Public Bodies Bill and subsequent secondary legislation.

### **Written Parliamentary Questions: College of Social Work**

Question: Meg Munn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether the Social Care Institute for Excellence will have a role in the running of the College of Social Work.

Answer: Tim Loughton: In 2009 the Social Work Task Force recommended the establishment of an independent College of Social Work to articulate and promote the interests of good social work. It will give the profession itself strong, independent leadership; a clear voice in public debate, policy development and policy delivery; and strong ownership of professional social work standards.

The Social Care Institute for Excellence has been asked to facilitate the establishment of the College of Social Work, providing administrative support and expertise in a developmental phase of two years. Neither Government nor SCIE seek to influence the form or function of the emerging college. SCIE will have no role in the governance of the college that emerges.

**May 2011**

**Lords Question: General Social Care Council**

Question: Lord Hunt: To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have received about their proposal to abolish the General Social Care Council.

Answer: Baroness Northover: My Lords, a small number of representations has been received regarding the abolition of the General Social Care Council from the council itself, the British Association of Social Workers, the Social Care Association, Unison and individuals. Most of the comments focus on ensuring the effective regulation of social workers by the health and care professions council under the proposed new arrangements.

Question: Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: My Lords, I am grateful to the Minister. She will be aware that yesterday the Munro review was published, containing a number of recommendations for enhancing the quality and status of social workers, particularly in relation to child protection. How does the Minister square that with the abolition of the General Social Care Council and the placing of the regulation of social workers under a health body that has absolutely no experience of social work?

Answer: Baroness Northover: The noble Lord-who I believe was the Minister responsible for setting up the General Social Care Council-is, not surprisingly, challenging us on this. As he will know, in 2009 there was a review of the council which concluded that it lacked focus. In essence, there was a muddling together of the regulatory function and the professionalisation of this area. One of the things that the review strongly recommended was that the profession of social workers should be regulated in the same way as the independent Health Professions Council has done. This change introduces that. The noble Lord expresses concern about whether it will reduce the effectiveness of that regulation. I do not think that it will; I think that it will make it clearer. It is very important that other bodies which, as he knows, currently exist, take forward the separate professionalisation and strengthening of the profession of social work.

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## Appendix 4

### Written Submission to the Health and Social Care Public Bill

#### Summary

1. The Health Professions Council (HPC) is pleased to make this submission to the Health and Social Care Bill Committee. In our submission to the Committee we have addressed issues surrounding the 'Regulation of healthcare professions and health and social care workers', which is Part 7 of the Bill. Our submission examines the implications of the relevant sections and how it will alter the current system of regulation. One of the main aspects of the Bill is the change in the regulation of social workers in England. We will continue to develop and maintain good working relationships with the General Social Care Council (GSCC) and the social care regulators in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure consistency in regulation across the UK.

2. The HPC is an independent UK-wide statutory regulator for 15 professions working in the NHS, education, the community and independent practice. Our focus is on the protection of the public and we do this by maintaining a register of professionals who meet established standards for training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

3. On the following pages we address Part 7 of the Bill comprising Clauses 193 to 215 by which the Health and Social Care Bill affects the HPC. We support the Bill and look forward to continuing to work closely with stakeholders across the UK during the process of implementation. Should the Committee wish for any further information we will be happy to provide it.

#### Introduction

4. The Department of Health's (DH) July 2010 White Paper, *Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS*, was followed by the *Report of the Arm's-Length Bodies Review* which detailed the intention to move the regulation of social workers in England from the General Social Care Council (GSCC) to the Health Professions Council (HPC). The overall objective is to make the regulation of social workers in England financially independent of government.

#### Transfer of regulatory functions

5. The working timetable is to complete the transfer of the Register of Social Workers to the HPC by April 2012, as stated in the *Report of the Arm's-Length Bodies Review*. The HPC is working closely with the GSCC on this process and the objective is to deliver a smooth transition which ensures the protection of the public.

## **Other professions**

6. The HPC has a strong track record in working with professional and regulatory bodies in this regard. In September 2004 the HPC assumed responsibility for the regulation of Operating Department Practitioners after working closely with the College of Operating Department Practitioners. In July 2009 it commenced regulation of Practitioner Psychologists, transferring voluntary Registers held by the British Psychological Society and Association of Educational Psychologists to the HPC Register. Most recently in April 2010 the HPC assumed responsibility for the regulation of hearing aid dispensers after the abolition of the Hearing Aid Council. Prior to and during the transfer of responsibilities, the HPC and the above bodies established good working relationships; the HPC is committed to replicating the quality of these relationships with the social work profession, employers, education providers, user groups and other stakeholders, as well as the regulatory councils in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

## **Issues**

### **Registration costs**

7. The registration fee for the GSCC currently stands at £30 per annum, this would be much higher if the GSCC were to operate on a full-cost recovery basis as an independent regulatory body and higher than the £76 annual fee for HPC registrants. The Health and Social Care Bill 2011 Impact Assessment outlines the cost of registration for social workers if GSCC was fully funded by fees from its registrants and with no Government subsidy. Fees would have to rise by a cost of between £210 and £250 on top of the fees currently paid<sup>1</sup>. Registering with the HPC will therefore be more economical than if the GSCC were to continue but without financial support from government; HPC also has one of the lowest regulatory registration fees.

8. Some registrants will qualify for a discount on fees. For example, newly qualified graduates receive a 50 per cent reduction in the fee in their first two professional years. Fees for registrants who live and work in England will be tax-deductible.

### **Student registration**

9. The HPC does not currently register students, unlike the GSCC. However, through its standards, guidance and approved education courses, students

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<sup>1</sup> E73. p125, 'Health and Social Care Bill 2011 Impact Assessments' Department of Health



are regulated by HPC. HPC provides guidance on conduct and ethics for students and requires all education providers delivering relevant programmes to operate disciplinary processes for students aiming to enter the professions which it regulates.

10. The Health and Social Care Bill proposes regulatory powers for HPC to establish a voluntary register for students. HPC will carry out an impact assessment and a consultation with stakeholders later this year looking at the issue of student registration and specifically whether social work students should be registered. The Council will then make a formal decision on the issue.

### **Setting standards for the profession**

11. The HPC has formed a Working Group which is preparing draft standards of proficiency for social workers in England as well as the threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register. The group consists of twelve members including individuals from relevant social work stakeholder organisations as well as four HPC members. This work commenced on 14 January and will include a full consultation on the proposed standards.

### **New name for the Health Professions Council**

12. The Health and Social Care Bill proposes that the HPC be renamed the Health and Care Professions Council (**HCPC**) to reflect the expanded remit that is proposed. A strap line will be used to clearly communicate the range of professions that will be regulated: *'Regulating health, psychological and social work professionals'*

13. There has been a positive response from stakeholders about the incorporation of the word "care" in the new name as it better reflects the range of professions that are regulated. In research conducted by Ipsos MORI and GfK NOP, 81% of the general public felt that 'Health and Care Professions Council' would best reflect the role of a regulator of many different professions. 76% of the general public associated the term 'care professional' with 'social worker'. As a UK-wide regulator a Welsh translation of the name will be used in Wales.

### **UK wide registration**

14. The registration of social workers in the UK is devolved and each of the four countries has its own regulator. These proposals only relate to regulation in England. The professions which the HPC currently regulates are UK-wide. The social work profession will be the only profession which the proposed HCPC will regulate in England alone.

15. HPC is experienced in working with the devolved administrations in regards to engaging with registrants and stakeholders. Clause 199 of the Health and Social Care Bill places a duty on HPC to co-operate with other Care Councils. HPC has begun working with the social work regulators in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. HPC will continue to develop good communications to ensure consistency in decision making and to ensure public protection is provided across the UK.

16. HPC will enable social workers registered with Care Councils outside of England to practice in England on a temporary basis. Options regarding the temporary registration of social workers outside England are currently being examined.

**Appeals:**

17. Fitness to practise appeals for social workers are currently heard by the Care Standards Tribunal but this will change with transfer of social work regulation. The Health Professions Order provides that appeals against decisions regarding fitness to practise are made to the High Court. This is consistent across all 15 HPC registered professions and the other healthcare regulators.

## Appendix 5 - Transfer of Social Workers' Register (England) communications workplan

### Project/initiative

Transfer of Social Workers' Register (England) from the General Social Care Council to the Health Professions Council

### Communications planning lead

**Health Professions Council** - Jacqueline Ladds, Director of Communications  
**General Social Care Council** - Sherry Malik, Director of Strategy and Social Work Education / Jenna Khalfan, Media and Public Affairs Manager

### HPC team responsible for project managing the transfer

<b>Directorate</b>	Projects/Operations
<b>Key HPC contacts</b>	There is a project group made up of representatives from HPC directorates and the HPC project lead is Greg Ross Sampson, Director of Operations

### GSCC team responsible for project managing the transfer

<b>Directorate</b>	Corporate Resources
<b>Key GSCC contacts</b>	There is a project group made up of representatives from GSCC directorates. The GSCC project lead is Chris Savory Director of Corporate Resources

## **Timeframe**

The Health and Social Care Bill which sets out the detail of the transfer was published in January 2011. Royal Assent is anticipated in November 2011 and the proposed transfer date is April 2012. The communications plan covers our activities from February 2011 until the transfer has been completed.

## **Background**

In July 2010, the Coalition Government published the report 'Liberating the NHS: report of the arms-length bodies which stated that 'the regulation of social workers would be transferred to the HPC ..... which will be renamed to reflect its new remit'.

Since that date, preparatory work has been undertaken to transfer the Register from the GSCC to the HPC. Both organisations have formed project groups, operational plans have been put together and meetings between GSCC and HPC departments have taken place on a regular basis.

The GSCC has worked to inform registrants, employers, HEIs and stakeholders about the transfer through bulletins, emails and meetings and the HPC Chair and Chief Executive have undertaken a series of meetings with stakeholders. Both organisations have been participating in the Social Work Reform Board meetings and attending the Social Work Oversight Regulatory Group (SWORG). The HPC has also set up a Professional Liaison Group to draft the standards of proficiency and the GSCC is part of this group.

A glossary giving an explanation of the acronyms used throughout the workplan can be found in appendix 3, page 31.

## Target audiences

There are a number of target audiences that need to be aware of the transfer, including:

- Service users and the general public
- Social workers, prospective social workers and social work students in England
- Prospective social workers and social work students in England
- Employers
- Parliamentarians
- Key stakeholder organisations, including the Social Work Reform Board, professional bodies, unions and other social work associations
- Education providers and related education stakeholders
- Existing HPC registrants
- Stakeholders in the devolved administrations, including the Care Councils
- Employees including Council and Committee Members, GSCC IQ panelists and HPC Partners

A more detailed list can be found in **appendix 1** of this workplan.

## Communication aims and objectives

Both the HPC and the GSCC are statutory regulators and their purpose is to protect the public. Each has a statutory responsibility to communicate with stakeholders and for this project, the main communication aims and objectives include:

- To raise awareness across all audiences that the HPC will become the new regulator of social workers in England from April 2012 and will be renamed the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (subject to parliamentary approval)
- To ensure that social workers are fully informed of and engaged with the process, receive information that they need to maintain their registration and are informed of the changes that will occur because of the transfer – fitness to practise process, registration fees, continuing professional development, student registration and programme approval (pre-registration and AMHP)
- To ensure that members of the public, but particularly service users have access to information about the role of the social work regulator
- To ensure that employers, education providers and stakeholders are aware of the new arrangements and understand the HCPC's regulatory functions and processes
- To provide opportunities for engagement, in particular consultations and Partner recruitment
- To raise awareness of the improvement work the GSCC is undertaking between now and the transfer and the learning reports that the GSCC will produce towards the end of the year.

## **Key messages**

The overarching key message is that the HPC will become the new regulator of social workers in England following the closure of the GSCC and will be renamed the Health and Care Professions Council HCPC, regulating the health, psychological and social work professions (subject to parliamentary approval).

In addition, there are some specific messages which will apply to individual audiences. Initial messages are set out below and will be developed as required for each audience throughout the transfer process.

### **Service users and the public**

- how and what concerns can be raised with the regulator
- how to check a social worker is registered
- impact of change on informing GSCC/HPC of concerns regarding individual registrants

### **Social workers, prospective social workers and social work students in England**

- the importance of registration (GSCC will be the regulator until April 2012, HCPC after that)
- informed about the transfer, and the changes that this will mean, for both registrants and prospective registrants - including information about HCPC's standards, processes and functions, particularly changes to registration, CPD/PRTL, PQ, FTP and fees and impact on applications in run up to transfer date (when known)
- informed about the HCPC's standards and how they will work alongside the Social Work Reform Board capabilities framework
- informed about opportunities for engagement, particularly consultations and partner recruitment
- how the role of the regulator relates to that of a professional body or trade union
- Changes to the way that the regulator will communicate with them in the future

### **Employers**

- the importance of registration (GSCC will be the regulator until April 2012, HCPC after that)
- informed about the transfer, and the changes that this will mean, including information about HCPC's standards, processes and functions, particularly changes to registration, CPD/PRTL, PQ, FTP and fees and impact on applications in run up to transfer date (when known)
- how to check an employee is registered
- how, if at all, their relationship with the regulator will change

- informed about opportunities for engagement, particularly consultations and partner recruitment
- Changes to the way that the regulator will communicate with them in the future

### **Employees/ HPC and GSCC Council/ Panel members and HPC Partners**

- up to date and accurate information at each stage of the process

### **Parliamentarians**

- informed about the transfer, and the changes that this will mean, including information about HCPC's standards, processes and functions, particularly changes to registration, CPD/PRTL, PQ, FTP and fees
- informed about the HCPC's track record in transferring professions to the Register, the effectiveness of its processes and its efficiency as a multi-profession regulator
- that the Bill provides an opportunity to bring together best regulatory practice

### **Key stakeholder organisations**

- the importance of registration (GSCC will be the regulator until April 2012, HCPC after that)
- informed about the transfer, and the changes that this will mean, including information about HCPC's standards, processes and functions, particularly changes to registration, CPD/PRTL, PQ, FTP and fees and impact on applications in run up to transfer date (when known)
- informed about opportunities for engagement, particularly consultations and partner recruitment
- how the HPC will work with the SWRB and other key stakeholders

### **Education providers and related education stakeholders**

- informed about the transfer, and the changes that this will mean, including information about HCPC's standards, processes and functions, particularly changes to registration, CPD/PRTL, PQ, FTP and fees
- how inspection processes will change (pre-registration and AMHP)
- what will happen to education providers going through GSCC approval and monitoring processes at the time of transfer (pre-registration and AMHP)
- informed about the HCPC's standards and how they will work alongside the changes driven by SWRB and funding changes (pre-registration and AMHP)
- informed about opportunities for engagement, particularly consultations and partner recruitment
- informed that practice placement grants will be administered by the College
- Changes to the way that the regulator will communicate with them in the future



## **Existing HPC registrants**

- the limited impact the transfer will have to their registration

## **Stakeholders in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales**

- how the HCPC will work with key stakeholders and the Care Councils
- informed about the transfer, and the changes that this will mean, including information about HCPC's standards, processes and functions, particularly routes to registration and fitness to practise processes

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## Key issues requiring lines

Based on media monitoring, we have identified a broad range of issues which will require addressing through our messaging and communications activities.

These include:

- The perception that HPC works to a health model
- That work undertaken so far to increase the profile and improve professionalism within the social work profession may be lost when the GSCC closes
- Concerns about changes to registration
- Changes to fees
- The impact of HPC's fitness to practise process, particularly as the GSCC currently only investigates conduct cases
- the impact on individual registration, what people need to do and timescales
- The HPC's position on student registration
- The HPC's position on assessed and supported first year in employment
- The HPC's position on supported year in employment
- The change from appealing to the Care Service Tribunal to the High Court in fitness to practise cases and changes to the ombudsman
- The impact of changes to the funding arrangements (grants, student fees and bursaries) of education programmes
- Explaining the different roles GSCC and HPC have in relation to the SWRB and HPC's links to the College
- The HPC's position on service user involvement
- Changes for those social workers who want to practice in another country
- Changes to communications, from SWC, employer and HEI e-bulletin to HPC newsletters

Specific responses to these issues will be developed and used, where appropriate, in all our communications activities.

To date, both organisations have uploaded initial frequently asked questions to their websites and will continue to develop these in conjunction with each other.

## **Communication channels**

We will use the full range of communication channels open to us, including print and broadcast media, social media, web, professional conferences and events, talks and presentations, public information materials and campaigns, newsletters and direct mail.

## **Service users and the public**

- HPC's public information materials and public information campaign
- Links to service user organisations
- Web
- Social media, including Facebook, Twitter
- Local and national consumer media

## **GSCC registrants (social workers and social work students in England) and existing HPC registrants**

- Newsletters including Social Work Connections and In Focus
- Direct mail
- Events, including professional conferences and GSCC and HPC events
- Through employers and education providers
- Web
- Social media including Facebook and Twitter
- Professional media
- Routine registration mailings and guidance leaflets
- Phone calls and enquiries to GSCC Helpdesk and HPC Registrations Department

## **Prospective social workers and social work students**

- Direct mail
- Events, including professional conferences
- Through employers and education providers
- Web
- Social media including Facebook and Twitter
- Professional media
- Phone calls and enquiries to GSCC Helpdesk and HPC Registrations Department

## **Employers**

- Newsletters including GSCC e-bulletin, DH and Gateway e-bulletins
- Direct mail and email
- Presentations and meetings with regional groups of Local Authority employers, REC ASWEB and Children England (groupings of agency and charity employers)

- Web
- Social media including Facebook and Twitter
- Professional media
- Events including professional conferences and HCPC events
- Employer specific materials

### **Parliamentarians**

- Professional, local and national media
- Web, including HPC's site on e-Politix
- Social media including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn
- Briefings and meetings as required

### **Key stakeholders organisations**

- Briefings and meetings as required
- Professional, local and national media
- Web
- Social media including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn
- Direct mail
- Events including professional conferences

### **Education providers and education related stakeholders**

- Newsletters, including GSCC e-bulletin and HPC Education Update
- Direct mail
- Web
- Social media including Facebook and Twitter
- Professional, local and national media
- Events including professional conferences and education roadshows

### **Employees and GSCC Council members and Panelists, and HPC Partners**

- Face to face briefings and meetings
- Newsletters (internal and external)
- Web
- Direct mail

## Measurement and evaluation

The HPC and GSCC will use a variety of measures to evaluate the success of the communications work we do. These include

- stakeholder opinion polling
- volume and type of calls to the Registration Department
- % registration renewals
- number and tone of articles in professional journals
- number of conferences, events and speaking engagements attended
- type of questions and queries raised at above
- web monitoring

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<b>Risk</b>	<b>Level of risk (high, medium, low)</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
The transfer doesn't take place	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both organisations will monitor the passage of legislation through parliament and ensure that parliamentarians are suitably informed.</li> </ul>
legislation is delayed	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both organisations will monitor the passage of legislation through parliament and ensure that parliamentarians are suitably informed.</li> </ul>
Service users unaware of transfer	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will utilise the full range of communication tools available to both organisations</li> <li>HPC's service user and general public information campaign will have clear messages and be monitored and reviewed regularly</li> </ul>
Social workers unaware of transfer	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will utilise the full range of communication tools available to both organisations</li> </ul>
HPC/GSCC messages don't align	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regularly monitor and review the communications workplan.</li> <li>GSCC and HPC communications teams will remain in contact ensuring that both organisations are aware and understand communications work undertake</li> </ul>
The National Archive content freeze on our website two months prior to closure in order to archive the site.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Message on the GSCC website with link to HPC site</li> <li>Increase level of information on the HPC website</li> <li>Work with DH to change this approach</li> </ul>
Launch of the College is delayed	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain links with College and relevant sector stakeholders</li> </ul>
Registrants 'falling' off the register in the months leading up to the transfer	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective communications from HPC and GSCC to registrants</li> </ul>

## Communications activities – transfer of social workers’ register (England)

2011 - 2012

Date	Headline activities	Audience	Lead
<b>February</b>			
11 February	<b>HPC PLG meeting</b>		
Ongoing	Research and plan programme of press releases, news items and articles (print and online) in professional media	Registrants, employers and professional bodies	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Publish article in HPC In Focus	Registrants, professional bodies, employers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Research design agencies, write brief and meet with possible companies for the name change	All audiences	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Prepare for GSCC’s social work conferences in Leeds and London	Social workers	HPC/GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor Public Bill Committee stage, draft written evidence and submit before 31 March 2011, provide information to targeted parliamentarians where required (eg written briefing, information on e-politix and face to face contact)	Parliamentarians	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Research and plan attendance at relevant professional body conferences and exhibitions	Registrants, professional bodies and employers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
<b>March</b>			
2 March	<b>HPC PLG meeting</b>		
4 March	GSCC social worker events – HPC Chief Executive/Chair to attend and present	GSCC registrants	HPC/GSCC Communications

<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline activities</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Lead</b>
9 March	GSCC social work connections issued – update on transfer and Bill included	GSCC registrants	GSCC Communications
7 March	GSCC attendance at Compass jobs fair – stand and workshop		GSCC Communications
11 March	GSCC HEI and employer e-bulletins issued – update on transfer and Bill included	Employers and education providers	GSCC Communications
18 March	GSCC social worker events – HPC Chief Executive/Chair to attend and present	GSCC registrants	HPC/GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Research and plan future attendance at relevant professional body conferences and exhibitions	Social workers, professional bodies and employers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Research and plan programme of press releases, news items and articles (print and online) in professional media – update on transfer and information about key issues	Social workers, key stakeholders employers and professional bodies	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
By end March	Monitor Public Bill Committee stage, draft written evidence and submit before 31 March 2011, provide information to targeted parliamentarians where required (eg written briefing, information on e-Politix and face to face contact), attend Committee	Parliamentarians	HPC and GSCC Communications
By end March	Commission agency to commence work on redrawing logo, application of strapline and reviewing housestyle	All audiences	HPC Communications
<b>April</b>			
8 April	Publish article in HPC In Focus – update on transfer	Registrants, social workers professional bodies, employers	HPC Communications



<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline activities</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Lead</b>
11 April	<b>HPC PLG</b>		
11 April	Publish information through social media channels – update on progress of PLG	All audiences	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Discussions about registrant correspondence and ensuring that messages about the transfer are contained within them.	GSCC registrants	GSCC communications
Ongoing	Ensure relevant website updates – updated FAQs, information on transfer, events etc	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Research and plan programme of press releases, news items and articles (print and online) in professional media - update on transfer and information about key issues	Registrants, employers and professional bodies	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Begin preparation for GSCC registrant events	GSCC registrants	GSCC communications
Ongoing	Monitor passage of Health and Social Care Bill and provide information to targeted parliamentarians where required (eg written briefing, information on e-politix and face to face contact)	Parliamentarians	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Research and plan attendance at relevant professional body conferences and exhibitions	Registrants, social workers, professional bodies and employers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
<b>May</b>			
Tbc	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> reading of Health and Social Care Bill</b>		
19 May	Attend Community Care Live conference - joint workshop and GSCC stand	Social workers, students and prospective social workers	HPC and GSCC Communications
tbc	Publish article in Education Update	Education providers	HPC Education

<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline activities</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Lead</b>
11 May	GSCC HEI and employer e-bulletins issued – update on transfer and Bill included	Employers and education providers	GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure relevant website updates – updated FAQs, information on transfer, events etc	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor passage of Health and Social Care Bill and provide information to targeted parliamentarians where required (eg written briefing, information on e-politix and face to face contact)	Parliamentarians	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Research and plan attendance at relevant professional body conferences and exhibitions	Registrants, social workers, professional bodies and employers	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Research and plan programme of press releases, news items and articles (print and online) in professional media – update on transfer and information about key issues	Social workers, key stakeholders employers and professional bodies	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Preparation for GSCC registrant events	GSCC registrants	GSCC communications
<b>June</b>			
tbc	<b>tbc House of Lords debate on Health and Social Care Bill</b>		
8 June	GSCC social work connections issued – update on transfer and Bill included if anything significant to note	GSCC registrants	GSCC communications
tbc	Plan developed containing the outlining the key messages for registrant over the months until the transfer	GSCC registrants	GSCC Communications
tbc	Publish article in HPC In Focus – update on transfer	Registrants, professional bodies, employers	Communications

<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline activities</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Lead</b>
tbc	Develop joint lines on fees and student registration	Registrants	GSCC and HPC communications
Ongoing	Monitor passage of Health and Social Care Bill and provide information to targeted parliamentarians where required (eg written briefing, information on e-politix and face to face contact)	Parliamentarians	Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Preparation for GSCC registrant events	GSCC registrants	GSCC communications
Ongoing	Ensure relevant website updates – updated FAQs, information on transfer, events etc	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Research and plan attendance at relevant professional body conferences and exhibitions	Registrants, social workers, professional bodies and employers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Research and plan programme of press releases, news items and articles (print and online) in professional media – update on transfer and information about key issues	Social workers, key stakeholders employers and professional bodies	HPC Communications
<b>July</b>			
tbc	<b>Launch of consultation on standards of proficiency</b>		
tbc	HPC - issue press release, update Facebook, issue Twitter message - announcing the consultation process for the standards of proficiency GSCC - issue release and related comms supporting HPC's standards of proficiency consultation	Social workers, professional bodies and key stakeholder organisations	HPC and GSCC Communications
tbc	Commence meetings with communications contacts of key social work stakeholder bodies	Stakeholders	HPC Communications

<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline activities</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Ongoing	Ensure relevant website updates – updated FAQs, information on transfer, events etc	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Research and plan attendance at relevant professional body conferences and exhibitions	Registrants, social workers, professional bodies and employers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Deliver programme of press releases, news items and articles (print and online) in professional media – update on transfer and information about key issues	Social workers, key stakeholders employers and professional bodies	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor passage of Health and Social Care Bill and provide information to targeted parliamentarians before debates in Parliament through written briefing, information on e-politix and face to face contact (where required)	Parliamentarians	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Preparation for GSCC registrant events	GSCC registrants	GSCC communications
<b>August</b>			
tbc	Communications preparation for Partner recruitment	Social workers, professional bodies, employers	HPC Communications
tbc	Publish article in HPC In Focus – information about consultation, partner recruitment, update on transfer	Social workers, professional bodies, employers	HPC Communications
tbc	GSCC HEI and employer e-bulletins issued – update on	Employers and	GSCC

<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline activities</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Lead</b>
	transfer and Bill included	education providers	Communications
Ongoing	Ensure relevant website updates – updated FAQs, information on transfer, events etc	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure attendance at relevant professional body conferences and exhibitions	Registrants, social workers, professional bodies and employers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Deliver programme of press releases, news items and articles (print and online) in professional media – update on transfer and information about key issues	Social workers, key stakeholders employers and professional bodies	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Preparation for GSCC registrant events	GSCC registrants	GSCC communications
<b>September</b>			
tbc	<b>Partner recruitment commences</b>		
7 Sept	GSCC social work connections issued – update on transfer and Bill included if anything significant to note	GSCC registrants	GSCC Communications
tbc	HPC - issue press release, update Facebook, issue Twitter message announcing partner recruitment GSCC - issue release and related comms supporting HPCs partner recruitment	Social workers, professional bodies and key stakeholder organisations	HPC and GSCC Communications
tbc	Issue release, update Facebook, issue twitter message reminding people of the consultation process for the standards of proficiency	Social workers, professional bodies and key stakeholder organisations	GSCC and HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor passage of Health and Social Care Bill and provide information to targeted parliamentarians where required (eg	Parliamentarians	HPC and GSCC Communications

<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline activities</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Lead</b>
	written briefing, information on e-politix and face to face contact)		
Ongoing	Undertake preparatory work for information campaign (new name and regulator of social workers in England), including contacting external agencies, agreeing messages and angles, researching deadlines	Service users and public/all audiences	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure relevant website updates – updated FAQs, information on transfer, events etc	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure attendance at relevant professional body conferences and exhibitions	Registrants, social workers, professional bodies and employers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Deliver programme of press releases, news items and articles (print and online) in professional media – update on transfer and information about key issues	Social workers, key stakeholders employers and professional bodies	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	GSCC and HPC Communications
Ongoing	Begin preparation for a series of events to inform education providers	Education providers	HPC and GSCC education
<b>October</b>			
tbc	<b>House of Lords debate on Health and Social Care Bill</b>		
tbc	Publish article in HPC In Focus – update on transfer	Registrants, professional bodies, employers	HPC Communications
tbc	Publish article in HPC Education Update	Education providers	HPC Education
tbc	Publicise series of events to inform education providers	Education providers	HPC Education
tbc	Possible month of GSCC social worker events	GSCC registrants	GSCC communications

<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline activities</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Lead</b>
	NCAS conference – joint event? GSCC stand?	Employers	GSCC and HPC communications
Ongoing	Monitor passage of Health and Social Care Bill and provide information to targeted parliamentarians where required (eg written briefing, information on e-politix and face to face contact)	Parliamentarians	GSCC and HPC Communications
Ongoing	Continue preparatory work for information campaign (new name and regulator of social workers in England), including agreeing key messages, timelines etc	Public and service users/all audiences	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	GSCC and HPC Communications
Ongoing	Begin preparation for a series of social work specific events to inform employers and 'Meet the HPC' events for social workers	Employers/social workers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure relevant website updates – updated FAQs, information on transfer, events etc	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure attendance at relevant professional body conferences and exhibitions	Registrants, social workers, professional bodies and employers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Deliver programme of press releases, news items and articles (print and online) in professional media – update on transfer and information about key issues	Social workers, key stakeholders employers and professional bodies	HPC Communications
<b>November</b>			
tbc	<b>Royal Assent granted</b>		
16 Nov	Community Care Live – children and families event - opportunity to host a seminar and have an exhibition stand where delegates can ask questions	Social workers	HPC and GSCC Communications
tbc	GSCC HEI and employer e-bulletins issued – update on	Employers and	GSCC

<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline activities</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Lead</b>
	transfer and Bill included	education providers	Communications
tbc	Possible publication of GSCC learning reports	All audiences	GSCC Communications
tbc	Hold series of events to inform education providers about the transfer process, the HPC's regulatory model and the expectations around approval visits	Education providers	HPC Education
tbc	(possible joint) Undertake mailing to employers with information about transfer and invitation to employer events	Employers	HPC and GSCC Communications
tbc	(possible joint) Undertake mailings to stakeholders with information about transfer	Professional bodies and employers	HPC and GSCC Communications
tbc	(possible joint) Undertake mailings (email) to registrants with information about transfer	Social workers	HPC and GSCC Communications
tbc	(possible joint) media release, write news story, update Facebook, issue twitter message announcing Royal Assent and timetable	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure relevant website updates – updated FAQs, information on transfer, events etc	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure attendance at relevant professional body conferences and exhibitions	Registrants, social workers, professional bodies and employers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Deliver programme of press releases, news items and articles (print and online) in professional media – update on transfer and information about key issues	Social workers, key stakeholders employers and professional bodies	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Continue preparatory work for information campaign (new name and regulator of social workers in England), including agreeing key messages, timelines etc	Public and service users/all audiences	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	GSCC and HPC



Date	Headline activities	Audience	Lead
			Communications
<b>December</b>			
7 December	GSCC social work connections goes out – update on transfer and Bill included if anything significant to note	GSCC registrants	GSCC Communications
tbc	Publish article in HPC In Focus – update on transfer and activities	Registrants, professional bodies, employers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Continue preparatory work for information campaign (new name and regulator of social workers in England), including agreeing key messages, timelines etc	Public and service users/all audiences	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	GSCC and HPC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure attendance at relevant professional body conferences and exhibitions	Registrants, social workers, professional bodies and employers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Deliver programme of press releases, news items and articles (print and online) in professional media – update on transfer and information about key issues	Social workers, key stakeholders employers and professional bodies	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure relevant website updates – updated FAQs, information on transfer, events etc	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications

## 2012

Date	Headline activities	Audience	Lead
<b>January</b>			
tbc	<b>Special Education and Training Committee (ETC) to approve Standards of proficiency and SET1</b>		
tbc	<b>Recruitment of ETC social worker member</b>		

<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline activities</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Lead</b>
tbc	Promote ETC recruitment through social media channels, media releases	Social workers, professional bodies	GSCC and HPC Communications
tbc	Commence publication process for Standards of Proficiency	Social workers, professional bodies, employers	HPC Communications
tbc	Publish article in HPC Education Update	Education providers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Continue preparatory work for information campaign (new name and regulator of social workers in England), including agreeing key messages, timelines etc	Public and service user/all audiences	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure relevant website updates – updated FAQs, information on transfer, events etc	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure attendance at relevant professional body conferences and exhibitions	Registrants, social workers, professional bodies and employers	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Deliver programme of press releases, news items and articles (print and online) in professional media – update on transfer and information about key issues	Social workers, key stakeholders employers and professional bodies	HPC Communications
<b>February</b>			
tbc	<b>HPC Council Meeting (to approve Standards of proficiency)</b>		
tbc	Publish article in HPC In Focus	Registrants, social workers professional bodies, employers	HPC Communications

<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline activities</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Lead</b>
tbc	GSCC HEI and employer e-bulletins issued – update on transfer and Bill included	Employers and education providers	GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Continue preparatory work for information campaign (new name and regulator of social workers in England), including agreeing key messages, timelines etc	Public, service users, all audiences	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure relevant website updates – updated FAQs, information on transfer, events etc	All audiences	HPC and GSCC Communications
<b>March</b>			
7 March	GSCC social work connections goes out – update on transfer and Bill included if anything significant to note	GSCC registrants	GSCC Communications
31 March	GSCC website will need to impose a content freeze in order for The National Archives (TNA) to archive the site – anticipate this will happen on 31 January 2012 based on assumption that transfer takes place 31 March 2012	All audiences	GSCC Communications
Ongoing	Continue preparatory work for information campaign (new name and regulator of social workers in England), including agreeing key messages, timelines etc	Public and service users/all audiences	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure public information materials, banners etc are updated and available on day of transfer	All audiences	HPC Communications
Ongoing	Ensure relevant website updates – updated FAQs, information on transfer, events	All audiences	HPC Communications
<b>April</b>			
tbc	Publish article in HPC In Focus	Registrants, professional bodies,	HPC Communications

<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline activities</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Lead</b>
		employers	
tbc	Publish article in HPC Education Update	Education providers	HPC Education
tbc	Hold social worker specific events to inform employers about the transfer process, the HPC's regulatory role and processes including registration and ftp	Employers	HPC Communications
tbc	Hold social worker specific 'Meet the HPC' events to inform social workers about the transfer process, the HPC's regulatory role and processes including registration and ftp	Social workers	HPC Communications
<b>May</b>			
tbc	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	Communications
tbc	GSCC HEI and employer e-bulletins issued – update on transfer and Bill included	Employers and education providers	GSCC Communications
<b>June</b>			
tbc	Commence elements of media campaign to raise awareness of the HPC – new name and regulator of social workers in England	All audiences	HPC Communications
tbc	Commence series of mailings to education providers to inform them of process and activities, including publications (standards of proficiency, SETs, SCPEs and GSC&E)	Employers and HEIs	HPC Education
tbc	Issue letter from the HPC with general information about the transfer and next steps – to include (tbc) registration logo, public information materials and 3 sets of standards	Social workers	HPC Communications / Registrations
tbc	Upload standards of proficiency to the HPC website	Social workers, education providers	HPC Communications
ongoing	Supporting communications for registration renewal process	Registrants	Communications
ongoing	Publish article in HPC In Focus	Registrants, professional bodies, employers	Communications
ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	Communications

<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline activities</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Lead</b>
<b>July</b>			
1 July	Launch media campaign to raise awareness of the HPC – new name and regulator of social workers in England	All audiences	HPC Communications
1 July	Ensure relevant website updates – updated FAQs, information on transfer, events etc	All audiences	HPC Communications
tbc	Letter from the HPC providing information about registration renewal process - to include (tbc) registration logo, public information materials and 3 sets of standards (if not already done)	Registrants	Registrations
ongoing	Supporting communications for registration renewal process	Registrants	Communications
ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	Communications
<b>August</b>			
ongoing	Supporting communications for registration renewal process	Registrants	Communications
tbc	Ensure article in HPC In Focus	Registrants, professional bodies, employers	Communications
Ongoing	Monitor media and respond where appropriate	All audiences	Communications

## **Appendix 1 – stakeholder audiences**

### **Employers**

- Primarily in local authorities
- Independent organisations (residential care homes)
- Agencies (REC, ASWEB)
- CAFCASS
- Charities (Action for Children, Mencap, Family Action, Children Society, Children England, NSPCC, Barnardos)
- Some also work for the NHS (hospitals, mental health trusts, and community-based settings)
- LGA
- ADASS/ADCS
- SOLACE
- International agencies

### **Professional bodies**

- British Association of Social Workers (BASW)
- The College of Social Work
- Social Care Association

### **Education stakeholders**

- Social work recruitment campaign
- Social Work Admissions System/University and College Admissions Service
- Education Development International
- Social Work Education Participation
- SWAP, JUCSWEC, QAA, HEFCE, HESA, UUK, UCAS
- HEIs

### **Professional media**

- Community Care
- Society Guardian
- Children and Young People Now (Social Work Now)
- Local Government Chronicle
- Municipal Journal (MJ)
- Sourceuk
- Practice
- Care Talk mag

### **Other key stakeholder groups (eg DoH, Unison)**

- Social Work Reform Board
- Munro Group
- Health, Education and Social Care Chamber of the First-tier tribunal
- Unison, Aspect, Unite
- Department of Health and Department for Education and BIS
- Children's Workforce Development Council
- Care Quality Commission and Ofsted
- Social Care Institute of Excellence
- Skills for Care
- Community Service Volunteers

### **Service users**

- Citizen's Advice Bureau
- Young Minds
- Involve
- A National Voice
- Mind
- Age UK (Age Concern + Help the Aged)
- Scope
- Crisis
- Shelter
- Addiction
- Disability Alliance
- Friends, Families and Travelers
- Action for Children
- Barnardos
- RNIB
- RNID
- Shaping our Lives
- Association of Social Care Communicators
- NSPCC
- Services for Independent Living

### **Regulators (inc. those in the devolved administrations)**

- CHRE and health regulators
- Care Council for Wales
- Scottish Social Services Council
- Northern Ireland Social Care Council

## Parliamentarians

- Health and Education select committees and/or those with an interest in social care
- Public Bill Committee

DRAFT



## **Appendix 2 – Statement of intent on joint communications**

### **GSCC/HPC joint external communications strategy December 2010**

The GSCC and the HPC have begun to have initial discussions about the development of a joint external communications strategy. The purpose of this strategy will be to ensure that the sector is well informed about the changes to the regulation of the social work profession in the run up to, and during, the transfer.

The strategy will aim to ensure openness and consistency in order to limit confusion and disruption to the sector.

This is in line with each organisation's values of:

From the GSCC's perspective,

- Fairness
- Quality
- Openness
- Efficiency
- Integrity
- Respect

From the HPC's perspective,

- Transparency
- Collaboration
- Responsiveness
- Value for money
- High quality service

The main audiences that the strategy will be targeted at are:

- Social workers
- People who use social work services
- Social work employers
- Higher Education Institutes offering social work courses
- Social work representative bodies and other sector stakeholders

It is also important to acknowledge that whilst the transfer directly impacts on social workers in England only, any communications and stakeholder activity will also focus on the devolved administrations and the importance of collaborative working with the social care regulators and stakeholders in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

The GSCC and HPC have discussed that joint activity will commence a number of months' in advance of the transfer date. This is anticipated to be April 2012 although is subject to legislative approval and may, therefore, change. Timescales will be drawn up when there is more certainty about the likely timetable of the Health and Social Care Bill and the transfer date. Until this point, it is important that the GSCC continues to have the main contact with the profession and wider sector so that it can continue to fulfil its statutory duties.

In advance of any joint activity commencing, each organisation is undertaking key communications work. The HPC is monitoring media and parliamentary activity, undertaking introductory meetings with stakeholders and responding to invitations to speak at conferences as well as planning future activities post transfer. The GSCC has recently launched a new website, developed e-communities and social media networks and produced an e-bulletin for social work employers. It is important that this work continues, however, the two organisations have agreed that they will co-ordinate, and share information, on any communications activity around the transfer to minimise the potential for confusion in the sector.

The main activity that has been jointly agreed to date is the GSCC's two conferences for social workers in March 2011 where the HPC has been invited to speak on the panel.

**Sherry Malik**  
**Director of Strategy**  
**and Social Work Education**  
**General Social Care Council**

**Jacqueline Ladds**  
**Director of Communications**  
**Health Professions Council**

### **Appendix 3 – Glossary**

ADASS - Association of Directors of Adult Social Services  
ADCS - Association of Directors in Children's Services  
AMHP - Approved Mental Health Professional  
ASWEB - Association of Social Work Employment Businesses  
CPD - Continuous professional development  
CST - Care Service Tribunal  
DfE - Department for Education  
DH - Department of Health  
ETC – Education and Training Committee  
FTP - Fitness to Practise  
GSCC – Generals Social Care Council  
HCPC - Health and Care Professional Council  
HCPC – Health and Care Professions Council  
HEFCE – Higher Education Funding Council England  
HEIs - Higher Education Institutions  
HESA – Higher Education Statistics Agency  
HPC –Health Professions Council  
IQ - Internationally qualified  
JUCSWEC – Joint University Council Social Work Education Committee:  
LGA - Local Government Association  
NCASC – National Children and Adults Services Conference  
PLG – Professional Liaison Group  
PQ - Post Qualifying (awards)  
PRTL - Post Registration Training and Learning  
QAA, - Quality Assurance Agency  
REC - Recruitment and Employment Confederation  
SCPE – Standards of conduct, performance and ethics  
SETs – Standards of education and training  
SOLACE - Society of Local Authority Chief Executives | Home  
SWAP – Social Policy and Social Work subject centre  
SWORG - Social Work Oversight Regulatory Group ().  
SWRB - Social Work Reform Board  
UCAS – Universities and Colleges Admissions Service  
UUK – Universities UK