

VLP and NRCPD update meeting | 15 May 2014 | Notes

In attendance

- Alan Haythornthwaite (VLP)
- Dan Sumners (NRCPD)
- David Wycherley(VLP)
- Jim Edwards (NRCPD)
- Sarah Banks (VLP)
- Van Holtom (VLP)

Communication

1. All communication with VLP via email should be sent to admin@vlp.org.uk. Dan would forward recent emails regarding [Access to Work](#) that had been sent to Alan to this address.

PSA and self audit

2. VLP was concerned NRCPD was still pursuing [Professional Standards Authority accreditation](#).
3. NRCPD [reiterated the statement made by the Board in March](#) that it had taken a pause in its [strengthening registration programme](#).
4. NRCPD was conducting an internal audit to measure organisational performance and practice against the standards required of a statutory regulator. It would identify what internal processes needed to be strengthened in order to meet those standards. That would feed in to a detailed plan of action for strengthening registration.
5. A progress report would be considered at the [NRCPD Board](#) meeting in July. The meeting would begin to consider how a Board constitution of half lay trustees and half professional trustees could be achieved.
6. The Board also recognised the need to continue improvements in communication with stakeholders so they fully understood the rationale for any proposed changes. NRCPD

would continue to consult with service users, practitioners, purchasers and registrants while developing the plan.

Complaints process

7. VLP was concerned the [complaints process](#) was ineffective and inaccessible.
8. NRCPD said the complaints process was being reviewed. Accessibility was a key concern. Stakeholders – deaf users of communication services, registrants, communication professionals, purchasers of communication services - would be asked for feedback on drafts of the communications related to the process.
9. The review would also consider the effectiveness of the process. NRCPD, as a voluntary regulator, had developed its processes on the basis of trust. But it was considering if now was the right time to alter its approach. Statutory regulation would bring greater powers in this regard.

Fit and Proper Person Declaration

10. VLP was concerned the [Fit and Proper Person Declaration](#) [PDF] asked about physical and mental health conditions.
11. NRCPD confirmed the declaration had been approved by its lawyers.
12. NRCPD would provide the rationale for the inclusion of these questions.

Links with other professional associations

13. Whilst accepting that various associations existed, NRCPD wanted the profession to speak to it with one voice.
14. VLP confirmed its willingness to work with other associations.

Continuing Professional Development audit

15. VLP said there needed to be greater flexibility in terms of
 - a. the types of CPD acceptable to NRCPD; and
 - b. how evidence of CPD is submitted.

16. Alternatives included

- a. the opportunity to provide evidence in person;
- b. revalidation in training centres;
- c. on-the-job assessments; and
- d. feedback from users.

17. VLP asked who the standards advisers were and how they were appointed. NRCPD would provide details of the recruitment process.

18. VLP asked about the guidelines for providing feedback on submitted CPD evidence. NRCPD would provide details.

Board composition

19. VLP was concerned the chair of [ASLI](#) had been co-opted onto the Board. They urged the Board to consider if it was appropriate to have the chair of a professional association as a member as they would be unlikely to represent the views of the profession as a whole.

20. NRCPD understood the concerns of VLP but said Board members were not representatives. They were appointed for their skills and experience. Their role was to steward NRCPD.

Action points

21. NRCPD would

- a. forward recent communications regarding Access to Work to admin@vlp.org.uk;
- b. provide the rationale for the inclusion of questions about physical and mental health conditions in the Fit and Proper Person Declaration;
- c. provide details of the recruitment process for standards advisers; and
- d. provide details about the guidelines for providing feedback on submitted CPD evidence.

Supplemental answers

Rationale for the inclusion of questions about physical and mental health conditions in the Fit and Proper Person Declaration

22. The Fit and Proper Persons Declaration was drafted by NRCPD in conjunction with its lawyer. As it says in the explanatory notes, questions about sensory, physical or mental health conditions are there to determine if a condition might affect a registrant's ability to meet the standards set out in the Code of Conduct and National Occupational Standards. The code of conduct states registrants agree to work within the limits of their competence, and a condition could in part determine those limits.
23. We want to satisfy ourselves on this because NRCPD has a responsibility to those who rely on the register. They want to know a communication professional meets the standards we say they do. You'll note that we are not asking registrants to tell us about all conditions, just those that could affect their professional competence.
24. It means we know if there are types of assignment a registrant can't take on. That helps us in responding to the public and purchasers of services.
25. As you would expect, the information provided by registrants is kept confidential and only used for the purpose it was collected. If we wanted to use it in other ways the provider of the information would be asked for their permission.

Details of the recruitment process for standards advisers

26. There is a recruitment process for professional standards advisers. More information is at <http://www.nrcpd.org.uk/page.php?content=45>.

Details about the guidelines for providing feedback on submitted CPD evidence

27. If all the correct information is provided and the audit is passed, we simply send a confirmation email saying so. Otherwise, comments are sent to the registrant, telling them about concerns or what else they need to do. If information is missing, we request it by a certain date.