
5b

To consider

Joint Co-ordination Group: Progress Report

Issue

1. A report from the Joint Co-ordination Group on progress towards the merger of PMETB with the GMC.

Recommendation

2. To endorse the assurance provided by the Joint Co-ordination Group that the project to merge PMETB with the GMC is on track (paragraphs 6-34).

Further information

3. If you require further information about this paper, please contact us by email: gmc@gmc-uk.org or tel. 0161 923 6602

Background

4. Strategic Aim Three of the 2010 Business Plan states that we will provide an integrated approach to the regulation of medical education and training through all stages of a doctor's career. A key activity under this aim is to complete all work necessary to deliver the merger of PMETB with the GMC.

5. This paper provides a report on progress and includes a statement of assurance by the Joint Co-ordination Group, following its most recent meeting on 28 January 2010.

Discussion

Overview of progress

6. We have continued to work very closely with PMETB colleagues across all areas of the merger project. Progress has been such that it has not been necessary for the Joint Implementation Group – which was established to resolve any differences of view between the two organisations – to meet since July 2009. We recently agreed with PMETB that there is no need for the JIG to meet again.

DH(E) funding

7. The Full Business Case (FBC) for the merger was approved by the DH(E) in October 2009. It includes the provision of £7.1 million of DH(E) funding to achieve co-location by 1 April 2010; integration of PMETB and GMC IS and other infrastructure work over the next two years (2010-2012); and gap funding for a three-year period (2010-2013).

8. We expect to sign a contract shortly with DH(E) setting out the basis on which funds will progressively be paid to the GMC. The contract also protects the GMC in respect of any currently unforeseen liabilities that might subsequently arise by means of an indemnity provision. The Joint Steering Group will continue to meet following the merger in order to monitor spending against the contract, and it will receive periodic reports on progress against planned activity and expenditure. Appropriate budget management arrangements have been put in place to manage and report on the DH(E) funding.

Transfer order

9. The formal transfer of assets and liabilities from PMETB to the GMC will be achieved through a Transfer Order that the Privy Council will be asked to approve on 17 March 2010. We are currently working with colleagues at PMETB and the DH(E) to finalise the contents of the Order and the supporting schedule of assets and liabilities. A draft copy of the Order and supporting schedule will be circulated to Council members for comment before submission to the Privy Council.

Governance: oversight of former PMETB activities

10. Item 5c on the Council agenda sets out the approach we plan to adopt when carrying over the standards, policies and procedures from PMETB to the GMC to support specialty training, including GP training, and provides assurance of progress towards establishing the GMC's governance oversight for former PMETB activities.

11. Council will be invited on 31 March 2010 to agree the necessary changes to the GMC's governance framework and Governance Handbook arising from the merger. These changes will be confined to the minimum necessary to enable appropriate governance oversight of the new functions from 1 April 2010, and in particular, to delegate key responsibility for oversight of specialty including GP training to the Postgraduate Board. The wider GMC governance review in 2010 will provide an opportunity to consider any longer-term governance implications arising from the merger, as an input to the benefits realisation work.

Legislation

12. We continue to work closely with DH(E) officials to ensure that the tight legislative timetable is maintained. Excellent progress has been made since the JCG last reported to Council in December 2009. The Section 60 Order, abolishing PMETB and transferring its statutory functions to the GMC, was approved by the House of Commons on 11 January 2010 and by the House of Lords on 14 January 2010.

13. Once the Section 60 Order is made by the Privy Council on 10 February 2010, the package of subordinate legislation (which has been circulated to Council members prior to approval by the Chair on behalf of Council) will go forward for Privy Council approval and to be laid before Parliament. We anticipate that these processes will be completed by the end of February 2010, enabling all the legislation to come into force as planned on 1 April 2010.

Accommodation

14. We remain on track to co-locate PMETB staff to our London office in March 2010. The fit-out of the second floor of our Euston Road offices commenced on 7 December 2009 and is scheduled for completion by the end of February 2010. Post-merger floor plans have been developed and shared with colleagues at PMETB.

15. The relocation of the Clinical Assessment Centre also remains on schedule. The Centre closed in London at the start of December 2009 and, following a dry-run, will re-open in Manchester on 2 March 2010.

Finance

16. The finance teams from both organisations are working to integrate PMETB systems into the GMC's systems. Co-ordinated and consolidated business and budgetary plans have been developed and will be considered by the Resources Committee before April 2010.

17. As PMETB will cease to exist at the end of March 2010 the Section 60 Order requires Council to approve and publish the Annual Report and Accounts for PMETB for 2009/2010. Both the Resources Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee are considering the steps necessary to ensure that the appropriate assurances are provided by PMETB, its internal auditors and its external auditors which include the NAO. Members of PMETB's Audit Committee will meet members of the GMC's Audit and Risk Committee on 25 February 2010. Following consideration by the Resources Committee in May and the Audit and Risk Committee in June 2010, Council will be asked to approve PMETB's annual report and accounts at its meeting on 13 July 2010.

Information systems

18. We continue to work closely with IS colleagues at PMETB to plan the transition of PMETB staff and systems onto the GMC's core infrastructure. An early priority has been to ensure that there is no loss of continuity in planning the 2010 PMETB trainee and trainer surveys. To mitigate the risks that might otherwise arise, PMETB's surveys team are moving to 350 Euston Road early in February 2010 so that their work can thereafter continue without interruption.

19. Detailed planning for the next phase of IS development will begin shortly and will form part of the post-merger benefit realisation phase (discussed at paragraphs 29-33). During this phase, key aspects of PMETB work, including work undertaken by the Certification, Appeals and Quality teams, will be integrated into the existing GMC Siebel system through the ongoing Strategic Applications Project.

Human resources

20. Significant progress has continued to be made in recent months on all the main human resource aspects of the transfer. We have worked closely with the senior team at PMETB to bring the process forward as far as possible to alleviate any concerns that individual members of staff may have.

21. Individual contract offers were sent to PMETB staff members on 29 January 2010, a month earlier than originally planned.

22. DH(E) have confirmed that transferring PMETB staff can remain on the NHS pension scheme, which will ensure we meet our obligations under the 'fair deal' guidance. We understand that DH(E) will shortly make an Order to this effect in the next two to three weeks .

23. Induction sessions for PMETB staff began on 2 February 2010. A further joint Open Forum, which among other things will be used to bring respective teams together, will take place on 1 March 2010.

Business integration

24. Joint business integration workshops have taken place to determine how PMETB's operational business requirements might best be integrated into the GMC. Our approach at this stage is to achieve a smooth transition using the 'lift and shift' approach (that is, to transfer the functions largely as they are) so far as is practicable.

25. We continue to work through the integration packs that have been prepared for each of the key business areas. These include a summary of the post-merger processes; a gap analysis summarising key changes to documents and systems; and a detailed business integration plan summarising specific actions that are required in order to facilitate and ensure operational readiness at the point of merger.

Communication

26. The PMETB and GMC communications teams are working closely together on the integration of operational activity in preparation for the merger. This activity includes brand transition for PMETB publications; the merger of website content; data migration; and the transfer of PMETB's contact information to the GMC's relationship management system.

27. Regular updates on the merger are circulated monthly to staff across PMETB and the GMC. More detailed information relevant to specific groups of staff is cascaded via PMETB and GMC managers as appropriate.

28. PMETB is continuing its Partners' Programme, for which communications support will be required post merger, including a Partners' Conference which is planned for 24 February 2010 and to which we will contribute.

Post-merger planning

29. Consultation on the draft report of the Education and Training Regulation Policy Review led by Lord Patel commenced on 12 January 2010 and will end on 9 March 2010. The final report will be considered by Council on 31 March 2010.

30. The Postgraduate Board continues to prepare to assume responsibilities from PMETB and has received a number of presentations from senior PMETB staff, including about the Future Doctors work and stakeholder engagement. The Director of Certification, Tara Willmott presented to the Board on the work of her Directorate on 4 February 2010. With the support of PMETB, we have begun to develop closer working relationships with a range of key interests who will be crucial partners following the merger. Among other activities, in January 2010, Graham Smith, Paul Buckley, Neil Roberts and other senior GMC and PMETB staff attended a meeting of the Chief Executives of the medical Royal Colleges to explain how the GMC had approached the integration of PMETB work into the GMC. A similar session took place at the Conference of Postgraduate Deans of the United Kingdom (COPMeD) residential meeting on 4 February 2010.

31. Joint working on equality and diversity activities between PMETB and the GMC is progressing well. A review of the action plans for both organisations' Equality Schemes has been undertaken and a consolidated plan has been drafted highlighting cross-organisational activities.

Benefit realisation planning

32. The post-merger benefit realisation phase of the project will begin immediately after the merger. This will build upon the early plans set out in the FBC and take account of the outcomes of Lord Patel's review.

33. JCG has discussed a paper setting out how benefits-realisation work will be taken forward. A more detailed benefits realisation plan will be considered by JCG meeting in March 2010.

Assurance and risk management

34. We continue to make very good progress against the Phase 2 project plan. On the basis of the progress review, the JCG is able to give assurance that delivery of the objectives of the merger of PMETB with the GMC is on track.

Recommendation: To endorse the assurance provided by the Joint Co-ordination Group that the project to merge PMETB with the GMC is on track.

Next steps

35. The next JCG meeting will take place on 15 March 2010. The final JCG progress report will be provided to Council on 31 March 2010.

Resource implications

36. There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

Equality

37. An Equality Impact Assessment was conducted as part of the process of agreeing the draft Section 60 Order.