
6a-Fitness to Practise: Hearings Management Proposed Consultation-Annex A

Summary of the Work of the Case Management Review Group

1. In July 2008 we established the Case Management Working Group chaired by Eleanor Grey, barrister and member of the Department of Health (England)'s Tackling Concerns Nationally Working Group.
2. The membership of the group also comprised:
 - a. Sir Michael Buckley – GMC Council Member until December 2008.
 - b. Dr Peter Terry – GMC Council Member until December 2008.
 - c. Neil Marshall – Assistant Director Adjudication, Fitness to Practise, General Medical Council.
 - d. Anna Rowland – Assistant Director Policy & Planning, Fitness to Practise General Medical Council.
 - e. Philip Grey – Director of Legal and Fitness to Practise General Optical Council.
 - f. David Henley, General Optical Council.
 - g. Charles Dewhurst – Head of Legal Services at the Medical Defence Union.
 - h. Dr Iain Barclay – Deputy Medical Director Medical Protection Society.
 - i. Gerda Goldinger – Head of Legal Services Association of Optometrists.
3. As one of the purposes of the review was to see how case handling could be improved prior to the transfer of adjudication to Office of the Health Professions Adjudicator (OHPA), we included representatives from the GOC because the adjudication of GOC cases has been identified for transfer to OHPA following the transfer of GMC cases.

4. The terms of reference of the working group were:
 - a. To review the current case management arrangements (the procedures post referral to a fitness to practise panel) that are in place at the GMC/GOC and note common issues of concern.
 - b. To consider improvements to the current process with the aim of achieving mutual benefits to both regulators and registrants' defence organisations.
 - c. To make recommendations to the Department of Health (England) and the future OHPA Management Board on how the process can be improved, including potential changes to current legislation, if necessary, in time for the advent of OHPA in 2011.
5. The review aimed to consider both short and longer term options for enhancing the GOC and GMC case management and hearing arrangements. These would include any changes that could be made immediately by the GMC and making recommendations to the Department of Health and the future OHPA Management Board on any potential changes to the current framework relevant to OHPA.
6. The review took the form of a series of five meetings of the Working Group between July and October 2008. In addition, much of the work of the Working Group was taken forward by way of electronic communication.
7. Central to the review was a consultation of relevant key interest groups including panellists, legal assessors, GMC and GOC panel secretaries, and the medical defence organisations and their legal advisers. As part of this exercise, the GMC sought to learn from the experiences of other jurisdictions both in the UK and overseas.