



AURE

Alliance of UK Health Regulators on Europe

Press release

For immediate release

23 January 2007

UK healthcare regulators call on European Commission to propose new duty of disclosure between regulators in Europe to ensure patient safety

UK healthcare professional regulators are today calling for the European Commission to propose a new legal duty on bodies with similar roles across Europe to exchange disciplinary and registration information about healthcare professionals and to act on it.

This call has been made in a joint response, submitted today, to the European Commission's consultation regarding *Community Action on Health Services* by the Alliance of UK Health Regulators on Europe (AURE), a coalition of all ten UK health and social care professional regulators. Speaking in Brussels later today, Professor Sir Graeme Catto, President of the General Medical Council, one of AURE's coalition members will say:

"Whilst the UK undoubtedly benefits from this high level of mobility, registering many dedicated professionals who contribute positively to healthcare in this country, there may be a minority who exploit free-movement rights and put patients at risk.

Placing a new legal duty on regulators across the EU to exchange registration and disciplinary information, and to act on it, would provide the tools to enable free-movement whilst at the same time ensuring the safety of patients and the public."

Media attention around healthcare in Europe has largely, to date, focused on the potential for increased numbers of patient 'tourists'. However, there is already a significant level of mobility of healthcare professionals across European borders. In 2005, over 7000 practitioners from the EEA came to the UK to register with AURE's members and find work.

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Hew Mathewson, President of the UK's General Dental Council, also a member of AURE commented:

“With this scale of mobility of dentists, nurses, doctors and other healthcare professionals across European borders, much greater information needs to be made available to patients, the public and health professionals alike.

“National regulators must be enabled to facilitate this free moment, but also to ensure the safety of patients and the public. “

Ends

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Notes to editors:

1. AURE is a network of the 10 UK health and social care regulators and exists to respond to European Union developments relevant to health and social care regulation and patient and public safety in the UK. Member organisations are: the General Medical Council, General Dental Council, Nursing and Midwifery Council, General Osteopathic Council, General Social Care Council, General Chiropractic Council, Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland, Health Professions Council, General Optical Council.
2. AURE exists to respond to European Union developments that have an impact on health and social care regulation and patient and public safety in the UK. We do not represent the professional interests of health and social care professionals.
3. On 26th September 2006 the European Commission launched an open consultation on Health Services. The deadline for responses is 31st January 2007.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/1267&format=HTML&agued=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

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4. The following table gives figures for the number of EEA health professionals (excluding UK) with UK health regulators from 2003-06:

Competent Authority	2003	2004	2005	2006
General Medical Council	1770	2419	2340	3076
Nursing and Midwifery Council	1030	1193	1753	N/A
Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain	441	271	432	N/A
General Chiropractic Council	N/A	N/A	1	2
General Dental Council	268	661	1,136	838
Health Professions Council	1200	1548	1800	1164
General Optical Council	12	17	11	27