

Agenda item:	17
Report title:	Annual research report 2016
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Action:	To note

Executive summary

This paper presents the annual research report for 2016. This provides a brief overview of the research programme managed by the GMC's research function during 2016 highlighting selected key findings, impacts and ongoing work.

A comprehensive list of all projects managed by the research function during 2016 is at Annex A.

Recommendation

The Board is invited to note the 2016 research report.

Annual research report 2016

- 1 The research programme provides those developing and deciding upon the GMC’s policies with robust, timely and useful evidence and insight by:
 - improving our understanding of the risks and issues that we are responsible for – their nature, causes and potential solutions;
 - providing evidence and insight regarding changes in our environment;
 - identifying what is regarded as good practice and what has been assessed to be effective in our sector, or in other relevant sectors that can inform our work;
 - evaluating our current activities;
 - exploring our key stakeholders’ views – eg their understanding and assessment of our activities, or their views on changes we are considering.

- 2 The research programme is developed through the business planning cycle. Potential research needs are initially clarified by the research manager through discussion with the relevant policy lead. Some proposals originate with the Intelligence Unit. Following discussions, and verification of support at least at Assistant Director level, a draft programme is developed and presented to the Research Policy Forum. At each stage projects are refined and some are eliminated, for instance when research is identified as not being an effective solution to the particular issue in question. A draft programme is then presented to directors for decision.

- 3 The 2016 research budget was set at £650,000. Only 80% of this was spent, primarily due to no viable bids being received for a large project on cosmetic surgery guidance tendered for in Q4. Selected key findings, impacts and ongoing work from the 2016 programme are now highlighted in relation to the themes identified above.

Understanding risks

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5 The fair training pathways research provided important insights into trainee and trainer views on the factors that result in differential outcomes for BME and non-UK qualified doctors in postgraduate medical training. Findings are being used to engage education and training stakeholders regarding these issues and encouraging them to work with us to consider what actions could be taken to address any barriers. A second stage of this research, focused on providing royal colleges’ perspectives on the findings from the first stage and their views on possible ways to respond to these, is due to deliver in Q1 2017.

Maintaining relevance

- 6 An innovative commission for professional regulation enhanced our understanding of the medium and long term trends in our 'operational environment'. This research – comprising desk based analysis of quantitative trends, a literature review, interviews with experts and a workshop with key stakeholders - identified key drivers of change as well as providing four evidence based scenarios modelling how the GMC's environment may change in the medium to long-term. The scenarios and key drivers constitute an important resource for interrogating our strategic thinking (eg developing our corporate strategy) and for focusing our horizon scanning work.

Identifying good practice

- 7 [Redacted]

Evaluating our impact

- 8 The revalidation evaluation, concluding late in 2017, had its interim report published in the spring and provided important data and insight to inform the Pearson review. An evaluation of the Regional Liaison Service's 'Duties of a Doctor' programme was commissioned in Q4 2016. This evaluation will help to establish the efficacy, and ways to improve, of one of our key 'upstream' interventions.

Understanding stakeholders' perspectives

- 9 [Redacted] Qualitative research commissioned in Q4 2016 is exploring doctors' awareness and understanding of the principles of consent and shared decision-making, as well as the challenges they face when implementing these in their daily practice environments. The findings will inform the updating of our consent guidance.


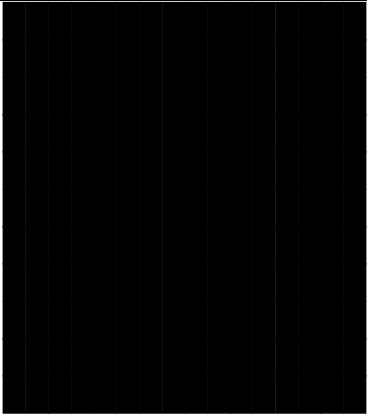

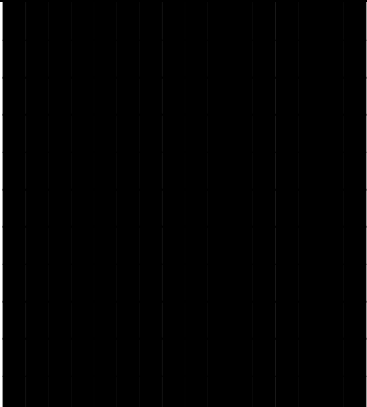
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All 2016 Research projects

Research projects delivered in 2016 but commissioned or begun earlier, alphabetically by title

Title	Purpose	Contractor	Total project cost	Key finding(s)
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
<i>Exploring patient and public attitudes towards medical confidentiality</i>	To support a review of our explanatory guidance to doctors, <i>Confidentiality</i> (2009) to understand if patients and the general public agree or disagree with the underlying principles in the draft revised guidance. The research focused specifically on a number of groups who may be less likely to engage in the wider	Ipsos Mori	[REDACTED]	In broad terms, there were strong levels of agreement throughout the research with the principles outlined in the draft guidance thus providing assurance that the principles in our confidentiality guidance are widely accepted.

	consultation and/or may have specific issues around patient confidentiality and the sharing of information.			The research also demonstrates our inclusive and open approach to public consultation, encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.
<i>GMC Tracking Survey 2016</i>	Following our 2014 survey, this survey will help us measure and track our performance over time against the strategic priorities in our current corporate strategy and help to inform the development of our next strategy. Further, it will help us to understand key stakeholders' perceptions of us, and their knowledge about our role, so we know how effective our communication strategy is and where we need to focus our efforts.	ComRes		
<i>Understanding Employers' Referrals of Doctors</i>	We want to better understand good practice in local complaints processes, escalation criteria and concern-raising cultures to ensure the 'right' concerns are escalated to us.	Community Research		

Research projects commissioned or begun in 2016 and delivered in 2016, alphabetically by title

Title	Purpose	Contractor	Total project cost	Key finding(s)
<i>Chief Executive Steering Group Survey 2016</i>	A survey of key comparable statistics from UK health professional regulators.	In-house	████████	The report includes comparable statistics from the UK health regulators on the number of registrants, enquiries, complaints, investigated complaints and serious outcomes.
<i>List of Registered Medical Practitioners (LRMP) consultation omnibus</i>	To provide a snapshot of public attitudes to complement the LRMP consultation	POPULUS	████████	A majority of respondents would find it helpful for doctors to provide additional information for the GMC register on the type of work they usually conduct (86%) and whether they have any specialist qualifications or professional interests (85%). Respondents aged 65+ are among those most likely to find these types of additional information to be helpful. Having a photograph of a doctor was considered the least helpful of all the types of information tested (49%).
<i>Medical Licensing Assessment (MLA) public omnibus</i>	To test our hypothesis that the public would be in favour of the new approach (MLA) as compared to the current situation	POPULUS	████████	Seven in ten (69%) are confident that the current arrangements ensure appropriate checks are made before doctors are able to work in the UK. However, around three in ten (31%) are not and older respondents are less

				likely to be confident. Two thirds of respondents (66%) said that a single assessment taken by all doctors regardless of what country they qualified in would increase their confidence that appropriate checks had been made before allowing them to work in the UK. Only around one in twenty (6%) said that a single assessment would reduce their confidence that appropriate checks had been made.
<i>Understanding the future operating environment for professional regulation</i>	To inform the GMC's long-term strategic planning by modelling plausible trends and developments in our operating environment over the next 10 to 15 years. This is with the purpose of helping us to consider how we may need to respond to, or act to take account of, such developments, to remain relevant and effective.	SAMI consulting	██████████	The research was a type of scenario planning and a key output of the research is four scenarios which model how the GMC's operating environment may look if certain plausible trends were to continue over the next 10-15 years. The scenarios are not attempts to predict the future – they are, rather, developed as an aide to strategic thinking.

Research projects commissioned in 2016 (or earlier) but not due for delivery until after the end of 2016, by projected completion date

Title	Purpose	Contractor	Total project cost	Projected completion
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				date
<i>Understanding how organisations ensure that their decision-making is fair</i>	To understand how other organisations ensure their decision making is fair, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what decision making tools, techniques, processes, training, guidance and other approaches are used • how they ensure quality and consistency in decision making • what good practice principles help to ensure fair decision making • any barriers or challenges to fair decision making and how these can be overcome 	RAND	████████	February 2017
<i>E&D in regulatory activities</i>	To determine how we might measure our progress and/or performance on equality and diversity (E&D) in regulatory activities, and the impact of our investment in activities related to this agenda. In order to do this we will take a recently developed working model of how E&D performance could be measured and discuss this with key stakeholder groups.	Mott MacDonald	████████	March 2017
<i>Big data</i>	The overall aims of the study are to: (i) establish how a range of organisations who undertake public functions make	Firetail	████████	March 2017

	use of very large multifaceted datasets, particularly for risk analysis and influencing activities, (ii) if and how organisations use their generated data for cost-recovery and revenue generation, (iii) understand any governance implications, and how they have applied best practice to ensuring stakeholder confidence (iv) identify barriers and challenges they have faced and how these have been addressed.			
<i>Fair training pathways for all: understanding experiences of progression</i>	Through exploring the views of those who are currently, or were recently, involved in postgraduate medical education speciality training, this research is designed to help us identify facilitators of, and barriers to, progression that differentially impact on doctors depending on where a trainee obtained their Primary Medical Qualification (PMQ) and/or their ethnicity.	University College London	██████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████	March 2017
<i>Fairness of decisions to refer doctors to The Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service Interim Orders Panels (IOP)</i>	As part of a wider investigation into the fairness of the GMC's decision making independent research will determine whether a decision to refer a case to the IOP itself is fair, specifically in terms of ethnicity and place of Primary Medical	University College London	██████████ ██████████	Early Q2 2017 for phase 1; Q3 for (optional) phase 2

	Qualification.			
<i>Doctors' attitudes to consent and shared decision making</i>	Exploring doctors' awareness and understanding of the principles of consent and shared decision-making and the challenges they face when implementing these in their daily practice environments.	Community research	██████████	April 2017
<i>Understanding harmful care</i>	The research will attempt to establish a taxonomy, and quantification, of the most common types of preventable harm that occur within a medical setting when a medical practitioner is involved in healthcare.	University of Manchester	██████████	April 2017
<i>Revalidation Evaluation</i>	To evaluate the impact of medical revalidation using the evaluation framework developed by Plymouth University.	UMbRELLA (name for collaboration of researchers)	████████████████████ ████████████████████ ████████████████████ ████████████████████	October 2017
<i>Duties of a doctor research evaluation</i>	This research aims to evaluate the impact of the duties of a doctor programme - a professional support programme developed and run by the regional liaison service. The programme aims to promote professional development by enhancing doctors' confidence and capabilities in dealing with common professional dilemmas and increasing doctors' awareness of GMC guidance through face-to-face	UCL	██████████	May 2018

	sessions with a regional liaison advisor.			
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