

Agenda item:	3
Report title:	Risk arising from changes to Health Education England and NHS Improvement
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Action:	To consider

Executive summary

The recently announced new working arrangements for Health Education England (HEE) and NHS Improvement (NHSI) are likely to have significant implications for the GMC. This could present opportunities for us, but also represents a risk across the business. Given the cross-cutting nature of the risk, and its relative significance, we believe that the Executive Board should include it on the risk register.

Recommendation

The Executive Board is asked to consider the implications of the new working arrangements for HEE and NHSI and agree that a new risk should be added to the corporate risk register. The proposed risk is attached in the annex.

Background

- 1** Last year's draft workforce strategy indicated that the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) were reviewing national organisational roles and responsibilities to ensure the workforce responsibilities were well aligned. Following this, DHSC recently announced that:
 - a** HEE will work jointly with NHS Improvement to develop its mandate for 2019/20 onwards.
 - b** HEE's board will continue to sign-off the draft mandate, but as a new step the mandate will then need to be approved by the NHS Improvement Board to ensure it meets service requirements, before approval by the Secretary of State.
 - c** The NHS Leadership Academy is planned to transfer from HEE to the new NHS Improvement and NHS England People function from 1 April 2019.
 - d** The new organisation will look for opportunities for HEE's regional teams to align with NHS Improvement/ NHS England's integrated regional teams.

- 2** In effect, this appears to be a merger of the two organisations, with HEE appearing to report to NHSI, which is itself being merged with NHS England. In principle this could be beneficial to the GMC, if it enables longer term planning and the importance of training to be more central to workforce planning. Indeed, we may wish to consider whether this merger could be beneficial in introducing more workforce planning intelligence into the Curriculum Oversight Group. However, there are countervailing risks which we believe need to be taken into account:
 - a** That the priorities of maintaining a service under pressure, which are crucial to NHS England, will overwhelm the requirement to protect training – whereas in the past, HEE has been a separate entity pushing the importance of education, this voice may not be heard as much (already we understand that HEE have supported temporarily taking trainees off programmes to help deal with winter pressures). In particular, NHSI have suggested that removing trainees should be a 'last resort', which suggests their board may take a more sceptical line on our approaches than HEE have in the past. We may, therefore, be less supported when we wish to encourage action.
 - b** HEE currently manage a budget of more than £5bn, including trainee salaries and study leave – the merger may precipitate this budget being 'shared' with other priorities, potentially reducing the training opportunities.
 - c** Politically, there is a risk that the Secretary of State in England, in looking to a single organisation to advise, does not receive the same level of advice on training priorities as those on workforce;

- d** If there is a move away from concentrating on medical education within the new body, we may be under more pressure to use our powers (in particular on removing trainees) but more exposed if we do so.
- 3** None of this is a foregone conclusion; however, clearly the GMC will want to work to minimise the risks that are presented from the merger. If Executive Board is content, we will add the risk attached as an annex to the risk log.

3 – Proposed Operational Risks for the Corporate Opportunities and Risk Register

3 – Annex A

Risk arising from changes to Health Education England and NHS Improvement

Operational Risk (Threat)

Following the announcement that HEE will work jointly with NHSI, there is a risk that the change in Leadership and the reporting structure, could result in the education agenda not being pushed and potentially training opportunities reduced as a result of shared budgets.

Mitigating Actions

1. Engage with HEE & NHSI through various forums to promote the training and education agenda and influence at an early stage;
2. Be proactive in developing and sharing actions.

Operational Risk (Opportunity)

Following the announcement that HEE will work jointly with NHSI, there could be an opportunity to develop longer term planning and promote training to be more central to workforce planning

Mitigating Actions

1. Engage with HEE & NHSI through various forums to promote the training and education agenda;
2. Partner with external stakeholders to develop shared agenda to influence HEE & NHSI medium-long term planning.