GMC publishes update on tackling inequality

The General Medical Council (GMC) has today (Thursday 10 March) published its first update on progress towards the equality, diversity and inclusion targets it set last year.

The regulator set targets to eliminate disproportionate complaints from employers about ethnic minority doctors, by 2026, and to eradicate disadvantage and discrimination in medical education and training by 2031.

It also pledged to increase its own diversity, and progression for its ethnic minority staff, across all levels including leadership roles.

The GMC committed to publishing details of progress against the targets annually, and today’s publication of Equality, diversity and inclusion: targets, progress and priorities for 2022 is the first update.

The report shows:

- The gap between employer referral rates for ethnic minority doctors and international medical graduates, compared to white doctors, has reduced slightly.*

- Fairness measures for medical education and training remain at similar levels.

- As an employer, the GMC has improved ethnic minority workforce representation at all levels and progression rates for ethnic minority staff.

GMC Chief Executive Charlie Massey said:

‘This update sets out the actions taken by us, and by others, to drive change. The early indications are good, but we are not complacent. Much more needs to be done. The issues are longstanding, and the incremental changes that are being made may take time to work through to the data.

‘We will continue our sustained focus, and we are calling on other organisations to do the same. These annual updates, of which this is the first, will continue to shine a light on the extent to which the necessary changes are happening.’

The GMC’s Equality, diversity and inclusion: targets, progress and priorities for 2022 is available online.
Notes to editors

* The proportion of designated bodies with fitness to practise referrals that were disproportionate in terms of ethnicity or UK/international qualification has dropped about 5%, from 5.6%, in the five-year period to 2020, to 5.3% in the five years to 2021.

The gap in employer fitness to practise referral rates between ethnic minority licenced doctors and white doctors has fallen by from 0.28% (0.30% white, 0.58% ethnic minority), during 2016-2020, to 0.24% (0.26% white, 0.50% ethnic minority) during 2017-2021.

The GMC Press Office can be contacted on 020 7189 5454, or email press@gmc-uk.org

The General Medical Council (GMC) works to protect the public by setting, upholding and raising the standards of medical education and practice across the UK. It does this by:

- Setting the standards doctors must follow, making sure they continue to meet these standards throughout their careers.
- Deciding which doctors are qualified to work here, and overseeing UK medical education and training.
- Taking action if a doctor is putting the safety of patients, or the public’s confidence in doctors, at risk.

It is in the public interest to have healthcare systems in the UK, both public and private, where doctors practise to the highest ethical and professional standards to provide the best possible, safe medical care.

The GMC is independent of government and the medical profession, and accountable to the UK Parliament.

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