

Consultation on an amendment to the Health Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules Order of Council 2003

Introduction

We are consulting on a proposed amendment to the Health Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules Order of Council 2003 in order to set the registration cycle for hearing aid audiologists / dispensers.¹

About us

We are the Health Professions Council (HPC). We are a regulator of health professionals and our job is to protect the health and wellbeing of people who use the services of the health professionals registered with us.

To protect the public, we set standards that health professionals must meet. Our standards cover health professionals' education and training, behaviour, professional skills, and their health. We publish a register of health professionals who meet our standards.

Health professionals on our register are called 'registrants'. If registrants do not meet our standards, we can take action against them which may include removing them from the Register so that they can no longer practise.

Hearing aid audiologists / dispensers

The Hearing Aid Council (HAC) is the statutory body that is responsible for setting standards of professional training, performance and conduct for individuals and companies involved in the assessment of hearing loss and subsequent sale of hearing aids. The Hearing Aid Council holds a register of hearing aid audiologists / dispensers.

Amendments have recently been made to the Health and Social Care Bill which is currently before the UK Parliament. If that legislation is enacted then, subject to the making and approval of an Order under section 60 of the Health Act 1999, the Hearing Aid Council will be abolished and responsibility for the registration of hearing aid audiologists will be transferred to the Health Professions Council. We currently anticipate that a new part of the Register for hearing aid audiologists / dispensers will open in April 2009.

It should be noted that although the legislative process to transfer the regulation of hearing aid audiologists / dispensers has begun, the necessary legislation has yet to be passed. However, we believe that it is important we consult on the proposed amendment to our rules at an early stage, to allow enough time to benefit from the input of stakeholders. In particular, this allows time for a full three month public consultation period.

¹ This document uses the term 'hearing aid audiologists / dispensers'. It is anticipated that the titles 'Hearing Aid Dispenser' and 'Hearing Aid Audiologist' will both be protected titles.

About registration cycles

Each profession registered with us renews its registration in two yearly cycles.

When a profession is due to renew its registration, we send each registrant a renewal form and ask that they sign the form and return it to us with payment of the registration fee or a Direct Debit authorisation, by the profession's registration end date. If we fail to receive a completed form and payment by the registration end date, the registrant's registration will lapse.

Schedule five of the Health Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules Order of Council 2003 outlines the registration end dates for each of the parts of the HPC Register. For example, the registration end date for operating department practitioners is 30 November in even numbered years.

Proposed amendment

We are proposing to amend schedule five of the Health Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules Order of Council 2003 in order to set the registration cycle for hearing aid audiologists / dispensers.

We are seeking the views of stakeholders on setting the registration cycle for hearing aid audiologists / dispensers.

We are suggesting that, dependent upon the passage and timing of the necessary legislation, the end date of the renewal cycle for hearing aid audiologists / dispensers might be 30 June in odd numbered years and we would particularly welcome your views on this suggestion.

Your comments

We would welcome your response to this consultation.

This consultation will put our proposals before a range of stakeholders with an interest in the regulation of hearing aid audiologists.

The consultation will run until **10 November 2008**.

This document is available to download from our website and available in hard copy on request.

If you would like to respond to this consultation, please send this response to:

Amendment to Registration and Fees Rules consultation
Policy and Standards Department
Health Professions Council
Park House
184 Kennington Park Road
London
SE11 4BU

Email: consultation@hpc-uk.org
Website: www.hpc-uk.org/aboutus/consultations

We will publish on our website a summary of the responses we receive and the decisions we have taken as a result.

If you would prefer your response not be made public, please indicate this when you respond.

We look forward to receiving your comments.

Yours faithfully

Anna van der Gaag
President