

# HAC Newsletter, February 2010.

## **HAC and HPC working with Citizen's Advice Bureau, Trading Standards, Consumer Direct, Age UK and RNID**

We have met with Citizen's Advice Bureau, Trading Standards and Consumer Direct to make sure all our organisations understand the impact of the transfer. In addition we are making sure that all advice given to consumers is accurate. The HPC have a working relationship with those organisations already and will seek to build on this in the months ahead.

## **HAC and HPC begin joint communications strategy**

To raise awareness of the transfer among consumers, the HAC and HPC have agreed a joint communications strategy that will climax on 1 April 2010. The main message is to help people thinking of buying a hearing aid to understand why they should ensure their dispenser is registered with the HPC. We will target national and local print and broadcast media. In addition, the HPC will contact NHS GPs and patient liaison services across the UK. **Dispensers can apply to the HPC for free public information materials to distribute to consumers explaining the HPC's role and the benefits of using a registered professional.**

## **New aptitude test held**

The HAC has approved a new aptitude test to allow people with experience of dispensing (usually from the NHS) but who do not hold an HAC approved qualification to join the HAC register. The test is administered and run entirely by two universities: Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge and De Montfort University in Leicester. The first test was held on 10 February. The test will also be approved by the HPC from 1 April 2010 so those who successfully complete it will be eligible to join the HPC register as hearing aid dispensers. It will be illegal to use the title 'hearing aid dispenser', assess or test someone's hearing or prescribe an aid for sale or hire unless registered as hearing aid dispenser with the HPC from 1 April 2010. The new aptitude test is an easier way for those who wish to begin dispensing hearing aids in the private sector to join the HPC register.

## **HPC appoints dispenser partners**

Following an open recruitment process the HPC has now appointed a number of hearing aid dispensers as partners. Partners provide the expertise the HPC needs for its decision making, and ensure that we have good professional, and lay (public) input into what they do. The partners will fill a number of roles, such as sitting on disciplinary and registration panels, assessing CPD returns and visiting approved education programmes. Some HAC Council members have been successfully appointed HPC panel members.

## **Registering with the HAC before the transfer**

It is possible to register with the HAC before the transfer. However to ensure your application is processed in time we would ask that you send in your registration form and payment as soon as possible. We have written to all those registrants who have voluntarily removed themselves in recent years setting out how they can join the HAC or HPC register.

## **Communication from HPC**

The HAC and HPC will write jointly to all registrants in the first week of March. This letter will also set out when dispensers should expect to pay their retention fees to the HPC. The fee is currently £152 for 2 years.

**Further information:** If you would like any further information then follow this link:

[\(http://thehearingaidcouncil.org.uk/transfer-closure-of-hac-page/\)](http://thehearingaidcouncil.org.uk/transfer-closure-of-hac-page/)