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## Chair's Report – September 2023

### **1. Purpose of Report**

To flag developments at HCPC from the Chair's perspective and to update on activities of note.

### **2. HCPC People**

Chief Executive Bernie O'Reilly started his tenure at the beginning of July. He has undertaken his responsibilities with energy, thoughtfulness and an open mind. The senior team and he have already had a development day together. I was especially pleased to know that Bernie is having numerous meetings with staff throughout the organisation and that he intends to meet every new appointee. The first three months' objectives I agreed with him have been achieved in two. We meet weekly and are in touch regularly, as needs be. Offering support to Bernie as he gets to know the sector and HCPC, as well as to the Executive leadership, continues to be an important part of my routine.

July Council was followed by our annual All Employee Day. It was the best one I have attended so far, with great talks, and plenty of informal opportunities to catch up. The rooms reverberated with conversation all day long and almost everyone seemed to have a memorable and worthwhile time. I certainly did and was delighted to have several Council colleagues either presenting or participating. Both our Council Apprentices – Damien Baker and Oli Davies – gave superb presentations that really resonated with attendees.

### **3. PSA Standards**

As Council knows, HCPC has met 16 of the 18 Professional Standards Authority Standards of Good Regulation, regaining two fitness to practise (FTP) standards and one standard linked to registration. Though we pause a moment to reflect the road travelled, retaining these standards and regaining the final two needs our continued relentless focus.

### **4. Stakeholders**

I have attended a range of meetings to introduce our CEO to key stakeholders. In addition, I have had programmed catch ups with other regulator's Chairs, with system regulators such as the CQC and with politicians and civil servants. The (slow) pace of regulatory reform is a recurring theme. Others are timeliness in Fitness to Practise cases and the changeable nature of the national political landscapes.

Together with senior Executive colleagues, I joined a quarterly conference of Allied Health leaders in Wales. Interim Executive Director Laura Coffey led the

presentation and we then responded to a range of questions. The team has been asked to join these meetings on a regular basis.

The new Chair & CEO Office is working well, with special thanks to Business Manager Zoë Allan.

## **5. Proposed fee increase for registrants**

Council is aware that, after discussions with DHSC and the Scottish Government, a fee rise of £18.24 is expected to come into effect in November 2023, following parliamentary approval processes in Westminster and Scotland. In future, we plan to have annual, incremental rises which, till regulatory reform comes through, will necessitate both a consultation and parliamentary processes.

## **6. External engagements**

In July I spoke at the Care and Occupational Therapy Show 2023 (in Exeter). I had the opportunity to meet registrants informally and to get a feel for their preoccupations. As a result of one such meeting, we have a registrant speaker for one of our workshops later in the year.

I was privileged to join family, friends and colleagues of the late Dame Clare Marx, for a celebration of her life. Dame Clare was the GMC Chair preceding Dame Carrie MacEwan. It was a poignant and wonderful evening, earlier in September.

## **7. Council reviews**

Annual reviews with Council Members have been completed. They provide us with rare moments of pause, reflection and a good deal of positivity. I am delighted to confirm that following due process culminating in approval from the Privy Council, David Stirling and Dr. Katie Thirlaway have been reappointed as Council Members for a two-year term. I am also pleased that independent member of the Education and Training Committee, Penny Joyce, has agreed to extend her term to the end of 2024.

Professor Steven Vaughn started a sabbatical from UCL in September. I would like to thank him for exempting HCPC from it!

## **8. Workshops**

Thanks to Council Members who contributed to two excellent workshops in the period – on Partners and on English Language requirements pertaining to our Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics.