

Council

Meeting Date	04 December 2025
Title	Chief Executive's report on organisational performance December 2025
Author(s)	Bernie O'Reilly, Chief Executive
Executive Summary This report provides my assessment on the HCPC's organisational performance and highlights key developments and pieces of work since Council last met in October.	
Appendices A –Chief Executive's meetings in the reporting period	
Action required	The Council is asked to review the information provided and seek clarification on any areas.
Previous consideration	This is a standing item, considered at each Council meeting.
Next steps	At Council's next meeting in February 2026, my report will provide a detailed update of our performance against our key performance indicators, a review of delivery against our 2025-26 corporate plan and an overview of our strategic risks.
Financial and resource implications	None as a result of this paper.
Associated strategic priority/priorities	This report is relevant to all strategic priorities.
Associated strategic risk(s)	This report is relevant to all strategic risks.

Risk appetite	Not applicable.
Communication and engagement	Included within this paper.
Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) impact and Welsh language standards	EDI objectives and Welsh language standards are discussed as part of this paper.
Other impact assessments	Not applicable
Reason for consideration in the private session of the meeting (if applicable)	Not applicable

Chief Executive's Performance Report – December 2025

1.Introduction

This report provides my assessment on the HCPC's organisational performance and highlights key developments since Council last met in October 2025.

At Council's next meeting in February 2026, my report will provide a detailed update of our performance against our key performance indicators, a review of delivery against our [2025-26 corporate plan](#) and an overview of our strategic risks.

All staff development day

In November, we held our All-Staff Development Day, which saw colleagues from across the organisation join with registrants and Council Members as part of our continuing professional development. We expect our registrants to maintain their own Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as part of our standards; and it is important we also invest time to improve our knowledge and skills. The day had record numbers of attendees and colleagues showed great enthusiasm and engagement in all the development sessions. The development sessions were designed to build the understanding of all the ways the HCPC seeks to protect the public, hear directly from registrants about the challenges they are facing and consider what practical things we can do to support wider changes happening in the sector. The agenda included inputs on behavioural change, applying our standards to real life scenarios and the current impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on registered professions. We were also able to hear directly from registrant paramedics and get hands on with equipment from various professions.

There was also a more interactive theme for the whole day, and colleagues got the opportunity to work with others from different departments to create practical proposals that can support our work in the future. These proposals will be read and considered by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to see what can be built on for corporate work planning. The feedback from the day has been positive with the average rating for the day being 4.15 on a scale of 1(not very enjoyable) to 5 (very enjoyable). I am grateful for all the hard work that went into putting the day together, for all of those, particularly registrants, who were able to contribute to our learning and development and to colleagues across the organisation for making it such a positive and enlightening day.

Corporate planning

Work has continued developing budget, workforce and investment plans for 2026/27 and financial projections for the medium term. This work is closely aligned with the work to develop our new corporate strategy which is on Council's agenda today. The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) will review a first cut of the budget and investment plans in December, before review by the People and Resources Committee (PRC), the Remuneration Committee (Remcom) and then Council in the new year.

Stakeholder engagement

Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)

On 29 October 2025, the Chair and I met with the Minister of State, Karin Smyth to discuss the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) report on the performance of the HCPC in 2025 and the regulation of hospital managers.

On timeliness, I explained factors involved including complexity of investigations, subject matter expert evidence across 15 professions, areas beyond our control such as third-party investigations (Police, Coronial, Health and Safety Executive) and most importantly the existing legislation that is thirty years out of date. I also explained in the last quarter we have seen a 2% increase in registrants yet a 28% increase in referrals with no trends by profession, employer, type of referral or geography. This is consistent across the sector. I mentioned new processes recently introduced including frontloading and the use of AI in redaction.

We also discussed the regulation of NHS managers announced on 21st July 2025 and the fact that our approach had been approved by Council. The Minister and DHSC officials explained they had planned funding for this work in 2027 but would consider in the meantime what if any funding may be available for 2026/27 for any preparatory work. They also explained the legislation for NHS managers would be combined with our regulatory reform legislation for efficiency including resource, finance and importantly parliamentary time.

We emphasised we would not be using any of our existing registrants' fees to fund the regulation of NHS managers which they understood and accepted. Since this meeting, we have emphasised to DHSC officials that not starting the work until 2027 puts at risk the timeline as set out in the [Government's consultation response document](#). We have continued engagement with DHSC colleagues and will update Council further should there be any more developments.

HCPC Parliamentary event

On 5 November 2025 together with the rest of the executive team, the Chair and Council member Catharine Seddon, attended the Houses of Parliament for a [HCPC drop-in event](#). The event was hosted by Sonia Kumar MP, who is a HCPC registrant (physiotherapist), and was an opportunity for MPs, peers and officials to come and speak to us about our work, the work of our registrants, the need for regulatory reform, and to discuss options for the future regulation of hospital managers.

We were pleased to have been joined by a range of Parliamentarians during the event, including the Shadow Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Stuart Andrew MP), the Liberal Democrat spokesperson for Primary Care and Cancer (Helen Maguire MP) and several representatives of the Health and Social Care Select Committee. We were also fortunate to have been joined by the Minister for Health from the Northern Ireland Assembly (Mike Nesbitt MLA) who was also in Westminster for the day.

It was a successful event that raised the profile of the HCPC with Parliamentarians and further underlined both the work done by the organisation in recent years, and the next steps we hope to take to build on what has been achieved.

We will continue to engage with Parliamentarians as we seek to fulfil our role in protecting the public and building confidence in the professions we regulate.

Four nations

I met with the Chief Allied Health Professions Officer for England, Suzanne Rastrick, on 13 November to discuss and seek input and thoughts on our corporate strategy work and the future regulation of NHS managers. On 19 November 2025, I met with the Chief Allied Health Professions Officer for Northern Ireland, Michelle Tennyson with a similar meeting agenda.

Unions

We met with Unison colleagues on 17 November 2025, agenda items included HCPC's work around sexual safety for Paramedics as well as HCPC's corporate strategy development.

Regular engagement and the Mann Rapid Review

On 19 November 2025, I met with the Chief Executive of the GMC, Charlie Massey and amongst other things, discussed the Mann Rapid Review into tackling antisemitism and other forms of racism in the NHS and healthcare professional regulatory system.

I have been invited to an interview with Lord Mann as part of his review in December 2025. The aim of this review is to examine how the regulatory system for healthcare professionals, from employment through to national oversight and professional regulatory bodies, supports recognition and reporting of antisemitism and other forms of racism, and tackles it at every stage.

They are seeking to understand current and planned work by the UK health regulators that will help to ensure that perpetrators of antisemitism and other forms of racism are held to account with effective action taken to tackle their behaviour. This is with the aim of ensuring that patients and staff are safe from racism within the health and care system.

We have also received a letter from DHSC as part of Lord Mann's review asking a number of questions including;

1. What plans do you have in place to bolster efforts to ensure registrants who are perpetrators of antisemitism and racism are held to account for their actions and effective interventions are put in place to address their behaviour?
2. How could your regulatory code of conduct. Standards be strengthened to clarify expectations around antisemitism and racism?
3. What are the blockers, challenges and risks that might be preventing your organisation from taking forward further action, including legislation?

We will respond by Monday 8th December 2025.

My full meeting list is provided at appendix A.

Data Insight

The latest Fitness to Practice (FtP) equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) supplementary report (which will be published in due course) contains updated and expanded analyses of FTP data by various characteristics. Gareth Davies, Head of Insight and Analytics will present a summary of key findings to Council as part of today's meeting.

Two further products are in the final stages of development and will be added to HCPC's [data hub](#) in early 2026. **The learner progression to registration analysis** will be refreshed in the new year to allow for at least one year's follow up for all new graduated from HCPC approved education programmes and will be published shortly thereafter. **An AI enabled analysis of CPD submissions** will be ready for launch to coincide with CPD week in March 2026. We will keep Council updated on these pieces of work.

2. Regulatory Performance

Below I highlight some of the key points about the performance of our core regulatory functions of education and registration; and a separate fitness to practise report will be discussed as part of Council's agenda today.

Education

Team performance against service levels and KPIs

The team have concluded assessments for programmes starting in January 2026. Our data and quality assurance work (as reported to the Education and Training Committee (ETC)) shows that the quality of our decision making has been consistently high but the complexity of our work is increasing. This is due to a broader range of evidence being collated by the team, out of us forming strong relationships with sector stakeholders, and developments and challenges within the education sector needing further reviews against our standards. We provide a detailed report on performance at each meeting of the Education and Training Committee (ETC). We have recently seen a reduction in the number of assessments that are outside of our service levels, as the team concluded overdue assessments from the 2024-25 academic year.

We have planned our performance review monitoring programme of work for the 2025-26 academic year. 31 education providers will be reviewed, to ensure continued alignment with our regulatory standards. A key focus for these reviews is ensuring education provider deliver our revised standards of proficiency and standards of conduct, performance and ethics. We have agreed deadlines with education providers for their submissions, which will help education providers and the Education team to plan their work for the year ahead. First submissions will be received in December 2025.

Responding to the NHS 10 Year Plan for England

We are engaging with the education sector on the delivery of the 10 Year Health Plan for England, including responding to the call for evidence for the workforce element of the Plan. We have published information for the education sector relevant to the Plan and the role we have as an independent regulation. This information is particularly focused for education providers when [developing new and existing programmes](#), [insight information about our experience of considering programmes where learners are employees of partner organisations](#), and [recognising the financial challenges in the higher education sector](#).

We have also responded to DHSC regarding "modernising revalidation procedures" which is in the plan. It is important to note that under our governing legislation (the Health Professions Order 2001), upon renewal of their registration, which happens every two years, registrants must satisfy us that they meet any prescribed requirements for continuing professional development (CPD). These

requirements are set out in our [CPD standards](#). This is the approach that we use at the HCPC to ensure that registrants are continuing to keep their skills and knowledge up-to-date and to develop in their roles. We do not have 'revalidation' as a model, either set out as a framework in our legislation or as an organisational approach, and we do not currently believe that a revalidation model is necessary to provide the assurance we need about our registrants' continuing professional development.

We had been planning to review our approach to CPD in our work planning for the next financial year and so the 10 Year Plan request is timely. We have informed DHSC on our approach and timescales regarding our review.

Education annual report 2025

We took a draft of our annual report to the Education and Training Committee in November 2025. This will be the third iteration of this report in its current form, and will focus on key findings from our assessments in recent years. We will be publishing this report in January 2026, and will update our [insight materials](#) to include new findings from our assessments, to help education providers and other sector stakeholders understand our regulatory requirements and common approaches in key areas.

Registration

UK applications to join our Register

The incoming UK applications to join our Register continue to reduce in line with expectations following the summer peak period. We received 1,939 UK applications via the UK registration route in October 2025, and the median processing time was two working days, which is significantly below the 10 working days KPI.

International applications to join our Register

We received 285 international applications in October 2025, and we continue to assess international applications within our 60 working days KPI. The number of international applications received remains lower than forecast when we set our budget for this financial year. As Council is aware we have adjusted our forecast during the year and this is discussed in the Finance Report on the agenda today. We have received 2,031 applications this financial year to date¹.

As a result of the continued improved operational performance and the reduction in the number of international applications, we have scaled down the international team in line with our flexible resourcing model. We have given notice to team members employed on fixed term contracts, who were recruited to assist with the increase in international application numbers in 2024 and early 2025.

We will continue to monitor international performance closely.

Registration renewals

¹ Financial vs Operational Reporting: There will be a slight difference in the reported volumes of international applications, related to recognising applications based on received payments (financial) versus the number of applications processed (operational).

- On the 1 August 2025 Occupational therapists began their renewal period. At the end of their renewal cycle on the 31 October 94.2% of Occupational therapists had renewed their registration which is only 1% lower than the previous cycle.
- On the 1 September 2025 Biomedical scientists began their renewal period, and as of 17 November 83.1% of Biomedical scientists have completed their renewal, which is higher when compared to this time for the previous renewal cycle.

Developing our international assessment approach

We have successfully gone live with our phase 1 changes to the international application assessment process. These changes follow a series of developments introduced over the last 12-18 months (including new English language requirements, plagiarism checks, new course information form, and our new internal operating model) to provide greater quality and consistency to this important route to registration.

The changes we introduced in November are to:

- require applicants to map their evidence to our standards of proficiency as part of their application (supported by guidance and examples on our website)
- remove our further information process, and in doing so limiting our documentary assessment to one round of assessment.

These changes will mean applicants have a better understanding of what is required to meet our standards and help them to provide evidence in the most appropriate way (as a result of the evidence mapping document). Removing further information will also reduce delays for applicants who we know often get trapped in a cycle of providing further information that then needs to be verified with third parties. This further information is also harder to verify that primary qualifications and poses a greater risk of fraud and plagiarism. Our assessors will also benefit from a more streamlined documentary assessment process with clearer outcomes to Accept, Refuse or require the applicant to take a Test of Competence. Full details of the changes are explained on our website: [Updates to our international applications process | The HCPC](#)

Whilst we monitor the implementation of these phase 1 changes, we will also now turn our attention to the phase 2 work we have planned over the coming months to improve the quality and consistency of our tests of competence.

3. Policy & Standards

Standards of Education and Training (SETs)

On 17 November, we launched our public [consultation on proposed revisions to the Standards of Education and Training \(SETs\)](#). The SETs underpin high-quality education and training across the 15 professions we regulate. This review aims to strengthen clarity, embed equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and futureproof the standards for evolving technologies and changing learning models. The consultation runs for 13 weeks (November 2025 – February 2026) and is available in English and Welsh.

To encourage participation, we are delivering a comprehensive engagement programme, including targeted workshops for education providers, learners, and professional bodies:

- 11 December 2025: SET 1 and structure
- 15 January 2026: EDI and data
- 27 January 2026: Emerging technologies

We are also hosting public and wider stakeholder workshops, which will provide background on the Standards of Education and Training, an overview of the proposals and information on how to respond to the consultation:

- 18 December 2025
- 13 January 2026
- 28 January 2026

There will also be ongoing promotion via social media, newsletters, webinars, and direct outreach to education providers and professional bodies.

We will continue to monitor and analyse responses throughout the consultation period. Initial analysis will be shared in early 2026. We anticipate bringing the revised Standards to Council for approval in summer 2026 followed by publication in the autumn, followed by an implementation period of around 12 months (subject to Council's approval).

Safeguarding guidance

In July, we reported to Council on the work we were engaging on with the Patients Association to gather patient and family experiences of safeguarding. The findings of this work highlighted the need for clearer communication, accessible information, and person-centred approaches. Participants welcomed the draft safeguarding guidance that we shared but called for simpler language, child-friendly resources, and stronger emphasis on empathy and accountability. The aim is to present our updated safeguarding guidance and the associated reports to Council in early 2026 for approval to publish.

Advanced Practice

Our webinar series on scope of practice, supervision and delegation for advanced levels of practice finished with our final webinar on 5 November. This work has been undertaken in partnership with the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) and NHS England.

In total, over 2,400 people joined the live webinars, asked questions, cast votes, defined future actions for themselves and shared their feedback. Recordings of the webinars are now live on the HCPC YouTube channel: [Scope of practice, supervision and delegation at advanced levels of practice \(2025\) - YouTube](#).

The webinars have been well-received, with attendees giving the series over 4 out of 5 stars on average for being both informative and relevant to their practice. Attendees valued the interactive nature of the webinars, the accessibility of the online format, the references to many different professions, sectors, and levels of practice, and the broad range of content covered by the series.

We are using all the information collected from webinar participants to inform new resources to support practitioners at advanced level of practice and managers. These will be published online in spring 2026.

4. Resources

Pulse Survey

The Q2 employee engagement survey recorded an overall engagement rate of 53%, representing a 9% decrease from Q1. Despite this decline in participation, the overall employee satisfaction score remained strong at 81%, only a marginal decrease from 82% in Q1. This stability indicates that the majority of HCPC employees who have responded continue to feel positive about their work experience and organisational environment. As always, ELT discussed the survey results and actions to be taken. Likewise, the PRC reviewed the results as part of the wider HR report, at its recent meeting.

Partners

Intensive preparations took place for the first payroll for partners at the end of November, under their new contracts and using a new payroll system. The payroll was run successfully on 26 November. Colleagues across the organisation have worked extremely hard to address the issues and ensure accuracy. Project governance arrangements have proved effective in spotting risks and identifying root cause issues, with an action plan of fixes and a lessons learned exercise carried out, to be fed into the preparations for the following month's payroll. The project will remain open to oversee progress until all the issues have been successfully resolved.

Technology

As part of the technology roadmap, IT and Business Change working with the wider organisation successfully deployed a new telephony system at the end of November 2025, as phase 1 of the contact centre project. Implementing this solution addresses a financial risk with the legacy contract, gives us an improved like-for-like service, and enables phase 2 of the project to get under way, to deliver an enhanced, multi-channel experience for people who contact us.

We have launched the network transformation project, which is also part of the technology roadmap, to complete the migration of our systems and data into the cloud, with enhanced resilience and security. As an early programme deliverable, on 21 November IT successfully migrated the organisation's network drives into the cloud.

Appendix A - Chief Executive's external meeting schedule covering Friday 17 October 2025 – Thursday 4 December 2025

The Professional Standards Authority (PSA) Alan Clamp, Chief Executive	17 Oct
Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) Phil Harper, Deputy Director Professional Standards & International Workforce	17 Oct
Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) Gavin Lerner, Director of Workforce	21 Oct
Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) Minister for Health, Karyn Smyth	29 Oct
Royal College of Podiatry, Jane Pritchard, Chief Executive & General Secretary	31 Oct
Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) Phil Harper, Deputy Director Professional Standards & International Workforce; Duncan Hall, Deputy Branch Head, Professional Standards & International Workforce; Sarah Little, Head of Leadership policy & Volunteering policy	10 Nov
Chief Allied Health Professions Officer for England - Suzanne Rastrick	13 Nov
Unison - Celestine Laporte, National Officer - Health; Nick Entwistle, National Officer – Health; Sharandeep Bandesha, National Officer – Ambulance	17 Nov
General Medical Council (GMC) - Charley Massey, Chief Executive	19 Nov
Chief Allied Health Professions Officer for Northern Ireland – Michelle Tennyson	19 Nov