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Her Majesty's Government:

Your Freedom

Consultation

Abolish the Health Professions Council (HPC)

by [cbtish](#) on July 01, 2010 at 01:39PM

The Health Professions Council (HPC) is one of several bodies that implement the socially corrosive theory that while professionals cannot be trusted, a quango operating a national database can. All its activities duplicate and subvert the work of the courts, employment tribunals, local management procedures or professional associations.

It should be abolished completely, freeing health professionals from double jeopardy, allowing local procedures for discipline and criminal justice to operate without interference, and encouraging professional associations to take responsibility for their members.

Note: The abolition of an equivalent body 'regulating' teachers, the General Teaching Council for England, has already been announced to Parliament.

Why the contribution is important

Civil liberties: The HPC erodes civil liberties by causing double jeopardy — a health professional can be tried independently by the HPC after being tried in a court of law or by another body.

Unnecessary laws: The HPC applies unnecessary laws (Section 60 of the Health Act 1999, and related Orders), which duplicate other more local and more effective ways to respond to wrongdoing by health professionals.

Business regulation: The HPC makes running a business or other

organisation in the healthcare sector more complicated and less accountable to the public, by duplicating regulations and disciplinary procedures, and by acting as a deterrent to whistleblowers (which in turn allows bad practices to accumulate unchallenged).

Value for money: In addition, the HPC fails to provide value for money according to all nine of the criteria in section 2.5 of the June 2010 Treasury Spending Review Framework.

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Current tags

- civil liberties
- regulations
- business
- health
- psychotherapy
- counselling
- state regulation
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- podiatrist
- expensive
- fail
- hpc
- i agree
- podiatry
- chiropody
- wasteful

Current rating

.76404494382

Average score :4.7

Based on :89 votes



Posted by LindsayO July 01, 2010 at 18:04

I agree

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Posted by LindsayO July 01, 2010 at 18:04

I agree

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Posted by DPHIPPS July 02, 2010 at 11:10

I agree

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Posted by Rosatti July 02, 2010 at 21:03

I am a physiotherapist in private practice and would like to alert all health professionals registered with the hpc to the unlimited powers they have to refuse re-registration if your continuous professional development activities do not comply with their arbitrary standards, set by people sitting at their desks not understanding how we health professionals work in a clinical setting. There is a worrying discrepancy in that the HPC seems to have powers to refuse re-registration on grounds that they do not agree with the type of CPD (Continuous Professional Development) and divorcing CPD from fitness to practice. If the HPC is there to protect the public, then they must in the first

instance establish or prove that the health professional in question is not competent or fit to practice. However, it seems that they do not have to prove that you are unfit to practice, but simply disagree with the type of CPD you have done and then threaten to remove you from the register, preventing you from practicing. They impose their standards on you and there is nothing you can do about it. The general assumption by the HPC is that allied health professionals cannot be trusted and are guilty until proven innocent. In a court of law you are innocent until proven guilty. This does not apply to the HPC. GET RID OF THE HPC

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Posted by *cevans* July 02, 2010 at 23:53

I agree totally.

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Posted by *JanetLow* July 03, 2010 at 00:13

What a good idea. This organisation really does need dismantling. The administrators need to be split up and given to each of the 15 different professions currently regulated by it, where they can serve the professions rather than try to master them.

Some of the nonsense the HPC get up to is recorded on the hpcwatchdog.blogspot.com. I've been following some fitness to practise cases - they put one woman on trial for a crime she'd been cleared of twice before by two other organisations. The HPC had no reason not to join in, its a tick in the box for their output, and a little bit of pocket money for their lawyers. She was cleared again, thank goodness, but practically had a nervous breakdown from the ordeal, and spent an absolute fortune on legal fees.

They really are a menace. All the registrants must pay a fee - a stealth tax, really - but they are not allowed any say whatsoever in how their money is spent - its taxation without representation, a double whammy.

The HPC is little more than a data-base state with big ideas about its importance and ambitious plans for expansion. At the very least its activities need freezing while a thorough investigation is made into what EXACTLY it is doing.

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Posted by rahouse July 03, 2010 at 00:34

So do I. The HPC is a paradigm case of statist authoritarianism, founded as it is in a 'low-trust' ideology that becomes a self-fulfilling cultural prophecy from which we all then suffer. It's also rooted in the deluded modernist presumption that it is both possible and appropriate to police and specify programmatic 'competencies' in the subtle healing arts (misleadingly termed 'professions' - after all, many of the currently regulated activities don't even claim or aspire to being conventional health 'professions' anyway - only the power-driven bureaucrats who run their professional associations aspire to that label). It thrives on a poisonous cocktail of compliance and Foucauldian surveillance, generating false, inauthentic professional selves amongst practitioners; and like all Weberian bureaucracies, it spawns a self-justifying discourse whereby its self-perpetuating existence and expansion become much more important to it than is the actual work it's claiming to do. With no effective accountability to anyone, least of all the practitioners it's regulating and 'surveilling', and with the high-handed capacity to blunder into fields that it doesn't begin to understand, the case for drastically trimming or even abolishing the HPC is unanswerable. At the very least, there needs to be extensive independent research into the efficacy of the HPC in improving health-care standards; and I'm pretty convinced that such research would show that this expensive juggernaut has had little if any positive influence on the quality of health care in Britain, compared with what would have happened in the status quo ante, before the HPC even existed.

Please, do let's have some pro-HPC voices in this dialogue with arguments for the HPC's existence, so we can delight in systematically demolishing any rational arguments that are offered in favour of HPC's existence, one by one. Bring back the late lamented Ivan Illich and his devastating critiques of iatrogenic medicine and disabling professionalistion - all is forgiven!

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Posted by cmorland July 03, 2010 at 06:43

I agree, if only because it's yet another expensive, useless quango.

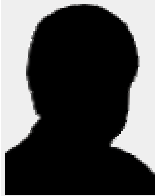
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Posted by babushkava July 03, 2010 at 10:58

The HPC was encouraged by the Labour government to take even more professions under its control and several of those professions that are about to be monitored and controlled by the HPC include counselling and psychotherapy. These professions already have their own well-established bodies who know what exactly it is we do. They know how to monitor quality and to investigate complaints. There is a massive alliance against the regulation of therapies BY HPC. We want regulation, we welcome regulation, but HPC is not the right organisation for the job.

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Posted by scotlandtherapy July 03, 2010 at 11:52

Regulation in some form may be positive for the counselling and psychotherapy professions. The HPC however is an expensive and misguided model since it mislabels these professions as "healthcare" and tried to impose an alien model of practice onto the profession. If we are to have regulation, lets have it with a bespoke and small organisation, not some overblown, bureaucratic group like the HPC who seem to keep reaching out for more and more power and tax payers money! Why not simply have a kitemark standard all independent professional bodies have to adhere to... virtually no cost, can be negotiated by the professional bodies and can contain an agreement to support criminal prosecution in severe cases of malpractice such as sexual abuse(not proposed by the HPC).

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Posted by tbrown July 03, 2010 at 12:41

Agree - professional bodies are capable of self-regulation, backed by current legal safeguards. This is an unnecessary layer of bureacracy.

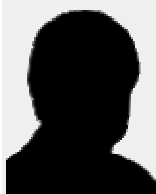
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Posted by Frapper July 03, 2010 at 17:25

I agree.

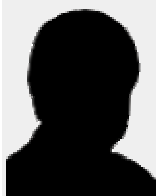
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Posted by redflower July 03, 2010 at 17:38

Absolutely agree. As well as completely unnecessary, also expensive layer of bureaucracy. As well as that, HPC would destroy counselling and therapy.

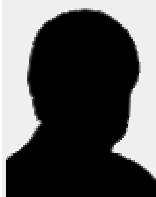
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Posted by kkpilgrim July 03, 2010 at 20:15

Totally agree. One of my colleagues who was subject to an official complaint by a disgruntled patient has already been through the formal complaints procedures and an Independent Management Review and has been cleared. Now the HPC are having their turn. Stressful, wasteful and unnecessary.

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Posted by Charlie July 04, 2010 at 09:15

My wife wanted to be a full time mother to our two children. However, HPC rules forced her back to work two years earlier than planned. She had been back at work for nearly three years when the HPC wrote to her saying that, prior to returning to work, she had not completed some requirement for re-training. She was given two weeks to organise the re-training or be struck off.

After a whole day on the telephone (very traumatic under the circumstances) the HPC conceded a database error and withdrew their allegation. Had they struck my wife off the local hospital would have been dangerously short of essential emergency medical

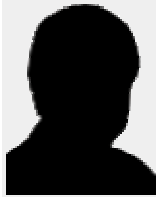
care.

Furthermore, time at work completing CPD is time which would be better spent on the wards. The CPD is meaningless in any case as it bears no relation to professional competence.

The HPC is little more than an intimidating fee gathering organisation which wastes valuable professional time.

It should be scrapped forthwith.

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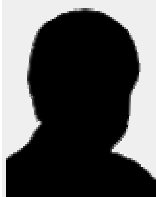
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Posted by HPCandThePublic July 04, 2010 at 13:07

Agree entirely. And where is the opinion of the public in whose interest the HPC claims to exist? We were seriously harmed, with long-term consequences, by an HPC-registered music therapist. Extraordinarily, the HPC returned a “no case to answer” decision, with no right of appeal. This compounded the trauma. We have been pursuing accountability and awareness of harm for the best part of seven years, but the HPC has been singularly obstructive. All we asked for was an apology and an undertaking of training in the areas in which the music therapist clearly lacked it, so that she does not replicate the irreparable damage that she has done to us. We do not particularly wish HPC-style naming and shaming.

The HPC has proved impermeable to harm done to members of the public, its position – however wrong – proved unassailable.

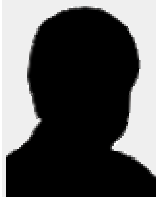
Interestingly, the Association of Professional Music Therapists, in marked contrast with the HPC, acknowledged the trauma and harm and accepted - on paper - my offer to give presentations to music therapy registrants and trainees about how to avoid the music therapist’s catalogue of mistakes which resulted in long-term, irreparable harm to the psychological, social and educational life of a child and an adult. There are ways of practising safely that do not harm te public.

Admittedly, nobody from the APMT has yet called me to deliver the presentations, but it seems to me that the original professional body has dealt with the serious incidents much more constructively.

The HPC is a terrible waste of much-needed public money.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RPKKZ5zRhyk>

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Posted by lbredt July 04, 2010 at 14:55

I totally agree and hope the new government means business and will cut kafkaesque quangos. LB

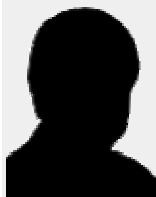
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Posted by lbredt July 04, 2010 at 14:55

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[Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate](#)



Posted by Stibble July 04, 2010 at 21:31

Totally agree. The HPC is no longer fit for purpose. They have sought to extend their governance over entirely inappropriate professions because IMHO they need to continue to justify their existence. This is an example of big government writ large. There are already professionally experienced bodies waiting in the wings to do this more effectively and cheaper ! Dismantle the HPC NOW !

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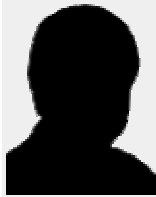
Posted by Abhinavagupta July 04, 2010 at 21:36

The HPC is totally the wrong body to regulate counselling and psychotherapy as most of counsellors and psychotherapists work outside the NHS and do not use a medical model for practice. That is a model of disease, diagnosis and treatment. There is no "disease" called depression caused by a lack of serotonin! There are many varieties of counselling and therapy all of which have value and can be effective but there are different criteria for effectiveness little consensus amongst all professionals. It is therefore hard to regulate in the way HPC would want with definite standards.

There is also the fact the professional regulation cannot be demonstrated as able to "protect the public" that great slogan. It is more about priviledging certain professional groups and certain approaches. In Russia under the Communist Party only behaviour therapy was allowed - psychoanalysis was seen as subversive!

Common law, existing statue law and common sense combined with good professional bodies and good forms of mediation and dispute management; not necessarily quasi-legal and adversarial, are the best in my opinion.

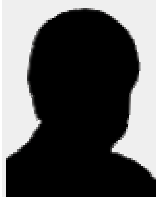
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Posted by ggladstone July 05, 2010 at 01:33

Agree with this proposal. I am delighted to see a government so on the ball that it is ready to kick quangos into touch. Along with many colleagues in the psychotherapy and counselling fields over the last two years I have been expending considerable time, energy and money to press for the removal of this threat to the integrity of our working lives and to the freedom of clients to choose the kind of therapy they would want rather than see the menu contract under the HPC. Nothing the HPC claims to offer cannot be better provided by other more aware, choiceful, ethical, economical and respectful means. Indications are now emerging - and I expect this invitation will elicit plenty more, that the HPC is a very far from satisfactory arrangement for the regulation of those professions already subject to its regime (witness the recent well publicised case of the senior psychologist brought to a Fitness To Practice Tribunal because someone,- not even a client, was upset by a sexual joke at a private dinner party). There is an extensive and in-depth literature critiquing the appropriateness of the HPC as a regulator for counselling and psychotherapy; and it is worth noting that almost nothing has been published in support of it. I will gladly forward my own submission to the HPC's 2nd 'Consultation' exercise titled "Unwise, Unjust, Untruthful" to any member of the new government who wants a 3 page summary from a psy professional with 25 years experience of the field.

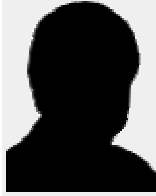
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Posted by davkal July 05, 2010 at 07:33

I completely agree and it would save money which the Government is now committed to save.HPC is one of the most unnecessary unelected quangos in existence and the sooner it is got rid of the better.

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Posted by Heruka July 05, 2010 at 09:34

Agree - delete this aberrant bureaucra-lunacy

[Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate](#)



Posted by BruceScott July 05, 2010 at 11:13

The HPC repeat the mantra of protecting the public. But they have not produced any empirical evidence to show that the public needs protection, that abuse by therapists is rife, or that HPC regulation will make matters better.

SSRI's anti-depressants are regulated but are still used as a mode of treatment. Thus the medical profession use them, prescribe them, knowing some people will have bad experiences with them. Likewise, HPC regulated clinical psychologists delivering CBT will at times do no good for somebody, or even make them worse (statistically speaking. But they are regulated....is there a more sinister plot than public protection in the back rooms of the HPC?

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Posted by johncorn July 05, 2010 at 12:35

The HPC is proving to be a self perpetuating, unelected and completely unnecessary extra layer of beaurocracy.

It completely fails in its declared responsibility to protect the public.

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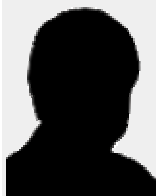


Posted by PeterD July 05, 2010 at 12:46

Totally agree with what has been observed.

The HPC are, indeed, a menace. They are symptomatic of the corruption which exists in this country today. The CHRE effectively has no powers to question or check the actions of the HPC. This means that the HPC is, in practice, unaccountable and they can remove a registrant's livelihood with redress. They can also choose to ignore valid and serious complaints against registrants and so can protect their 'friends' as and when they see fit. They are totally unfit for purpose.

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Posted by markjarmuz July 05, 2010 at 13:36

I agree

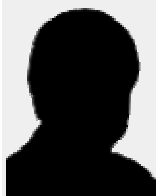
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Posted by hjgrassow July 05, 2010 at 16:36

I agree.

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Posted by Pragmatic_Professional July 06, 2010 at 21:07

I agree. Another prime quango candidate that this new government has 'pledged' to get rid of.

As a Radiographer I am a member of the SoR (Society of Radiographers) who are ideally placed to provide regulation and assistance for fitness to practice reviews. And surely there is enough legislation within the NHS framework already to govern a functioning

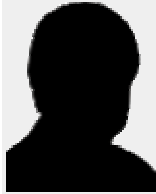
health professional within their working environment.

Isn't my Degree certificate, my crb and regular evaluation with my employer enough to maintain proof of my competence?

The HPC is just another money making business dressed up as an official regulator.

I wonder what their executives and CEO's earn per annum.

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Posted by jencw July 07, 2010 at 10:39

Absolutely agree

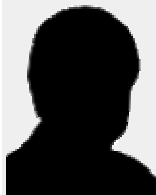
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Posted by mnorth July 07, 2010 at 20:39

HPC is both surplus to requirements and not fit for purpose - less competent than the existing professional bodies in terms of understanding how counselling and psychotherapy is practised and thus less able to regulate and legislate appropriately

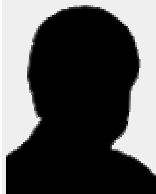
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Posted by kas July 07, 2010 at 21:29

Excellent idea!

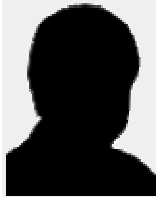
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Posted by steanton16172 July 07, 2010 at 22:56

I agree with this completely. The HPC is an illegal body! I found the NCP's report about the HCP very interesting and inspiring (it's available

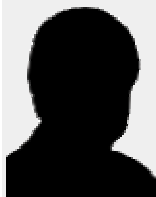
at <http://www.ncphq.co.uk/page180.html>) I also signed the Alliance's petition against HPC-regulation available at http://www.petitiononline.com/mod_perl/signed.cgi?staterereg
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Posted by Strawberrygirl July 09, 2010 at 09:46

I agree. The proposals for HPC regulation of counsellors and psychotherapists are not fit for purpose

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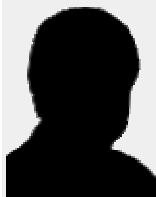
Posted by Hawley July 09, 2010 at 09:55

I am a qualified, accredited and experienced therapist, using psychotherapy, counselling and clinical hypnotherapy. I am already in 3 leading professional organisations and fully insured. The CPD I undertake makes sense to my work and my professional organisations fully understand my work and my CPD. The HPC is a totally pointless further layer of beurocracy and a waste of government money. They can stop someone working, just be disagreeing on their type of submitted CPD. This is silly as they don't understand or have skills to know which is relevant CPD. They do not understand private practice at all. I agree with every single one of these other comments on this page.

I found the NCP's report about the HCP very interesting and inspiring (it's available at <http://www.ncphq.co.uk/page180.html>)

I also signed the Alliance's petition against HPC-regulation available at http://www.petitiononline.com/mod_perl/signed.cgi?staterereg

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Posted by mila July 09, 2010 at 10:50

I agree

Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate



Posted by mdavybarnes July 09, 2010 at 10:50

From what I have researched the HPC is not an appropriate body for regulating psychotherapy and counselling. I understand that many professionals who are currently under the HPC are unhappy with them.

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Posted by helenahargaden July 09, 2010 at 11:06

I have read all the comments and agree with them. Some people have written so eloquently above that I trust these objections will find a responsive and pragmatic governmental ear to what we are saying. Many practitioners will not be outspoken because it is not really the style of those working quietly and discreetly but we have had to find a voice as it has become clearer through the process that we are in danger of being taken over by those who are power hungry, both in our own profession and politically.

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Posted by feelbetter July 09, 2010 at 11:13

I am a counsellor/psychotherapist and in despair at the idea that the HPC should be involved in our regulation. This will be a good test case of whether the Coalition is serious about giving responsibility and freedom (to the professionals, their accreditation bodies and the general public in this case) or will listen to the bureaucrats looking after their own interests and hiding this under the fig leaf of protecting the public.

The consequence of regulation of counselling/psychotherapy for those of us not dependent on the state for our livelihoods will be more cost, less freedom to take responsibility for how we practice and a denigrated and increasingly cowed and limited profession.

It's actually a no brainer and as I say, a real test of whether this government is serious about responsibility and freedom of just interested in spin.

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Posted by LMcGinlay July 09, 2010 at 11:39

GET RID OF THE HPC AS THE PROPOSED REGULATORY BODY FOR COUNSELLING & PSYCHOTHERAPY.

We do not need to become a singular medical model. Clients and therapist alike will be become disadvantaged by joining the HPC. Clients should have the right to choose their therapy/therapist. As counsellors we respect clients autonomy. We should not be living under a nanny state when we work with such personal and intimate issues, we work with real people and value them as that.

I have a regulatory body and I work hard to work within their ethical framework as do all my colleagues. It is a waste of money, I find it appalling that we are having to spend money fighting this lunacy and tax payers money is being wasted on more bureaucracy. So if this government is serious about spending cuts here is an instant money saver!

I strongly oppose HPC Regulation for Counsellors and Pyscotherapists.

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Posted by jgarner July 09, 2010 at 12:19

I agree. I am more than happy for independent oversight of my private psychotherapy practice but it needs to be fit for purpose and free of duplication of the oversights already maintained by the three professional bodies to which I already pay fees to subscribe voluntarily: BAPC, UKCP and ITA.

These bodies already provide an excellent service to the public to protect them against fraudulent or incompetent practitioners.

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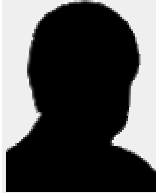


Posted by joefried July 09, 2010 at 12:51

I agree completely. The HPC is precisely the kind of quango the government should be bringing to an end -- it's mainly concerned with building a larger empire and employing

more bureaucrats, and it uses the governments fear of "rogue" practitioners to argue a bigger remit. In fact, it has no power over "rogue" practitioners, only over those who use regulated names. Those people who use these names -- psychotherapists for example, as argued above, already are regulated.

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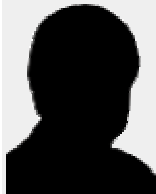
Posted by jtee July 09, 2010 at 13:09

I absolutely agree. The HPC is not fit for purpose. It should go.

Jeff

Psychotherapist

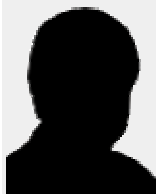
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Posted by Carla July 09, 2010 at 13:55

This very expensive but ineffective blot on the landscape has had little if any positive influence on the quality of health care in Britain. There should be some regulation of mental health professions but most of that is already done by the professional bodies most of us subscribe to. There are still some very dodgy alternative therapists around and some very questionable training courses that should be examined more closely. The HPC would not stop these people from practising as long as they called themselves lifecoach or therapist they would escape the HPC control. They stampede as a group of bulls through a china shop, ruining all that had been achieved and as a result many people have been denied access to experienced and qualified counsellors and psychotherapists. If this government that still has to earn my trust, is really aiming to get us out of our financial mess, they should immediately close down the HPC that swallows money without accounting for it. I am very surprised they have not already done so. I see that as much more important than stopping schools development because the HPC has a detrimental effect on the mental health care in this country.

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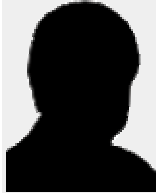
Posted by GDavidRose July 09, 2010 at 14:25

I agree. The HPC kills off creativity in all the professions it touches.

Dave

Psychotherapist

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Posted by jcouling July 09, 2010 at 17:38

It is encouraging that the Coalition Government is offering to listen to the public's views. I have worked as a counsellor for over 20 years and seen how this work can benefit clients at first hand. If HPC regulation is not stopped, my fear is that irreparable damage will be done to a profession which already has a perfectly adequate system of accountability for its members.

With all the current emphasis on the need for cuts, this one has to near the top of the list.

Jo,

Counsellor and Supervisor

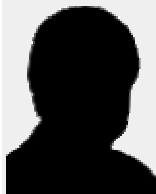
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Posted by isabelledoron July 09, 2010 at 17:47

I entirely agree with all of the above.

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Posted by galileo July 09, 2010 at 21:16

This spring I have received 6 letters and 2 printed booklets from HPC. And, if you can believe it, all were to tell me how to fill in my renewal form, which was no more than a recto-verso tick box form. Does it really take a 20 page booklet to tell a professional, trained and recognised as senior in my work, with almost 20 years professional background and clinical experience, how to confirm that my name and address haven't changed? Not only did they write to me, but they also invented a manager that they

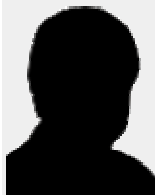
imagined I must have and who they wrote to, asking them to prompt me to send back my form. Now let me be clear, all this was simply to renew my registration and continue to pay HPC. Nothing to do with providing me with any relevant information about improving my practice, protecting the public, and neither did it provide the public with any meaningful information about me. And all of this was months before the deadline for renewal.

I don't know how much it costs to produce and post an official letter these days, let alone to print and post out the booklet (let's not even think about the trees) but I imagine it consumed a fair chunk of my membership fee. While I am happy to keep my local postman in a job (I like to chat to a real person and give a Christmas box to someone I see doing a valuable job) I do not see how this ridiculous and insultingly patronising paperwork has the remotest connection with any notion of maintaining standards of professional practice and public protection. Utter bureaucracy.

Just let me spend my time and energy doing something which develops my skills and serves my patients.

Why not use the funds instead to provide public education so that people know what questions to ask and how to access the most suitable one of the multiple treatment choices available to best meet their needs?

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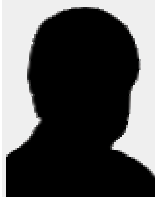
Posted by DMurphy July 09, 2010 at 23:42

It's an excellent idea to abolish the HPC - it certainly is not fit for regulating the counselling/ psychotherapy field. These professions are quite capable of regulating themselves - an they can do it far more effectively than the HPC ever will be able and for a far smaller cost to the public finance.

Down with the HPC!

D Murphy

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Posted by dedicated July 10, 2010 at 01:27

I am a UKCP Registered Psychotherapist with over 15 years experience of working as a counsellor and psychotherapist in various mental health settings including a university, a mental health charity, two NHS trusts and, more recently, as an independent practitioner.

In 2009 I became actively involved in the Alliance for Counselling & Psychotherapy Against State Regulation [<http://www.allianceforcandp.org/>], was among the earliest signatories of their petition [http://www.petitiononline.com/mod_perl/signed.cgi?statereg], and helped organise their first conference in London in May that year. Since then, thousands of counsellors and psychotherapists throughout the UK and large numbers of their clients, have begun to act on their concerns and speak out on this crucial issue which is NOT, as the HPC would have you believe, about “protecting the public”. [The public is VERY adequately protected already by existing legislation, and counsellors and psychotherapists have counted for years amongst the most rigorously supervised by their professional associations of all the vocations working in and around the health industry].

No, it's about Protecting the Power of a small minority of mental health bureaucrats to dictate over the heads of Joe and Josephine Public exactly how therapy should be done, how 'happy' we should be, what sort of 'happiness' we should espouse, what should and should not count as 'disordered' thinking, emotions and behaviours etc. It's about reducing the range and choice of therapies [of which there are currently many hundreds] down to a very few overly-manualised and technical modalities which, according to government bureaucrats, can be 'shown' to bring about 'measurable' degrees of 'symptom relief' when 'applied' to humans who have been categorised [by the same bureaucrats] according to a recognised list of 'official' bar-coded mental complaints.

With its constantly intoned mantra about 'Protection of the Public' [without offering ONE JOT of scientific evidence as to why such protection is needed, or how its regulatory regime might provide such 'protection', or even a proper risk analysis] the HPC has over the last two years or so set about the task of steam-rolling through [by means of one idiotic CON-insult-ation exercise, 'professional' liaison group, or indoctrination gathering after another] a raft of highly questionable, poorly scrutinised and badly drafted secondary legislation [a.k.a. Health Protection Order 2001], the combined effect of which will almost certainly be to kill off once and for all the wide range of professionally delivered talking treatments and other forms of mental health service available in a huge range of settings across the UK including hospices, all manner of voluntary agencies, the private sector, even the NHS.

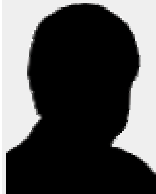
The process by which the New Labour Government charged the HPC with this task of

surveillance, audit and suppression of fundamental freedoms of therapy practitioners and clients in this country is, it must be said, eerily reminiscent of the way in which the old Sozialistische EinheitsPartei of the former East Germany set up the Stasi. Many therapists see the HPC, and the way it profiles itself as the “Sword and Shield of the Public” as part of a much wider Stalinisation of mental life in the UK over the last few years, in which far too much emphasis has been placed on targets, standardisation, regimentation, categorisation and box-ticking and far too little on individuals and their actual needs as appraised by other individuals within a meaningful and professionally bounded and, above all, HUMAN relationship.

The HPC is an overweening, incompetent, useless, ludicrously expensive and completely superfluous quangocracy and the sooner it is abolished, the better.

R Jenkins, BA PGCE MA DipCouns CTA UKCP Reg Practitioner

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Posted by dgoodlake July 10, 2010 at 10:35

The HPC is a bureaucratic and inefficient regulatory body. Regulation of the health professions should be through each professional bodies. Therapists pay for the HPC but have no voice in its running or decision making.

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Posted by Chiropod July 10, 2010 at 10:50

As a chiropodist (now podiatrist) of 30 years experience in practice, teaching and circuit lecturing, I remember the time before the HPC was devised. The Dept of Health were wrongly informed by a leading professional body (vested interest) and the HPC regulation of Podiatry was set up on false premise - that chiropody and podiatry were one and the same. Podiatry may well be the term used by the rest of the world, but in the UK the term for routine foot maintenance is chiropody. If you start with a false premise it becomes necessary to defend it and the hole just gets deeper. Podiatry may well contain chiropodeal skills, but is a wider subject with need of deeper learning. The two occupations are therefore different.

The HPC is simply raising money by sale of licences to use reserved titles. As such it is operating a restrictive trading practice in favour of registrants. The job done by HPC

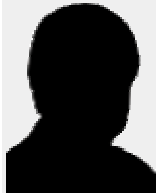
registrants is also done by non-registrants who cannot use the titles (Foot Health Practitioners) - equally well - and the public suffer no ills whatsoever from this.

The HPC acts in a manner that is unfair to practitioners, posting their personal details and notice of allegations made where the public are encouraged to go. Even if the allegations are subsequently found to be spurious, harm is done to the reputation and practice of the practitioner - the taint remains.

The HPC has developed its 'Standards' well beyond the need of practice. The result is to make practice within their rules prohibitively expensive and unduly prescriptive. Their 'consultation' is for public consumption, their 'listening events' for the purpose of 'telling'.

There was a great deal more sense in the profession before the HPC arrived. The HPC have divided and decimated our profession.

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Posted by nelehenots July 10, 2010 at 12:21

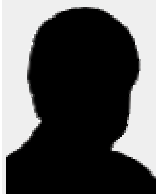
I agree. Insurance companies, existing professional bodies, civil and criminal law are all existing controls within the system.

I would ask two questions of anyone who wishes the HPC to continue setting up state regulation of the counselling profession.

How much will it cost the tax payer?

What difference will it really make?

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Posted by Urban July 10, 2010 at 13:21

As a Chiropodist of 20 years in private practice I have always belonged to a professional organisation, held Public liability insurance and worked within the guidelines of that professional organisation. The public are protected in law and always have been.

The formation of the HPC has certainly not improved treatment in Chiropody/Podiatry as meaningless CPD is easy enough to prove and this is all that is necessary to remain registered. It is supposed to monitor the protected titles of Chiropody/Podiatry but allows the use of these titles to be suggested without taking action.

I am still a member of a professional organisation, hold the same insurance and have never been threatened with any action by any patient - ever.

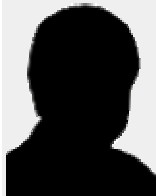
I now have to pay to belong to the HPC but for the life of me I dont know why.

I have considered deregistering myself as some have and continuing to use the title as I was using it five years before the HPC came into being but guess what?

I have a small but significant number of patients who claim back the cost of treatment from various healthcare companies and yes, one has to be HPC registered now or they wont pay out. So, I risk losing a percentage of turnover if I de-register, even though those insurance companies honoured claims from patients using my practice before the HPC was heard of.

I agree with all comments so far and this organisation needs abolishing and allow the various allied healthcare bodies to truly move their standard of treatment forward. The HPC can never do this and is, therefore not protecting the public.

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Posted by johncorn July 10, 2010 at 16:13

Some time ago the Government were petitioned to abolish fees paid to the HPC. The Governments response was that ...

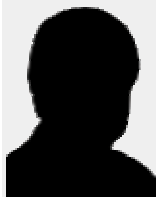
By paying the cost of regulation, registrants have greater involvement in the maintenance of professional standards.

And pigs might fly !!

The full petition response can be viewed here ...

[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/\[...\]/Page16489](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/[...]/Page16489)

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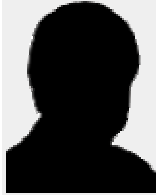


Posted by ahodgkiss July 10, 2010 at 18:55

I am a consultant psychiatrist and a Lacanian Analyst. I agree with those who have drawn attention to the duplication of regulatory function the HPC represents, the costs of this bureaucracy and the demands it makes upon registrants.

I would add that I vehemently oppose the plan for HPC to regulate psychotherapies in future and will try to work in principled non-compliance should this happen. See Maresfield Report for fuller discussion.

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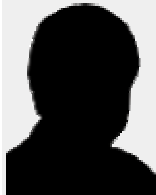


Posted by BF July 10, 2010 at 23:19

Agreed. It is not fit for purpose.

As far as Podiatry is concerned, it cannot and doesnot protect the public from rogue practitioners.

[Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate](#)



Posted by Footpod July 11, 2010 at 07:33

I would agree with the above.

The concept of the HPC is good but the application is not.

As a chiropodist/podiatrist it is my opinion that the HPC does not protect the public. It has yet to take out a prosecution against an unregulated foot-care person for a mis-use of title.

The problem started with the "Grandparenting" scheme when hundreds of privately-trained footcare practitioners were taken onto the register without a test of competence. This has produced uneven standards of training levels among registrants that only serves to confuse the Public still more.

When I read the Hearings section of the HPC website it appears to me that the HPC are getting too involved with matters that should be dealt with by NHS employers via their disciplinary procedures. It could be construed that NHS Trusts are using the HPC to get rid of practitioners who they feel don't "fit in".

In addition, it seems that those cases were there is "no case to answer" just drop of the radar. There is no information posted to show that the practitioner was unfairly accused.

As the HPC has only power over its Registrants it cannot stop the private training of unregulated foot care persons with varying levels of training skills. Indeed there are

some trainers who promote courses for students (including scalpel-work) that supply only 5 days of practical training.

Caveat emptor!

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Posted by davz 15 July 11, 2010 at 11:10

As a Podiatrist I agree totally!

[Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate](#)



Posted by talus July 11, 2010 at 15:41

I hope that our present Government do indeed intend to take note of comments on this website but I am not holding my breath !

I am a senior health professional having more years experience than I would wish to admit and it strikes me that it might be useful to clarify how dependent the British public might be on the good auspices of the HPC.

Consider this ...

Let`s assume that we have a health professional who is a paragon of virtue, an exemplar to all in their field and a thoroughly reliable well trained expert in their chosen area of work.

They are employed by the NHS.

This person is registered with the HPC because they were told that that is what they had to do. More than that, they thought that was the right thing to do .

Later, on reflection, they decide that they are disturbed by the HPC`s apparent inability to to achieve the main directive which is to protect the public.

They make the decision to remove themselves from the HPC "list".

Immediately they must be removed from employment.

Not because they have done anything wrong, not because they are incompetent in any way but simply because they are not on the HPC "list".

They were a major asset before the HPC existed but they are now out of work because the HPC say they are no longer able to use the professional title to which they are most assuredly entitled.

One step further ...

What if every professional currently regulated by the HPC decided that they no longer wished to belong to this pointless body?

Immediately the NHS would lose its radiographers, paramedics, dieticians and all the other well trained, hard working professionals that the public and the NHS relies on, not because they have done anything wrong but simply because they are not on the "list".

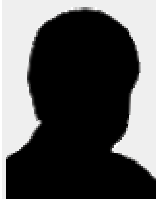
The question is, do the public need the HPC more than they need the highly trained, dedicated and HUMAN health professionals who are currently being told what to do by a bunch of unelected non-professionals who hide behind the facade of the HPC?

In summation, yes I think that the HPC should be dismantled.

It is not fit for purpose, it does not and cannot achieve its task of protecting the public, it assumes powers for which it was never intended, it presumes to make judgement of moral standards and takes up tens of thousands of working hours from its registrants who are forced to jump through hoops to achieve its arbitrary standards of CPD which it admits on its website has no bearing at all on competence.

It seems churlish to mention that it charges its registrants a not inconsiderable amount of money in order to achieve all this non-action, but hey-ho, I suppose that somebody has to foot the bill for people who would be unable to find useful employment elsewhere !

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Posted by wjohnston July 11, 2010 at 17:48

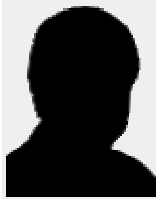
I agree wholeheartedly with this proposal.

The HPC is a leftover from the obsession with control espoused by Tony Blair.

I used to be a staunch labour voter; until that is the Labour party abandoned enlightened socialism in favour of obsessive standardisation, strangely reminiscent of Soviet Russia. The HPC represents precisely the worst excesses of this sort of heavy-handed control.

The HPC is an anachronism which belongs properly in some ghastly past history which we might prefer to forget.

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Posted by PPK July 11, 2010 at 18:11

I completely agree with this proposal. To add to the many objections listed here, that of duplicity and political double-speak in the attempt at 'consulting' the professions through the PLG initiative was an example of stunning arrogance and outright dismissal of the most basic common sense suggestions. The way in which so many of us gave our unpaid time to offer up concerns and objections, only to see them flagrantly ignored, dismissed in public meetings or directly contradicted in final proposals, proved beyond any reasonable doubt that the HPC do not have the capacity to understand a consultation process, listen to professionals, and regulate the professions, thus making a complete farce and mockery of their hypocritical much vaunted slogan - to protect the public.

Whilst I did my very best to try and keep an open mind and support a fair minded debate through interviews published, I could not escape the 'evidence' - they don't care.

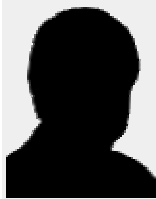
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Posted by sheilacarey4 July 11, 2010 at 18:18

I agree with the proposal. Counselling is not a medical intervention, and already has robust enough professional organisation. Save the money to provide a service, not to introduce process that has the potential to limit one.

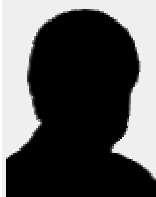
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Posted by rlawton July 11, 2010 at 22:04

I have been working against the proposal to have psychotherapy & counselling come within the HPC's remit. Having read accounts from other professionals currently working within the HPC framework, I completely agree with the suggestion that the HPC should be abolished. It appears to be unnecessarily bureaucratic, inflexible and totally unsuited to its purpose.

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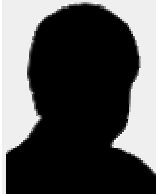


Posted by johnwheway July 11, 2010 at 22:17

As a senior professional psychotherapist of more than 25 years standing, and a registered member of the UKCP, having never had any complaint brought against me, I agree. In my view, psychotherapy and counselling are not health professions. They exist to enable and support individuals to reflect on the emotional difficulties of living, the better to make free and responsible personal choices about how to deal with them. In other words, psychotherapy and counselling aim to facilitate personal liberty to live according to one's true feelings and values. These practices, however much buttressed by over a century of careful research and theorising, are not sciences in the way that most people think of science - are not susceptible of experimental testing. Therapy tries to provide conditions for personal discovery and choice - it is not about prescription or results. The UKCP and other organisations have worked for many years to improve training and ethical regulation, and there is no reason to suppose that this process will not continue to produce refinements. But all this has come from within the profession - it has been an example of responsible self-regulation, in which the protection of the public has been a primary motivation. I think it would be a sensible idea to have informed monitoring of how the UKCP and other bodies regulate - but this is best as a second-order activity. The HPC has demonstrated, often in quite ludicrous ways, that it does not have a grasp of the good that psychotherapy and counselling attempt to do, or of the manner in which this attempt is best carried out. Most psychotherapy is undertaken in the private sector by citizens choosing to spend their time and money on employing a therapist. While citizens should be protected against charlatans, I believe most therapists enter the profession with highly ethical intentions, and take a responsible approach to maintaining the standard of their work - for example in the common practice of undergoing at least two-weekly supervision with a more senior

colleague to ensure quality work, and to take remedial action, such as returning to their own therapy or having further training, if this is indicated. Rather than imposing the HPC on psychotherapists, it would be well to study this built-in way in which therapists traditionally ensure quality control of their work and apply it across other professions which are concerned with helping people. Please, in the interests of personal liberty, free us from this ill-advised bureaucratic misadventure.

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Posted by JoTaylorJones July 12, 2010 at 10:34

Yes, please, PLEASE abolish the HPC. As a practitioner of a profession which is supposedly about to come under the jurisdiction of this body I have looked at the potential effect of HPC regulation. I have found nothing but bureaucracy, unnecessary expense and arbitrary rules made by an organisation which understands nothing of what lies at the heart of professions within its remit.

To train with a reputable university then become a member of the largest regulatory body of one's profession, in my case the BACP, should be enough. To be told halfway through my four-year training that when qualified I may still have to ask permission to practice from people who know very little about counselling and will take a 'character reference' only from a doctor or lawyer is insulting.

I have a personal interest in this; it is that I believe in counselling and psychotherapy and what it stands for, amongst which is the wide diversity of choice and accessibility which will be lost by the introduction of barriers.

But as a general statement, I feel that civil liberties are encroached upon when a practitioner is no longer free to follow their ethical beliefs (specifically for me, that counselling is not 'medical', nor should it be, it is an alternative and addition to the flawed reliance on medication) nor trusted to make good decisions and classed as of secondary value to a 'proper' profession such as medicine or law.

Some months before the election I was assured by a Conservative candidate that in the event of their taking power, counselling regulation would not happen in this way as Conservatives did not feel Labour's way of dealing with health professions was appropriate. I agree, please give us an alternative.

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Posted by omhelena July 12, 2010 at 12:51

I totally agree with the abolishment of this quango discriminatory offensive waste of my money. The money gives a job to an administrator who does absolutely nothing for me. As a person with a disability, it discriminates. Whether I have 40 hours or just two hours work I have to pay the same fee. Because this is compulsory I have been forced to no longer be a member of my own professional body, simply because I cannot support both memberships on a very low income.

But what is it actually there for? It is supposed to protect the public and patients in healthcare settings. Yet as a music therapist, recent fashionable funds have provided the label "arts and health" and any Tom, Dick and Harry who happens to be good at sales and grant funding applications, but not necessarily skilled in the work, can apply and successfully get funding to work within hospitals directly with patients and without having to register with this organization. This is scandalous. This makes a complete mockery of their existence.

Music and health organizations who are now commercial businesses (as too are many charities), are taking jobs away from post graduate fully qualified therapists, but yet have hardly any training at all to work with these most seriously vulnerable people. Therefore the whole purpose of the HPC is unfit for purpose.

There has been a move away from allowing people to work in their specialist areas to wrongly expecting everyone to become a business superstar and to cope with competitive markets for funding, rather than applying for a job and winning it on the merit of your background and expertise, mostly through Arts Council tax payers use of money.

Furthermore, and directly related quangos, the idiotic rule that states you have to pay fees to the General Teaching Council if you are a qualified teacher, but even if you are working in a school under the profession as a therapist, means I still have to additionally pay the GTC because of double qualifications, even though my hours of work are barely enough to live on. Yet this quango, the GTC, also does not prevent unqualified music undergraduates and graduates without teacher training, working in schools, who also do not have to pay fees to the GTC and yet if I work in a school as a music therapist, I end up having to pay both lots of fees, even if I am living on less than £2000 a year! Is it any wonder people with disabilities give up trying to get work. The 'business' expenses outweigh the practicality of being affordable. This is daylight robbery and the organization is not of reasonable value. Please stop employing an administrator with my money and instead give me a job.

The quango body (HPC and GTC) must be abolished and administrators cut, but each existing professional body could be given a small portion of that government funding to

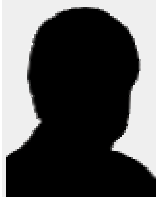
support, the professional bodies instead, who understand the profession which must not medicalize something that works upon health in different ways.

Make it compulsory for all arts and health workers to gain similar postgraduate qualifications and suitable training before working with vulnerable people and then get them to support the existing professional bodies that could combine, and bring up to standard the two tier systems created by policies of inequality which has actually caused less safety to patients and vulnerable residents and children, such as both the HPC and the GTC. The existing professional bodies also provide professional development and other professional support that the HPC does not do and ensure professional training.

The HPC does nothing except waste money on unnecessary administrators who have trips out and about around the country and stay, no doubt in expensive accommodation to publicize themselves for doing nothing useful at all! Get rid of them and get real about why people are not being adequately protected. If all workers in healthcare and schools who used music with patients and children, and were covered by the right level of qualifications and necessary checks it would additionally save a lot of wasted applications for repeated CRB checks currently required for for each separate new project, even if that is only for a few weeks, causing more costs and waste of police time and resources.

But scandalous Healthcare Trust decisions to spend, for example, £19000 on a 6 week project (Derbyshire) for graduate musicians with no health or psychology training to work with people with severe alzheimers is a scandalous and squandered waste of money. That money, spent on only 6 weeks, is nearly enough for a full-time salary for a properly qualified music therapist, who could be working for the same amount, part-time, with several groups in the same week for a whole year on that same amount of squandered and wasted tax payers money, provided in part by the Arts Council and in part by the Trust, who ironically refuse to fund music therapists and are contributing to the cause of unchecked, untrained workers in healthcare and educational settings. Ironically the same area is one of few in the country that currently employs no music therapists. The HPC has done nothing to address this problem and to protect those people and ensure they have adequate professional and competent workers working with them and not simply using them as their practice and experiment to see if they enjoy the work or not. There needs to be better regulation, but the HPC is not the answer and it is robbing me and others of necessary funds whilst not protecting the public against unskilled workers.

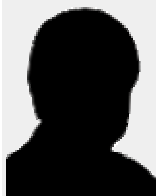
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Posted by gajackman July 12, 2010 at 13:33

So far the HPC's attempt to regulate counselling and psychotherapy has shown a complete lack of understanding of what either of these actually are. For me this demonstrates precisely why it should be abolished. It not only undermines public faith in professional bodies but shifts the focus, undermining the integrity of the psychotherapist who practices from a place of endless reflective learning, monitored and reflected by peers, not an externalised, tick-box of inappropriate criteria. Look at what has happened to the teachers? They are disempowered, demoralised and enervated by increasing demands upon their time to 'cover their backs'. How could a highly motivated and profoundly trained body of people be monitored by a bunch of beaurocrats who simply are not practitioners?

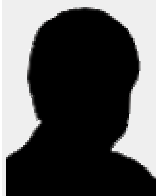
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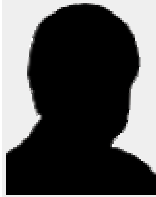


Posted by gajackman July 12, 2010 at 13:34

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[Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate](#)



Posted by awaters July 12, 2010 at 13:57

I agree. HPC adds an unnecessary and expensive bureaucracy, with blanket rules inappropriate to diverse professions. There are many useful comments above.

[Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate](#)



Posted by rdarwazeh July 12, 2010 at 15:13

I fully agree with all the above comments. The HPC is managerialism and bureacracy gone mad. It neither supports high standards of professional practice in a way that is appropriate to each different profession it is aiming to regulate, nor does it protect the interests of patients, clients or service users.

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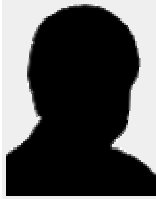


Posted by PeteSm July 12, 2010 at 15:46

It is clear from a wide range of medical professionals that the HPC is incapable of dealing with the individualism of patient / client / therapist needs and as such niether protects or supports the public.

As a counsellor signed up to existing professional bodies, I strongly agree with this call to stop state regulation of counsellors & psychotherapists and urge the government to review the efficacy of the HPC.

Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate



Posted by richardc July 12, 2010 at 17:57

I agree, having read most of the above and as I am facing possible regulation by the HPC as a therapist myself.

I believe the HPC is masquerading as a protector of the public but has become ironically a malignant cancer preying on and causing damage to the health professions and trying to take over other neighbouring fields such as mine.

E.g. replacing true ethicality, professionalism, responsibility and competence with the deeply unhealthy and hollow illusion of safety by over-regulation, the superficial veneer of ignorantly stipulated but rigidly enforced CPD requirements and a myopic approach to professional standards,

riding roughshod over reason, facts and the true application of justice to all parties,

constricting individuality and oppressing creativity for practitioners, restricting freedom and choice for patients / clients,

behaving arrogantly, failing to listen to or respect genuinely the many voices of considered objection,

usurping authority but not itself demonstrating the accountability it requires of others,

devouring public and practitioners' funds,

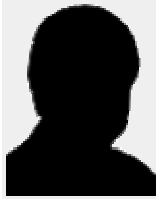
and threatening to damage the field of counselling and psychotherapy, intrude on the therapeutic relationship and impinge on the therapeutic space / frame, while displaying virtually no understanding whatsoever of the varied and deep nature of these waters, to the eventual detriment of clients.

The HPC is growing into the very antithesis of what it is supposed to engender in the professional practice of those it seeks to control.

It is an outrage that the HPC itself continues to practice in such an unhealthy and potentially damaging way, given its title and its intended function, and even more so that its remit is ever widening.

Remove the Health Professions Cancer now!

Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate



Posted by ArthurMusgrave July 13, 2010 at 00:30

The HPC has shown that it lacks all credibility. It has sought to 'capture' counselling seemingly purely as business exercise that will enable it to expand and increase its income without any regard to first principles as to whether it should be regulating this field. This cynicism brings its whole function as a regulator into question.

The first question the HPC needs to consider is whether there is a problem it should be addressing – in other words, is there a significant level of abuse perpetrated by unregulated counsellors and psychotherapists? Irresponsible advocates of HPC regulation, who should know better, continue to pontificate and claim that some 5% of therapists are abusive. But they can't produce proper figures to substantiate their assertions and the HPC has not sought to identify accurate data itself. If there is a hidden problem here surely professional indemnity insurance for therapists would be much higher than it is? You have only to pause for a moment to compare what therapists pay with the premiums that the average lawyer pays to realise that the danger the abusive therapist poses must be relatively low.

However the second question that the HPC has chosen not to consider is equally important. Even if there is a problem that needs to be addressed, how should that be done? Does it necessarily follow that HPC regulation is the best solution?

The evidence suggests that if mediation were introduced something like 90% of existing complaints would be resolved to the satisfaction of complainants. HPC regulation does not provide mediation as a first step – why not? More importantly, why does it look as though that HPC cannot be bothered to think broadly about the best way of addressing disputes between therapists and their clients?

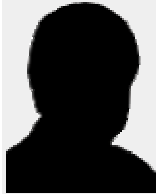
Furthermore, the world's leading authority on counselling and psychotherapy regulation, Professor Daniel B. Hogan, has suggested that much of the need for regulation of the kind proposed by the HPC might be removed if, instead and where necessary, changes were considered to the criminal law. But first we need proper research as to the nature and scale of the problem.

But there is a more fundamental problem with the regulation of counselling and psychotherapy by the HPC and that is that the most detailed and thorough research – that by Professor Bruce E Wampould – has shown that counselling and psychotherapy are not health professions. It will therefore undoubtedly cause endless confusion to future generations of new entrants to the field if HPC becomes the regulator. The HPC has stubbornly refused to consider this evidence and has even suggested that it is irrelevant. But there is no doubt that future training curriculum will be distorted if, contrary to the research, the medical model continues to underpin decision making

about policy.

How can anyone trust the objectivity of a regulator that discounts evidence and research that questions its own role? An undergraduate argument on this level would be dismissed with contempt. So why does HPC continue to be listened to with respect? It is not fit for purpose.

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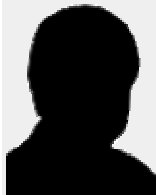


Posted by Thereus July 13, 2010 at 09:39

I agree.

The HPC does nothing that the proper professional bodies are not better at. It does it at great cost, using expensive lawyers who are ignorant of clinical issues and with a clumsy, beaurocratic style that serves nobody. End them.

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Posted by pbarham July 13, 2010 at 10:38

I am in entire agreement with this proposal. The HPC should be put to sleep.

[Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate](#)



Posted by mgwt July 13, 2010 at 18:51

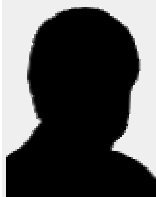
Regulating bodies are very important for Counsellors/Psychotherapists. For clients and for practitioners.

HPC has no such power. Controlling the CPD training cannot give an insight into our competency as c.ounsellors/therapists

On the other hand BACP is not a well equipped organisation either. It has no facility to actually check if you are a qualified therapist or not.

So HPC and BACP cannot be used as regulatory bodies.

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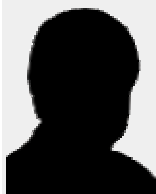


Posted by CarlPP July 13, 2010 at 20:10

I have read all of the above comments and totally agree. I was an early signatory to the Alliance for Counselling & Psychotherapy Against State Regulation petition, having been deeply concerned by the HPC proposals since they were first mooted. Notwithstanding the unsustainable and unnecessary costs involved in the HPC, it is unsuitable for the purpose of regulating the talking therapies, most of whose practitioners work outside of the NHS and would ultimately destroy most, if not all, that is good about counselling and psychotherapy. Regulation can only exist where there are tightly controlled hoops through which to jump, and that does not permit any creativity or divergence from those hoops, yet it is from this very creativity that great progress can develop - something is created, tried out, found to be successful and talked and written about, or if not successful, abandoned. Talk of protecting the public is nonsensical. Medicine and nursing are both regulated, but have both been subject to seriously dangerous (murderous) rogue practitioners. We already have effective and robust professional standards bodies, without this quango.

The HPC is a quango created by a desperate attempt to control all levels of society and thereby destroy autonomy, and I hope that this new coalition government can show its mettle and disband the HPC without delay.

[Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate](#)



Posted by cec57 July 14, 2010 at 22:18

I agree

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Posted by londonvoter July 15, 2010 at 09:59

this is a silly proposal, As a registered health professional with the HPC, I do agree with the frustrations of my colleagues about the HPC, however abolition is not the answer.

The HPC requires reform.

Are people seriously suggesting that all health regulation should be abolished, by following the logic of abolition of the HPC, by extension people support abolition of the NMC< GMC< GOC< GDC etc, this is ludicrous!

Health professionals must be regulated, otherwise we would be in a situation where anyone could practice by virtue of training. The only way of controlling access to dangerous medications, medical procedures etc and to ensure competence is via regulation, which I agree the HPC in its current format fails to do.

Have 15 completely differing professions (and growing) under one umbrella body is dangerous and not fit for purpose, and does nothing to protect the public the prime function of any regulator of health professionals.

As opticians have the GOC

Doctors have the GMC

nurses, midwives and health visitors have the NMC

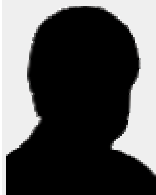
Osteopaths have the GOsC

and so forth surely the answer is to have uniprofessional councils, then it is clear that either abolition of the HPC with replacement by similar bodies as above e.g. general physiotherapy council, general podiatric council etc would be more sensible, or reform the HPC to have a structure similar to its predecessor the CPSM and reinstates the uniprofessional boards as this would be a far cheaper option on the tax payer and would indeed function corrected.

As this only requires secondary legislation it would take minimal parliamentary time and minimal cost. After all the whole reason the professions were informed that the HPC would be set up by secondary legislation rather than primary legislation was due to the speed with which it could be changed in structure and function, indeed it has already been reformed once since its inception, by removal of the right of professionals to elect representatives to the council, so there is precedent.

I implore the Secretary of State and his official to ask the parliamentary draftsman to look into this issue forthwith

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Posted by rosherville July 15, 2010 at 12:15

The HPC attempts to regulate a number of quite different professions.

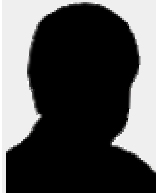
The needs are so varied that a 'one size fits all' organisation is inappropriate and in reality does not work.

The CPSM was not perfect but functioned far better than the HPC.

The HPC is expensive for registrants, is not fit for purpose and should go as soon as possible.

As far as Podiatry goes a 'General Podiatric Council' is the way forward, it could protect patients and be fair to registrants at a reasonable cost !

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Posted by londonvoter July 15, 2010 at 14:03

I agree with the posted above, who appears to agree with my original post, as a podiatrist i feel a general podiatric council is the best option, and my physiotherapy colleagues feel a similar body for their profession is long overdue.

I do think it could be set up at minimal cost e.g. all the current HPC professions could have their own council, but share a secretariat e.g. registrar, registration and legal officers i.e. they could be transferred from the HPC avoiding redundancy payments etc, and the actual professional council would require only a small number to be effective.

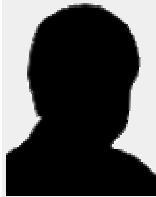
As an alternative keep the HPC but reform its structure to resemble something similar to the old CPSM with its uniprofessional boards, though these would in all but name function as uniprofessional councils, and I think it would be hard for the government to justify the opticians having , osteopaths and chiropractors all having their own councils for regulations but other professions continuing to be under one body, especially given that physiotherapists and podiatrists are similar in numbers to opticians and osteopaths.

As I stated secondary legislation is all that is required and could be implemented in a matter of months.

Perhaps people can make an appointment with their MP, the summer recess is coming up and is an ideal time to raise this issue, and ask them to lobby health ministers via

written questions, and to gather enough support from other MP's to put down an early day motion in house when it returns after the recess

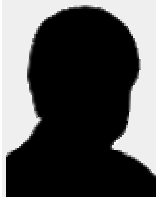
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Posted by kitos July 15, 2010 at 18:02

The HPC is a waste of space. The vast majority of the public have no idea what or who they are. They understood State Registered as it meant something. They are toothless and don't actually protect our titles or our qualifications... hence all the 'grandparenting' that took place. If you report a protected title being used by a non registered practitioner what do they do? I have not heard anything back from them and yet they are apparently charging me to look after my 'benefits' and 'title'. A very poor deal I think. Get rid of them and let's get back to State Registered and sanity and saving money.

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Posted by DavidL July 17, 2010 at 10:26

It is indeed an expensive bureaucratic scam against its enforced membership, whom it does nothing to represent.

Worse, it has been empowered to run kangaroo courts. As reported in the Daily Telegraph of 17/7/10, p11 under 'Scientist said junior could be a bomber', it has applied a 3-year caution to the record of one Elizabeth Howard (with whom I have no connection and whom I have never met), a biomedical scientist of Manchester who, at 2 outside functions, allegedly said -after a few drinks- that another departing member of staff 'might be able to get a job as a suicide bomber'.

The observation is tasteless and may well be the basis of action for slander, but why is it any business of the HPC to police the intemperate observations of its members outside their professional duties?

The remit of this trumped up organisation should be severely cut along with the fees that it charges its conscripted membership

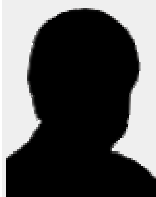
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Posted by pod1 July 17, 2010 at 17:40

I agree with my colleague 'Londonvoter'. A Council for each of the professions with proper representation is the ideal. However, I am cynical and do not believe that this can happen. The reason? The HPC exists for the purpose of employing civil servants and providing fat pensions on their retirement, which is why it flows like a sluggish amoeba engulfing more and more professions as it fattens. I suspect that the new government would abolish it like a shot if it was funded by public money, but it is not. It is funded by means of a stealth tax levied on the registrants, the majority of whom would lose their employment (many with the NHS) if they elected to de-register. My reading of history shows that the U.K lost the American colonies in circa 1776 on the rallying cry 'No taxation without representation'. Yet 200 years later, this is precisely the situation we find ourselves in. Sadly, in my view, unless the professional bodies take the lead in making the appropriate representations to the government - and then to the level of rebellion - the status quo will be maintained.

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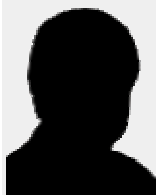


Posted by redbaron July 18, 2010 at 10:10

I'm not a professional effected by these rules but having read through all the comments you have my full support for this. Clearly there are plenty of far more effective provisions to help protect me from the very rare case of incompetent professionals.

This is just a distraction duplication and attempt at the sort of totalitarian control from the top that this country needs to strip out of our lives.

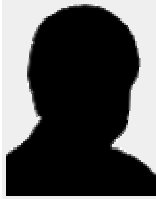
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Posted by rose101uk July 20, 2010 at 13:57

I agree completely. The HPC is a quango which is more concerned with controlling practitioners in a way that destroys choice, and providing employment for its own, than providing any advantage to the public. It should be abolished and psychotherapists and counsellors should continue to be regulated by the experts in the field, their peers.

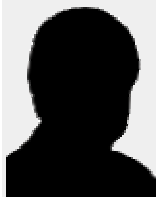
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Posted by mvhansmann July 20, 2010 at 15:14

I am in agreement with regulation for the counselling/psychotherapy profession, but not by the HPC, which I agree should be abolished. I do not think it is fit for purpose and that BACP is in a much better position to regulate the profession and safeguard the interests of clients.

Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate



Posted by Newalan July 21, 2010 at 23:48

Before HPC there were State Registered Chiropodists and private Chiropodists, both were regulated by their own institutes.

State Registered Chiropodists were automatically accepted into HPC system (regardless of how long they have been practising) but the private Chiropodists had to go through many loops hops and can only register if they had been practicing for a number of years.

The upshot is that those private newly qualified Chiropodists, may not call themselves Chiropodists but they can call them selves things like Foot Health Practitioners. Many are practicing as such, so as the years go by these newly qualified Chiropodists will have established themselves and never wanting to join HPC.

10 years from now I can see hardly many Chiropodists or other practitioners belonging to HPC if it still exists. One way or the other HPC's days are numbered.

Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate



Posted by alfie July 23, 2010 at 00:06

I absolutely agree with this proposal.

The HPC are an intimidating fee collecting quango.

As a Chiropodist/Podiatrist I jumped through the many hoops of the grandparenting system that the State Registered Chiropodists didn't have to.
I did 6 years training and have been practising in London for 16 years without a word of complaint from the public.

No effort has been made to bring state registered and private practitioners together so that the training is uniform, comparable and compatible.

The HPC's rules for CPD are crazy. There is not enough relevant courses to go on, and the HPC insist that the courses we attend have to be 'relevant' to our practice or they will not be counted. Ridiculous!

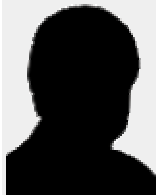
There is also very little opportunity to incorporate business with important further study without giving up substantial work time.

Education for most Chiropodists is always high on the agenda.

Each practitioners Association can govern the concerns of its members. They did so in the past and can in the future.

We do not need another tier of beurocracy called the HPC.

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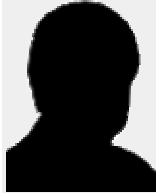
Posted by amurphy July 23, 2010 at 14:24

The vast majority of the counselling and psychotherapy profession agree wholeheartedly with the concept of regulation and of setting high standards of training and entry into the profession. Regulatory frameworks are already in place within the profession. These frameworks are based on a thorough understanding of the therapeutic frame, of the patients own role in the therapeutic endeavour. These frameworks whilst not perfect, respect, represent and understand the nature of therapeutic practice and allow for proper mediation when difficulties arise. This is a model of proper responsible self regulation within the profession. The HPC does not offer anything like this model of regulation and has so far treated the consultation on its fitness to regulate our profession with utter contempt. Those of us who have taken a great deal of time to comment to the consultation process, to describe our practice in full, to advise the PLG and the HPC as to why the HPC model of regulation is not fit for purpose for our profession have been systematically ignored.

I agree with other comments that the HPC is an expensive and misguided regulatory model for the professions of psychotherapy and counselling. The professional bodies and the alliance against state regulation have suggested to HPC and to the government many

times over that an alternative to the HPC is to be recommended. An alternative model of regulation is already in place within the professional bodies and can be unified . It is also supported by existing criminal laws which are sufficient for cases of serious mal practice .

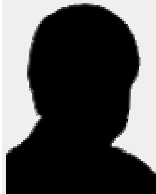
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Posted by mark_widdowson July 23, 2010 at 15:43

I agree

[Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate](#)



Posted by joeberks July 23, 2010 at 19:13

The quicker it goes the better

[Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate](#)



Posted by phawtin July 23, 2010 at 19:17

As a podiatrist who is sensible enough not to practice clinically and who is employed as a practice education facilitator covering AHPs, nurses and midwives, I have vast experience of the standards of education for both the HPC and NMC.

I can see that both the HPC and NMC fail to be fit for purpose - the HPC has taken to many professions on under its remit and its guidelines/standards for education are far too vague to be of any use, while the NMC NMC appears to be the polar opposite.

At least the NMC conducts annual inspections of the HEI s and practice placement through Mott McDonald and clinical educators (mentors in nursing and midwifery) must pass an NMC recognised course at level 2 or above - unlike the HPC, poor students can be sent to any old person on clinical practice outside the HEI. This is fine if you are a physiotherapist or OT as they have the 'Apple" course - but if, as I was, stupid at 18 and undertook chiropody - well you are left with a hopeless professional society that provides nothing in the way of preparation for mentorship and preceptorship.

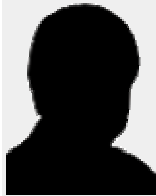
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Posted by dndoohan July 23, 2010 at 19:43

As the Membership Secretary of the National Council of Psychotherapists (1971), many, if not all, of our Members feel that the HPC is a totally useless, expensive quango that in no way fulfills any need other than their own. They have no real idea of the work that Counsellors and Psychotherapists carry out on a daily basis and just wish to impose their own ideas of how we should work. The idea that they have been formed to protect the public is a breathtaking nonsense that we all hope will soon be abolished.

[Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate](#)



Posted by bhsmethurst July 23, 2010 at 21:24

I agree

[Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate](#)



Posted by johncorn July 24, 2010 at 12:15

Dear Prime Minister,

If nothing else will sway you on this subject then please, please consider the amount of money that is pouring into the HPC.

This is money that is NOT being circulated in the economy where it would do most good.

It is money that is accounted as a business expense within private practices so you are LOSING tax income.

The vast majority of HPC funds is spent on administration and legal costs in pursuit of complaints which were previously, and very ably, dealt with at managerial level within health organisations.

The HPC is costing a huge amount of money to achieve a task which was more than

adequately regulated by professional bodies or, in the worst case, by criminal proceedings.

Get rid of the HPC !!

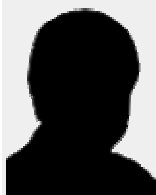
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Posted by brownpods July 25, 2010 at 14:04

Yes please !. The CPSM had its faults but i would welcome it back with open arms if it were to re-replace the HPC. Myself and my wife (also a registrant) and a number of my NHS associates were de-registered at the end of the last period due to (apparent)late submission for re-registration and payment, due to errors relating to changed addresses and similar administrative matters which meant that HPC had out of date contact details. It is arguable whether some of us were to blame but the HPC was adamant in every case I was aware of that they werent informed of change and it was the registrants fault in every case (law of averages - highly improbable). The resultant time spent on endless telephone calls with different HPC departments and staff, the significant additional financial cost, hassle, confusion, beaurocracy, unhelpful attitude, need to obtain new professional references, and to re-apply from scratch as if we were newly qualified never previously registered(we didnt get struck off it was just an administrative matter) and for some of us the inevitable suspension and need to take unplanned annual leave or unpaid leave from our NHS jobs once we were de-registered, which resulted in cancellation of clinics, operations (so patients suffered and were inconvenienced), etc etc - need i go on (i could !) - well if i ever needed convincing that HPC should go this would have done it in spades. However i had already come to that conclusion long before this debacle, on the grounds that its supposed main reason for existing, to protect the public, is an absolute nonsense. In my profession, the protected titles of chiropodist and podiatrist have simply resulted in the unregistrerd and unregisterable and their various training institutions and associations using alternative and unprotected titles such as Foot Health Practitioner/Professional etc etc. and to go by their national newspaper marketing they continue to flourish. The public are no more protected than before and the HPC is therefore failing in its main duty. Hence there is no logical case to be made for its continued existence.

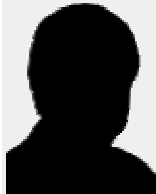
Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate



Posted by carolinej July 25, 2010 at 23:19

Please disband this wasteful body who offer me nothing in return for the fee they charge me as a psychologist. I am also required by my NHS employer to maintain chartered status and divisional membership with the BPS and this is just another expense which makes part time work as a mother of young children less viable. I am particularly concerned by their proposed audits of the CPD records of a percentage of practitioner psychologists and their apparent total lack of understanding of what constitutes appropriate professional development. I feel this quango is a worthless exercise and that as a body they offer little in the way of protection to the public as they have no understanding of the professions they regulate and seek to regulate. Please end this bureaucratic burden which most penalises those working part time or who offer affordable therapy to members of the public (whilst being regulated by their own professional bodies)as all have to pay the same extortionate fee in addition to their other registrations and professional insurance premiums.

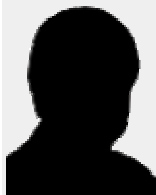
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Posted by carolinej July 25, 2010 at 23:30

Please disband this wasteful body who offer me nothing in return for the fee they charge me as a psychologist. I am also required by my NHS employer to maintain chartered status and divisional membership with the BPS and this is just another expense which makes part time work as a mother of young children less viable. I am particularly concerned by their proposed audits of the CPD records of a percentage of practitioner psychologists and their apparent total lack of understanding of what constitutes appropriate professional development. I feel this quango is a worthless exercise and that as a body they offer little in the way of protection to the public as they have no understanding of the professions they regulate and seek to regulate. Please end this bureaucratic burden which most penalises those working part time or who offer affordable therapy to members of the public (whilst being regulated by their own professional bodies)as all have to pay the same extortionate fee in addition to their other registrations and professional insurance premiums.

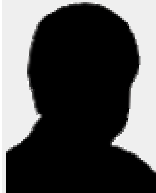
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Posted by carolinej July 25, 2010 at 23:33

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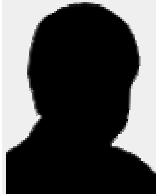
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Posted by desarmstrong July 26, 2010 at 14:32

I am in whole-hearted agreement with this!

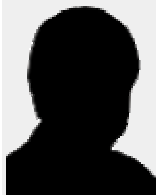
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Posted by Kyrret July 26, 2010 at 18:25

I agree

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Posted by nsummmerton July 27, 2010 at 11:46

The HPC are using the power invested in them by the government, to implement a dictatorial system of rules that will prevent a continuation of an already healthy and effective self- governing profession.

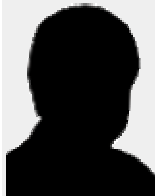
The introduction of these regulations will undoubtedly reduce the effectiveness and development of the Counselling and Psychotherapy profession. To do so is short sighted and anti-democratic, it is necessary that we prevent the current plans going ahead.

If the HPC are going to regulate this complex and diverse profession then they need to a lot more research, or at the very least reflect upon research that already exists.

Many of us are aware of the negative impact state regulation has had on other professions, due to a reduction of trust in the individual, and an increase of regulations that achieve nothing but use up an individual's capacity to achieve anything useful within their working day. We have witnessed how the effectiveness of individuals and organisations has been reduced due to over regulation; this is evident in our NHS, the Education system and within Social Work.

We know that by not trusting the professionals in these areas, the regulating bodies have given non-professionals the task of policing the professionals, and due to ignorance of how these professions function on a human level, this has resulted in the professional being unable to do the job effectively because there is too much time spent completing paperwork, to prove that they are doing the job as required by the non-professionals, who have set regulations that are ill informed and ineffective.

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Posted by dedicated July 27, 2010 at 12:55

Nsummerton (above) puts the case very well for HPC to butt out of regulation of counselling and psychotherapy.

Mention of the regulation of Social Work brings to mind the government's recent announcement that HPC will be asked to take this over from the General Social Work Council. It should not escape the attention of those opposed to any and all over-regulation of this type that not only is this move likely to compound the problems of lack of trust of professionals etc already mentioned, but it must also raise the question of costs and benefits to the various 'stakeholders'.

One has to wonder how the HPC, operating its current regulatory model which relies on paying huge fees to its 'legal partners' of £1000s per day, is going to survive if it does not continuously Hoover up more 'professionals' - willing or unwilling to pay for Title Protection (it's NOT Public Protection, for sure!). It's looking increasingly as if HPC have bitten off more than it can chew with counsellors and psychotherapists, many thousands of whom have already declared they will adopt Alternative Professional Accountability (formerly known as Principled Non-Compliance) -

see <http://www.allianceforcandp.org/> for more. As increasing numbers of C&P

professional bodies lobby their members, that number is likely to rise, and the total of 50,000 or so HPC were hoping to extract fees from may dwindle to the point where they must surely wonder whether it's worth all the hassle.

But, lo, along comes the DH with another gift: 100,761 (estimated) social workers and social care workers. Yippee! Well over £7.5m into their coffers to keep afloat their ludicrous "regulatory" smoke and mirrors machine.

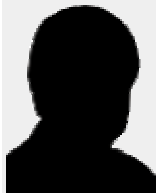
Regulation is necessary. Of that, there's no doubt. But who regulates the regulators? Where does the buck stop? Why bestow another £7.5m of potential fees on a body who have so singularly failed to demonstrate that they are capable of what they say they are doing in any of the spheres in which they currently "regulate"?

What is the thinking behind the DH's decision to hand over Social Work to the HPC Fitness to Practice Circus? Is it because they imagine HPC will do a better job than the professionals who make up the Social Work Council? Do they seriously imagine that the critical shortage of social workers and social care workers will be addressed by such a move?

I just don't get it! Isn't this exactly the sort of knee-jerk reaction for which the current government used to criticise the previous one?

DH - please - before you charge the HPC with any other task of "regulation", please take into account the views and opinions of those professionals who are directly affected. The best way to protect the public from poor quality social work or similar interventions isn't by blaming and shaming under-resourced, poorly managed and supervised social workers after the event in HPC kangaroo courts. It's by fostering a culture in which professional standards (of whatever occupational group) can be continuously vetted and improved and in which consumers (individual, public or corporate) of professional services can be fully informed and educated about their choices they are making.

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Posted by Rosatti July 31, 2010 at 14:21

I have posted my views at the beginning of this discussion and as a health professional regulated by the HPC I have to warn everybody out there about extreme bullying tactics with regards to the HPC enforcing their Standards on Continuous Professional Development, threatening registrants to be removed if in their view they do not reach

their CPD standards. It is an extremely distressing process being threatened with removal when one knows and has testimonies from all around that one is an extremely efficient and excellent health professional in their field of speciality. The HPC is controlled by nobody. The DHS has no powers and CHRC has no statutory powers over them. They can do what they like and threaten your livelihood.

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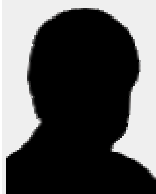


Posted by mrsangry August 01, 2010 at 11:35

I absolutely support the abolition of the HPC. The HPC do nothing to protect either the public or health professionals and is therefore unfit for purpose. I have yet to meet a patient who has heard of them

When this new government was elected, I wrote to Health Secretary Andrew Lansley, outlining my numerous complaints against the HPC and suggesting it be abolished immediately. Two weeks later I had a letter from the DoH informing me that the HPC is independent from government and therefore cannot be abolished! She went on to say the HPC is governed by the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence (CHRE) www.chre.org.uk and any complaints should be directed to them.

Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate



Posted by rusgandy August 01, 2010 at 13:49

I agree. RG

Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate

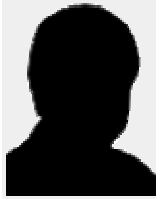


Posted by Rosatti August 01, 2010 at 20:44

The CHRE has no statutory powers over the HPC. It can only act in an advisory role. I have got this in writing from the DoH/Andrew Lansley. It is therefore pointless to complain to the CHRE because the HPC know that they have no powers over them. If the health professionals - and in future the social workers - do not want to be bullied and threatened by the arrogant behaviour of the HPC then we need to keep campaigning

until the new government gets the message that somehow the powers of the HPC need to be curbed or abolish it.

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Posted by IraGreen August 02, 2010 at 20:30

I agree and I don't think we can afford to turn a blind eye to the importance of putting a stop to the HPC and their attempts to regulate the counselling and psychotherapy profession. The HPC is not fit for purpose, in my opinion. It's a joke and not a very funny joke.

If you truly believe in helping people, please use your voice and lets put a stop to this very dangerous joke. For all those who want to help and those who have yet to find their voice...

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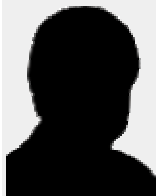


Posted by Andy3142 August 04, 2010 at 14:23

I agree. The HPC is part of New Labour thinking, a cross between managerialism and Stalinism. It's the idea that nothing works right without regulation, that nobody can be trusted, that no area of life works without a central government diktat.

As a therapist I have the highest possible internal standards and I belong to a reputable professional body. Junk it now.

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Posted by rosherville August 08, 2010 at 10:01

There`s strength in numbers !

We cannot expect quangos or politicians to listen to logic and common sense if it affects them in any way.

It will take majority groups (hopefully backed by their professional bodies) to either refuse to register or deregister, informing Government why. Then the HPC will disappear and each profession have its own appropriate regulatory body.

The HPC should have been smothered at birth, what were the professional bodies thinking about ?

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Posted by dedicated August 08, 2010 at 13:06

"What were the professional bodies thinking about?" asks rosherville.

Answer: Power - as in the power obtained by sucking up to the State so that it will parcel out to you (and your profession) that bit of the otherwise uncolonised territory it judges you are 'fit' to managing on its behalf, and thereby persuading the public (your customers, its subjects) that 'everything in the garden is lovely'. The HPC is little more than a bailiff, when all's said and done.

The problem for us psychotherapists working independently of the State is that the whole process of power disposal and distribution thus enacted is precisely what we aim in our practice to help people (our clients) to become more aware of, to critique and, if they choose, to replace with something that is a better fit for them.

Currently, the right of said clients to choose freely with whom and how they wish to discuss their personal issues is well protected (by the State and its laws). This is what I, and most of my colleagues who practise independently in a range of personal and professional development fields from business coaching to psychotherapy understand by 'protecting the public'.

Some of our number, it must be said, appear to have been persuaded by a bureaucracy-obsessed State that the greater good is to be found in the protection of their title [think 'enclosures', baronial rights, etc]. This number, as a percentage of the likes of British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy or (in the case of the practitioner psychologists now sacrificed to HPC) British Psychological Society, is actually quite small. It's just that they have become prisoners of the power they have corralled for themselves within their respective organisations, and seem no longer able to let go of it. The type of regulation they aspire to, and have always aspired to, is the regulation not of standards, fitness to practice etc but of the Market. They seek, through Protection of

Title, to carve out a fiefdom for themselves under the aegis of and by the Grace and Favour of the State - which just happens, in the meantime, to have devised indirect (and extremely botched) methods of out-sourcing its Regulation Services to a completely toothless CHRE and a utterly incompetent, uneconomical and potentially illegal (think: double jeopardy) Health Professions Council.

So there's your answer to the question: "What were the professional bodies thinking about?"

The problem with many of the psy-professional bodies is that the lust of some of their number for 'power-over' has completely blinded them to the real need of their clients, patients, customers -- all of the clinical/non-clinical population, essentially -- for 'power-with' [think "Your Freedom"].

Could it be that those amongst the psy-professional bodies who have collaborated with the bureaucratic agenda of State-sponsored Regulators (Bailiffs) like HPC have essentially been addressing not (as they like to make out) the survival of 'counselling/psychotherapy as a profession' but their OWN survival as un-individuated children of the parent State?

As I said in a previous post, HPC2001 has all been so reminiscent of what happened in Eastern Europe in the last century. For State read Soviet Union, for Government (New Labour) read SED, for HPC read STASI, for BACP and other representatives on the Professional Liaison Group read all those thousands of oppressed citizens of the former East Germany 'prepared' to inform on each other, lest they lose their place in the queue for a new Trabant.

To the coalition government I say this. Remove or at least curb the enthusiasm of the HPC. It must stop trying to control our thoughts, stop trying to kid the public it is 'protecting them'. The Law [which the public put there from Magna Carta on] is already protecting them. It's also protecting their right to choose. HPC 'regulatory regimes' are just limiting that right, and limiting the rights of psy-practitioners (and, sadly, their unelected representatives in the 'professional' bodies) to THINK in the best interests of their clients.

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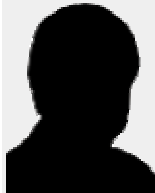


Posted by robbol August 08, 2010 at 23:14

This organisation does not serve the public. As a Paramedic, I can say in all honesty that my core skills and knowledge have deteriorated since coming under the umbrella of the

HPC. This is because so much of my time is now devoted to useless CPD research on diverse subjects that take my attention away from the essential part of the job. This may satisfy the whims of this so called professional body but does nothing to enhance patient care. If the govt is serious about protecting the patient and interested in the well being of NHS staff, then it should seriously consider abolishing this quango at the first opportunity. I am not aware of any Paramedic that has any trust or respect for this HPC, the vast majority view it as an obstruction to progress and quite unfit for purpose.

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Posted by johncorn August 09, 2010 at 12:22

Spread the word !!!

I have found that the vast majority of professionals regulated by the HPC do not know of this website. I am amazed, though extremely glad, that this, (see robbol above), seems to be the first submission from a paramedic.

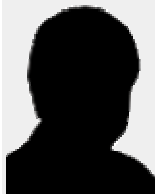
So I implore you all, pass this websites details to all of your colleagues, be they dietician, radiographer, paramedic, chiropodist it doesn't matter.

Just make them aware and ensure that they understand that they do NOT have to use their name on this website because this seems to raise fears of reprisal in many people.

Cut and copy the address shown below and pass it on !!

[http://yourfreedom.hmg.gov.\[...\]th-professions-council-hpc](http://yourfreedom.hmg.gov.[...]th-professions-council-hpc)

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Posted by hpcslave August 09, 2010 at 20:53

RELATING TO PARAMEDICS BUT RELEVANT TO ALL GROUPS REGISTERED WITH HPC

HPC protects the public from fake paramedics.... Nope Im afraid not. To the general public anyone in green is a paramedic including first responders, private medics, technicians and anyone with the AMBULANCE badge sewn on their jim jams at public

fairs etc.

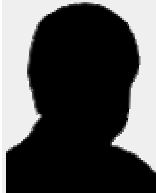
HPC protects paramedics..... How exactly. Any Paramedic who receives a written complaint to the HPC is named and shamed on the publicly viewable hpc website. Full details of the alleged incident are shown prior to any hearing and on occasions after the paramedic has been cleared in a court of law.

Hearings are heard by Lay members with no formal medical qualifications.

Inconsistent decisions on very similar cases. No Legal Precedents here folks.

The HPC does not protect the Public or the professionals it forces to register so why do we need it at all

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Posted by hpcslave August 09, 2010 at 21:01

One final note. I know it wont happen as we have yet to show a united front on important issues but what if.... just maybe....

All registrants signed a document stating that as of a particular date in 6 months or a years time, we will no longer recognise the HPC as a governing body for our various roles. What could they do if we all stood together on this. Yes we risk a problem with our employers but if there were NO REGISTERED paramedics, radiographers, OC's or others then who really has the problem? The members of staff or the organisations we work for ?

It would take some organising but it would be nice to think we could stand up and be counted on this one.

HPC registered UK Paramedic for now.

Note. I have never been subject to any investigation by the HPC. This is not sour grapes... more like optimistic thinking aloud

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Posted by johncorn August 10, 2010 at 09:49

The comment above from hpcslave goes to the heart of the matter. The public needs us, the NHS needs us.

The HPC also needs us because without their database of registrants the HPC ceases to exist. The HPC only exists because it controls a database of registrants. The proof of the qualification of those registrants was supplied by the registrants own professional bodies. The necessary information on ALL of the registered professionals already existed, and still exists, with our own professional bodies. Why do we need the HPC database?

This matter was raised previously on this site (see talus, July 11th).

A hugely important point is raised here, if a qualified, skilled, respected and valuable health professional removes themselves from the HPC list then they must be removed from employment. They are the same highly skilled professional, their qualifications are held with their professional body, but the HPC has been given the power to strip them of their professional title.

It is easy to see who is the most important in this scenario.

Without us the patients suffer, without us the NHS grinds to a halt but without the HPC who would even notice?

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Posted by rosherville August 10, 2010 at 11:23

A salutary experience and it exemplifies how the HPC regards registrants.

With 40 years unbroken registration with the CPSM/HPC behind me plus an existing direct debit, I received a letter 2 days after the close of the registration window. I was informed that I had been removed from the register because my renewal form was 'incomplete because I had not confirmed all three boxes regarding HPC's standard of proficiency, changes to health and character and Continuing Professional Development'.

I immediately 'phoned and said that I was sure that the form was correctly completed !
No, they could do nothing, I must apply for re-admittance , it`s Parliament that imposed the rules.

Could they send my form back ? No, it belongs to us.

Could I speak to the Chief Exec ? No, just his secretary.

I asked secretary to check my renewal form. Ok we`ll phone back.

Head of Customer Services – checked your form, you did cross the standard of proficiency, and Continuing Professional Development' but not changes to health and character

Would you look more closely ? Sure you havn`t ticked it.

Then I authorise you to tick it for me !!**@//!!

Could not possibly do that, health and character is the most important bit !

Just download 18 pages for re-admittance, get a certificate of character from a JP, a health check from a GP and get copies of passport and driving licence. 'Why' ? To make sure you are who you say you are and are fit and proper to be a registrant !

I conclude that this is a tickbox oriented quango, devoted to self expansion, protection of the public is nowhere to be seen. Worst of all, 'common sense' is a totally foreign concept.

I should add, I`ve been an outspoken critic of the HPC since before it`s inception, and published accordingly.

Time for Change

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Posted by *masm2010* August 10, 2010 at 13:38

This is a repost of a message sent on or around July 24th that seems to have disappeared from the collection.

PodI gets to the heart of the problems that HPC presents for HM government.

A Judicial Review of HPC's due process in regulating counselling and psychotherapy is in progress. It seems likely to conclude, that in claiming to be fit for purpose to regulate counselling and psychotherapy, they didn't even remotely do their homework, indeed they have often seemed adamant that understanding what they were regulating was not part of their remit. Alongside this, in classic late capitalist style, the HPC have chosen to

outsource responsibility for externalities such as the tedious emotional difficulties of disputes between clients and practitioners to expert 'partners' who are off the salaried and pensioned payroll.

HPC personnel say they feel hurt by claims that this makes their relationship with the psi field parasitic. A more accurate image would be that of an invading army. Yes, they negotiate with leaders of the psi territories and 'try to find a way forward' but ultimately, as the annexation of the psychologists, previously very publicly opposed to HPC regulation demonstrated, they represent over-whelming force and they are prepared to use it.

This is very important for clients. As most practitioners appreciate, coercion, the use, or threat of force, and/or sanctions, whether between parents and children, or across families, or via bullying at work, is frequently at the root of difficulties that clients bring.

And here we meet an irreconcilable paradox that makes the HPC unfit for its declared purposes, because the origins of much, even most abuse of clients by practitioners takes the form of exploitation and manipulation, i.e. the application of force in more or less subtle ways. Professional status, especially if it is state endorsed, tends to support such abuses of power, or makes it harder for clients to resist it. If we look at the HPC's framework for professional ethical probity, what do we see? Through its implementation of mandatory 'standards' and legalistic, adversarial, bureaucratic 'fitness to practise' processes, that it insists it has the right to impose, it amounts to a culture of coercion and duress. How can this demonstration of the validity of dominance avoid contaminating relationships between practitioners and psychotherapy and counselling clients?

The HPC institutionalizes a subtle but pervasive abuse of power that is contrary to clients interests. It should be abolished.

But there is a professional lobby in the way of this ambition.

Who stands to benefit from HPC regulation of counselling and psychotherapy?

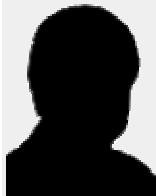
Decades of close encounters with the counselling and psychotherapy field have shown that the principle benefits of regulation are likely to accrue, not to clients but to the vested interests of well over a hundred training and accrediting bodies, including universities, that deliver courses in psychology, psychotherapy and counselling. All are businesses, all seek HPC regulation. A sub-text in the marketing of many of these courses has long been that qualification will bring 'state-regulated' status and possible access to work in the NHS. For such economic reasons the psi training industry wants

HPC regulation, and wants it so badly that despite the widely perceived failure of HPC regulation to be fit for purpose, it has been willing to compromise both its core values and the rich diversity of the psi field.

Business matters and the difficulties of entrepreneurs and academics with livelihoods at risk can be appreciated but not to the extent that we bystand the installation of a toxic form of management and external surveillance of counselling and psychotherapy by an agency of the state. One that, as has been pointed out by a major figure in the field, through control of its 'standards' will gradually produce a homogenized, HPC version of both of them. How could this ethical and creative strangulation conceivably be in the interests of clients?

Many practitioners eligible to register will take a principled stand against signing up with the HPC and won't register. HM Government would be well advised to follow their lead and encourage the HPC to drop plans to regulate counselling and psychotherapy.

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Posted by rosherville August 11, 2010 at 11:53

I stand to be corrected but I heard that a number of Podiatrists decided to deregulate, They informed the HPC of their intention to continue to use the title. After 2 years the HPC had taken no action against them ! Of course, only those in private practice could take this course, those in the NHS would have been dismissed.

I understand that legal opinion was that if a qualification in Podiatry was held and the profession had been carried for a period of more than 3 years before the HPC; then under Euro law they were entitled to continue unhindered.

Perhaps the Psychologists should check this out !

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Posted by johncorn August 12, 2010 at 14:50

A little note to demonstrate how the HPC fails to protect the public.

I am a Chiropodist and I recently visited an elderly, diabetic couple in their home. They explained that their usual Chiropodist was off sick.

As well as being diabetic this couple have serious underlying health problems.

On completion of treatment the husband looked a bit bemused so I asked if there was a problem.

He asked me why I had taken notes of their treatment I thought this was a strange question and explained the importance of keeping accurate notes of all treatments for future reference.

His next question really stopped me in my tracks.

He asked why I had used two separate sets of instruments, one for him and one for his wife !!

You will have guessed by now that their usual practitioner is not really a registered chiropodist but operates under an alternative title and not only fails to keep records but uses one set of, unsterilized, instruments for all their patients !!

Incidents like this are happening on a daily basis all over the country.

The HPC has no power to prevent it and, naturally, has absolutely no interest in the matter.

This pointless quango DOES NOT PROTECT THE PUBLIC !!!

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Posted by dedicated August 12, 2010 at 16:27

Following the post by 'johncorn' above.

You're quite right. The HPC is of itself powerless, as would be any body of faceless, disconnected bureaucrats, to intervene here.

It necessarily relies on other podiatrists, dieticians, practitioner psychologists, paramedics, etc to report such incidents, for them to set their cogs in some sort of

motion, taking in some cases anything up to SIX MONTHS to get any sort of hearing and up to a further TWO YEARS to take any sort of "action" [e.g. "strike them off", the outcome of which will not stop a Podiatrist morphing into a foot care practitioner, still less stop him/her practising below acceptable standards].

The telling of tales by colleagues within the wider Name Shame Blame culture that is everywhere these days is what is relied upon for the above to happen. Indeed the HPC would not, COULD not exist in any normal culture in which there is a decent balance between freedom and responsibility. ["Please, Miss, So-and-so said a rude word, and the NHS manager dealing with it couldn't be bothered to punish her, and I'm feeling so crap in my job at the moment that I just want to hit back at So-and-so because I hate her, so there!]. And absolutely no improvement to patient care occurs whatsoever.

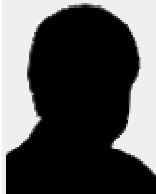
In case readers/contributors have not come across it yet, Janet Low's excellent blog contains numerous examples of how the HPC is manipulated by otherwise ineffectual NHS staff or management (or others with some axe to grind) into escalating their unresolved employment disputes to State level.

And they call this protecting the public!

Here's the link:

<http://hpcwatchdog.blogspot.com/>

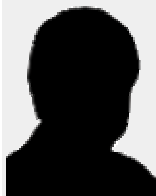
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Posted by physiopod August 20, 2010 at 00:50

I agree the HPC should be abolished.

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Posted by Rosatti August 21, 2010 at 11:14

I have been selected this year to submit y CPD profile together with my re-registration. I have followed the example of my own professional body which is published on the hpc website. I have followed the written guidelines (they are now available on the hpc website as video under Continuous Professional Development) but stil keep having it

thrown back at me as not meeting their standards, despite having added a further 5 CPD activities Below I am just quoting the official hpc guidelines and quotes from the hpc which I received.

"The registrant has explained how her EXPERIENCE has improved the quality of her work and how this experience has benefited the service user. The standards could be met if the registrant can show links as to how her CPD activities within the registration period have improved her work and benefited the service user."

In the hpc guidelines they list amongst many, the following to be CPD activities:
"Learning by Doing", "Reflective Practice", " Gaining and learning from EXPERIENCE"

Can anyone make sense of the assessors comments ?

Next, I am being told that "Standard 1 states that a registrant must PROVIDE a continuous and up-to-date record (does up-to-date mean dated?) of their CPD activities. In this case the assessors are looking for a continuous list covering the registration period May 2008 to April 2010. Please provide a full dated list of your CPD activities for the entire registration period. "

I have always followed their printed guidelines and chosen to keep my CPD records in 2 Lever Arch Files. Their Guidelines state:...."or you might keep a folder in which you store any documents relating to your CPD. This means that you can keep your personal record in a format that suits you. This also means that you can plan and undertake CPD which is relevant to you and your job and which fits with how you prefer to learn. Standard 1 states a registrant must MAINTAIN (note NOT PROVIDE) a continuous up-to-date (note NOT DATED) accurate record of your CPD activities. You might keep a folder in which you store any documents relating to your CPD. This means that you can keep your personal record in a format that suits you. WE NEVER ASK TO SEE YOUR COMPLETE CPD RECORD FOLDERS.

AND finally to add insult to injury, I have also been told that "However, we do not consider a registrants day to day work activities to be CPD activities." The official hpc guidelines state"you should be able to show that your CPD activities are part of your work, contribute to your work and are not separate from it."

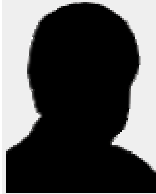
I have consistently been trying to explain to the hpc in lengthy written statements that experience and reflective practice is the main contributor to improve knowledge (and as you can see from the above comment by the assessors, they have acknowledged this). But now they have moved the goal post again and say that day to day work activities are not considered to be CPD activity, despite the fact that they list "Learning by Doing" as a

recognised CPD activity.

I have pointed all the above out to the hpc.

Can anyone make sense of the above ?

Please login to flag this comment as inappropriate



Posted by johncorn August 21, 2010 at 18:20

With reference to the submission by `Rosatti` above.

CPD is a blunt instrument wielded with gusto by the HPC to show registrants just how powerful it is.

May I refer readers to the following which is taken directly from the HPC website.

The HPC comments are marked with .. [HPC]

The comments marked ... [My Response] , are my own.

The HPC publication from which this information was taken can be downloaded from here...

[http://www.hpc-uk.org/\[...\]/10001314CPD_and_your_registration.pdf](http://www.hpc-uk.org/[...]/10001314CPD_and_your_registration.pdf)

The particular reference to CPD and competency will be found on page 4 of the publication.

The HPC publication has this this to say about CPD ...

[HPC] There is no automatic link between your CPD and your competence.

[My Response] If CPD has no link to competence then why is CPD considered to be of any importance at all with regard to public safety?

[HPC] This is because it would be possible (although unlikely) for a competent professional not to undertake any CPD and yet still meet our standards for their skills

and knowledge.

[My Response] Why would it be unlikely? If a professional meets the HPC standards of skills and knowledge without undertaking CPD then surely, by definition, they are up to standard ?

[HPC] Equally, it would be possible for a registrant who was not competent to complete a lot of CPD activities but still not be fit to practise.

[My Response] So, if you are competent then CPD is unnecessary. If you are incompetent then CPD will not make you competent.

[HPC] We have a separate process (our fitness to practise procedures) for dealing with lack of competence, and this is not linked to our powers to make sure registrants undertake CPD. (You can find out more about our fitness to practise procedures on our website at www.hpc-uk.org.)

[My Response] Here the HPC are reiterating their belief that fitness to practice is NOT linked to CPD.

[HPC] The Health Professions Order 2001 says that we can set standards for CPD, and we can link these standards to renewing registration.

[My Response] I remind you of the first line, direct from the HPC website...

[HPC] There is no automatic link between your CPD and your competence.

[HPC] We can also take registrants off our Register if they have not met our standards for CPD (although there is a right to appeal).

[My Response]

1) So there is no link between competence and CPD.

2) CPD does not necessarily improve competence.

3) The CPD standards are set by and assessed by non-professionals.

4) You can be struck off, (LOSE YOUR JOB), for not meeting these unnecessary standards.

The depth of arrogance displayed by the HPC in their dealings with the registrants is astounding.

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Posted by Rosatti August 21, 2010 at 22:08

In reply to the above, I have noticed this myself that there is no link between CPD and fitness to practice. In other words, the HPC are saying to the public, which they are supposed to protect, :"

Dear Public, we like to make the Health Professionals carry out a lot of paperwork and like to get them worried as to whether they can stay registered, but it does not really matter whether they are fit to practice or not. We just like to bully them with CPD and we can make them unemployed just because we feel like it, even though they might be quite a competent Health Professional (which of course we will not bother to find out)."

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