

12 March 2019

## **Health and Care Professions Council response to the Faculty of Physician Associates Career Development document**

### **1. About us**

We welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation.

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) is a statutory regulator of health, social work and psychological professions governed by the Health and Social Work Professions Order 2001. We regulate the members of 16 professions, including chiropractors / podiatrists and physiotherapists. We maintain a register of professionals, set standards for entry to our register, approve education and training programmes for registration and deal with concerns where a professional may not be fit to practise. Our role is to protect the public.

### **2. Response to the consultation**

As many of the consultation questions relate to matters outside of our remit, we have decided not to respond to these directly but have instead set out in general terms our processes which may impact upon this resource, should HCPC become the regulator of physician associates. These relate to continuing professional development (CPD), supervision and protected titles.

#### CPD

At the HCPC, we take a flexible approach to CPD. This means we do not set minimum numbers of hours or training courses registrants must complete in order to meet our requirements, but instead set broad standards which registrants must meet in demonstrating CPD. This includes the requirement that registrants 'maintain a continuous, up to date and accurate record of their CPD activities' and 'demonstrate that their CPD activities are a mixture of learning activities relevant to current or future practice'.

At registration renewal, every 2 years, we audit 2.5% of each profession who are required to submit a CPD profile. This is assessed against the CPD standards.

#### Supervision

Currently, the HCPC does not have any specific requirements relating to supervision, however we recognise its value for registrants and their practise and therefore encourage it.

Supervision is the subject of research we have recently commissioned. Our intention is to use the outputs of this research to develop guidance for employers on what constitutes effective supervision. We would welcome stakeholder engagement as part of this process, and will take on board the FPA's guidance as part of this.

### Professional titles

We note the question 'Should physician associates working at different levels have specific titles that reflect and recognise the breadth of their practice and/ or seniority in the healthcare team?'

From a regulatory perspective, we only protect titles protected by law, we do not recognise titles or prefixes change based on seniority or breadth of practise. However, in using any additional titles, HCPC registrants must be mindful of the Standards of conduct, performance and ethics, which outline the obligation to be honest about experience, qualifications and skills. In using any title which indicates breadth of practice or seniority in the healthcare team, this should be used appropriately, and should not mislead service users.