

Healthcare Scientists and Regulation

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This note is to alert Strategic Health Authorities and provider organisations of the change in timescales to the regulation of five aspirant groups of healthcare scientists, outlined below. In addition, it is important that employers continue to encourage staff delivering services in these areas to apply to and remain on the appropriate voluntary registers in the interests of public protection.

The White Paper “Trust, Assurance and Safety – The Regulation of Health Professionals in the 21st Century” sets out the Government’s plans for the future direction of regulation of healthcare professionals which requires substantial amendment, including the intention to introduce primary and secondary legislation. Whilst healthcare scientists remain a priority for the introduction of statutory regulation, the timings for the regulation of healthcare scientists will therefore need to take account of the overall implementation timetable and is not now likely to take place before 2009.

The Department of Health has met with members of the aspirant HCS groups to discuss the effect on the regulation of the following professionals:

Clinical technologists
Clinical perfusion scientists
Clinical physiologists
Clinical photographers
Maxillofacial prosthetic technologists.

However whilst this may seem disappointing in terms of the timescales there is much to be done in preparation to accommodate the opening of a statutory register. Additionally, this delay will afford us the opportunity to undertake the modernisation of healthcare scientists' education and training at both pre and post registration levels, linked to a career structure that underpins regulation and is set within an affordable and sustainable provision model that supports the reform of the NHS. This will include discussions with professional and regulatory bodies, the NHS and educational partners.

For further enquiries please contact patricia.saunders@dh.gsi.gov.uk.