

25 March 2020

UKPHR news

COVID-19: Whatever it takes

Here at the register, we are proud of all for the work our registrants are doing to keep communities safe. We appreciate the tremendous impact that the current situation is having on all our registrants and we will do whatever it takes to support them in terms of relaxing our regulatory requirements during this crisis.

Our response will continue to be reviewed as the situation develops, our current position on key matters is as follows:

APPRAISAL, REVALIDATION AND RE-REGISTRATION

For specialists, we are releasing you from professional appraisal requirements and revalidation requirements for the time being.

For practitioners, we have reviewed re-registration requirements and we will be discussing other issues with registration scheme coordinators.

CPD

We stand with the Faculty of Public Health in granting exemptions from CPD requirements for the duration of COVID-19 operations.

EMERGENCY REGISTRATION

Statutory regulators are likely to soon be accepting recently retired health professionals back onto their registers, to help with the fight against the virus. UKPHR is introducing its own emergency rule to allow the Registrar to do the same for retired public health professionals. We are emailing former registrants who may be affected.

NEW APPLICANTS

Anyone currently applying for specialist registration by portfolio assessment can contact us directly to put the process on hold without penalty. Practitioner registration scheme coordinators are responding to practitioners.

VOLUNTEERS

We are as grateful as ever for all those who take on volunteer roles as assessors, verifiers and mentors. Those affected should contact us directly to discuss how we can help manage and postpone (where necessary) their valuable contribution to our registration processes.

COMMUNICATIONS

As you would expect, we have now moved to home working at the register. Our website is operating normally, and we remain active on Twitter. Please use email as the preferred and most reliable means of communication: we are monitoring emails to all inboxes every day.

We are not in the office, so telephone calls and mail sent to the office will not reach us. If you need to make an urgent call to us, please call my mobile 07966 378844. If you need to post something to UKPHR, please email me first to check where to mail it to.

SPECIALISTS' PROFESSIONAL APPRAISALS

We operate a policy of equivalence, so far as possible, with the General Medical Council (GMC) in relation to professional appraisal and this will continue.

In line with the guidance from NHSE, and in response from requests from registrants engaged in the fight against COVID-19 throughout the UK, we have decided that **the requirement to undertake an annual professional appraisal is suspended for the months of April to September 2020 inclusive**. Appraisals due to be completed during these months will count as "approved missed appraisals".

SPECIALISTS' REVALIDATION

The GMC has stated that all doctors due to revalidate over the next six months will have their revalidation deferred for one year and we have stated that we will do the same. This means that revalidation dates falling within the period April – September will be put back until next year.

For revalidations due in October or later, we are maintaining these revalidation dates for the time being. We will review the situation in the summer when hopefully we will be clearer about the duration of the current crisis.

We will make the same arrangements for five-yearly re-registration of practitioner registrants.

360 FEEDBACK EXERCISES

We ask that no-one initiates a 360-degree colleague feedback exercise at this time. The exercise can be run once the appraisal system has returned to normal.

PRACTITIONERS' RE-REGISTRATION

Currently, practitioner registrants undergo re-registration once every five years.

Just as we have decided that all specialists due to revalidate over the next six months will have their revalidation deferred for one year, we will treat practitioners due for re-registration over the next six months the same. This means that re-registration dates falling within the period April – September will be put back until next year.

For re-registrations due in October or later, we propose to maintain these re-registration dates for the time being. We will review the situation in the summer when hopefully we will be clearer about the duration of the current crisis.

Other issues are being raised about aspects of practitioner registration, especially about practitioners who are currently preparing their portfolios for assessment and the processes around assessment and verification. We will discuss these with scheme coordinators next month (Wednesday 08 April) and make further announcements afterwards.

FURTHER QUESTIONS

If you have any further questions, please email us at register@ukphr.org

"The times we are in are unprecedented. Together we will, with determination, goodwill and invention, overcome the threats and rise to future challenges."

DAVID KIDNEY, Chief Executive, UKPHR