Strategic plan

Purpose
To agree the GPhC strategic plan for 2012-2015.

Recommendation

The Council is asked to agree the strategic plan which appears in draft at Appendix 1.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 In 2010 the Council agreed its Vision and Strategy document – the core strategic document to which we have been working. It can be found on the GPhC website: www.pharmacyregulation.org/aboutus/whoweare/visionandstrategy/index.aspx

1.2 The 2010 Vision and Strategy document was developed and agreed before the organisation assumed its operational responsibilities. It committed the Council to developing a three to five year strategy for the future. This paper follows up on that commitment, proposing a new strategic plan for the period 2012-2015.

2.0 Key considerations

2.1 A new strategic document, taking account of the learning from our first operational year and of the significant changes in the external context, is timely. We have to submit the strategic plan to the Privy Council office, for laying before the Westminster Parliament and the Scottish Parliament by the end of September 2011.
2.2 The nature and purpose of the strategic plan and the key contextual factors are all discussed in the draft document itself:

_About this strategic plan_

This strategic plan summarises what we are aiming to achieve over a three year period, and why. This strategy will be complemented by a three year corporate plan setting out how we are going to achieve these aims and fund the work. A more detailed annual business plan and budget for each year will describe the specific tasks, projects and budgets for each year.

2.3 The draft has been prepared based on Council Members' informal discussions in workshop mode and through iterative informal discussions by email. No decisions about what to include in the plan were (or could have been) taken through those processes, which have nevertheless been useful in helping to inform the preparation of a draft for the Council's consideration.

2.4 Likewise the draft takes into account informal feedback provided by a number of stakeholder representatives.

2.5 In the course of the informal discussions leading to the preparation of this draft, a number of versions of the 'mission statement' were discussed. Views on the merits and disadvantages of possible options varied. There was a clear (although by no means unanimous) preference, internally and externally, for the formula which appears in the proposed draft: We promote and maintain people’s safety and health by regulating pharmacy professionals and premises.

3.0 **Equality and diversity**

3.1 Each of the five key priorities in the draft plan has equality and diversity aspects which need to be analysed and reflected appropriately in the corporate and business planning which will flow from the strategic plan.

3.2 The draft plan specifically highlights the diversity in healthcare and pharmacy within and between the home countries of Great Britain and gives priority to our understanding and engaging effectively with different contexts in England, Scotland and Wales. The Council’s devolution commitment is set out in the GPhC Devolution Policy, which complements the draft strategic plan.

4.0 **Communications**

4.1 The strategic plan itself, once laid before Parliament and the Scottish Parliament, will serve a formal communication purpose as one of the core documents by reference to which the Council will be held accountable. Future GPhC annual reports, as well as accounting for progress in terms of the annual plan to which the report relates, should include an interim update on progress.
within each year towards the achievement of these longer term strategic objectives.

4.2 The strategic plan will also inform day to day operational and corporate communications, as an important source document, to be drawn on for authoritative information about the Council’s aims and priorities.

5.0 Resources

5.1 The assessment of the overall resource requirement for 2012-2015, and relative priorities for resource allocation as between different objectives will be important aspects of the corporate and medium term financial planning discussion following on from the strategic plan.

6.0 Risk

6.1 The Council’s commitment to proportionate risk-based regulation appears prominently in the draft strategic plan, featuring as one of the main objective areas under the proposed first key priority.

6.2 In terms of risk to the GPhC, having an up to date strategic plan is an essential component of our risk management approach, focusing as it does on the identification and management of risks to the achievement of the organisation’s objectives: these derive from the strategic plan. And having a strategic plan in itself helps to reduce the likelihood of the GPhC wasting time and resources, provided by registrants, on activities and work which are not strategic priorities.

Recommendation

The Council is asked to agree the strategic plan which appears in draft at Appendix 1.

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31 August 2011
General Pharmaceutical Council

Strategic plan
2012-2015
Who we are
The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) is the independent statutory organisation accountable for the regulation of pharmacy professionals and registered pharmacy premises in Great Britain. The GPhC was set up by the Pharmacy Order 2010. The GPhC is governed by a council of 14 appointed members. Half are lay people and half are pharmacists or pharmacy technicians.

Our mission
We promote and maintain people’s safety and health by regulating pharmacy professionals and premises.

Our vision
We aim to be trusted by patients and respected by registrants, regulating effectively in a way which delivers value for money.

Our values
In all our work we aim to
- put patients’ safety and health first
- be focused on improvement
- be responsive to change
- develop policies which are inclusive
- be independent and fair
- demonstrate respect for others
- ensure that regulation is proportionate.

Our council has adopted the Nolan principles of public life and has undertaken to apply these principles in exercising its role as our governing body.

Our history and context
We began operating as the independent pharmacy regulator in September 2010. We took over the regulatory responsibilities and legacy of the former regulator, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, at a time of national economic and fiscal challenge. This was also a period of major change and challenge in healthcare, and in higher and further education, between and within the home countries of Great Britain. All regulators will rightly continue to be scrutinised and held accountable both for their performance and achievement of their objectives and in relation to their efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

Pharmacy faces many challenges and opportunities. These include the opportunity to contribute more fully to patients’ safety and health in a wide variety of commercial and organisational settings, and to public health. Increasingly, the professionalism of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, and of those who own and manage pharmacy businesses, will be critical to safe and effective practice in pharmacy and multi-disciplinary teams. Proportionate and effective regulation provides essential underpinning for
- individual pharmacy professionals’ capacity and confidence positively to embrace and live up to their professional responsibilities and
- pharmacy’s collective commitment to professionalism.
These will become ever more important as the role of pharmacy professionals and how they work continue to change.

Technological advances, resulting in new medicines and systems for their supply and administration, and patients’ increasing knowledge and awareness of medicines and regulation, create challenges and opportunities for us.

We are a new organisation, though our inherited information and business systems do not meet current and future demands. The majority of our staff transferred from the former regulator, which gives us a great depth and breadth of knowledge and a good starting point as we seek to establish our new culture and approach.

Our work to develop this strategic plan has benefited from the learning we have gained in our first year of operation, as well as from our understanding of the direction of regulation policy nationally and internationally.

**About this strategic plan**

This strategic plan summarises *what* we are aiming to achieve over a three year period, and *why*. This strategy will be complemented by a three year corporate plan setting out *how* we are going to achieve these aims and fund the work. A more detailed annual business plan and budget for each year will describe the specific tasks, projects and budgets for each year.

**Our key priorities**

We have identified five key priorities for action over the next three years, as follows:

1. **Deliver our core regulatory services in a way that is fit for current and future purpose**

2. **Strengthen our capability to measure and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our operational performance**

3. **Communicate and engage effectively with key stakeholders**

4. **Anticipate and respond to developments in pharmacy and healthcare**

5. **Make sure that we have the right people in place, with the right culture and organisational policies and procedures.**
These five key priorities will drive our corporate and business planning for the next three years. Our main objectives under each strategic priority for the next three years are:

1. **Deliver our core regulatory services in a way that is fit for current and future purpose**
   
a. Deliver our statutory functions efficiently and effectively

b. Review and where necessary transform our fitness to practise and enforcement procedures, including the regulation of registered pharmacy premises, so that they become increasingly effective, efficient, proportionate and risk-based

c. Confirm our policy with respect to further strengthening of the assurance/revalidation of continuing fitness to practise of GPhC registrants, and finalise our plans for implementing new policy in this area

d. Influence the concept and design of an overarching new legislative framework for health professional regulation.

2. **Strengthen our capability to measure and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our operational performance**
   
a. Implement necessary new information and administration systems to replace those we inherited at launch

b. Establish new service and efficiency standards – and measurable efficiency improvement objectives - and report regularly against these

c. Maintain and continue to improve our governance and assurance arrangements.

3. **Communicate and engage effectively with key stakeholders**
   
a. Reach out to patients, carers, families and communities in order
   - to enable them to help us shape the development of standards in pharmacy in ways which reflect their priorities
   - to inform them about the standards they can expect of pharmacy professionals and registered pharmacy premises and
   - to support them to take effective steps when they have concerns about safety and professional standards
b. Make it easy for pharmacy professionals, pharmacy owners and pharmacy and healthcare organisations
   • to keep themselves up to date with, and to help us shape, standards which promote professionalism and professional responsibility, and
   • to take effective steps when they have concerns about safety and professional standards

c. Work closely with others to promote integrated public and patient access to regulation, to eliminate gaps in public protection, and to minimise the inefficiencies and confusion caused by regulatory overlaps.

4. Anticipate and respond to developments in pharmacy and healthcare
   a. Actively keep under review the available evidence and information about risk in pharmacy and regulate accordingly
   b. Establish effective horizon-scanning to inform all our policy development work and the development of our regulatory operations, ensuring that we understand and engage effectively with the different pharmacy and healthcare contexts in England, Scotland and Wales
   c. Use our resources and networks to influence positively the development of pharmacy and healthcare in line with our regulatory aims.

5. Make sure that we have the right people in place, with the right culture and organisational policies and procedures
   a. Build a GPhC culture which embodies the Council’s values in practical terms, demonstrating in our organisation the professionalism we expect of GPhC registrants
   b. Review and where necessary change our management policies and procedures so that they promote this culture
   c. Develop the organisation in suitable accommodation that meets the current and anticipated future needs of the organisation.