To:

NHS England: Trust Chief Executives, Workforce Directors, Medical Directors, Healthcare Science Leads

NHS Scotland: NHS Board Chief Executives, Workforce Directors, Medical Directors, Healthcare Science Leads, HR Directors Group, Chief Executives Group

NHS Wales: Trust Chief Executives, Workforce Directors, Medical Directors, Directors of Therapy and Healthcare Science

Northern Ireland - Health and Social Care: NHS Trust Chief Executives, Workforce Directors, Medical Directors; Healthcare Science Leads

Department of Health Regulation Unit

Scottish Government Health Regulation Unit, Health Workforce Unit

Welsh Government Health Regulation Unit

Northern Ireland Regulation Unit/CMO

15th February 2016

Dear Colleague,

**Healthcare Science workforce: Professional Standards Authority accredited registration**

We are the Academy for Healthcare Science and its Regulation Council. The core purpose of the Regulation Council is to maintain a register of the Healthcare Science workforce who are not covered by statutory regulation (through the Health and Care Professions Council). Our NHS-commissioned Register is accredited by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (the PSA has oversight of the nine main statutory professional regulators and is responsible for an accreditation process for voluntary registers).

This letter draws to your attention the existence of our accredited register, which is a UK-level venture. We explain the context for accredited regulation of this workforce and the benefits to you, and to patients, in assuring fitness to practice of non-statutory Healthcare Science staff.

**An important potential benefit to note, aside from the fundamental goal of improved patient safety described below, is that by ensuring that your healthcare scientists are on a proper register you may be able to negotiate significant savings in your indemnity / insurance arrangements.**

**Context**

In 2010, the UK Government decided not to extend statutory regulation to 'aspirant' groups unless there is a compelling case to do so. Instead, a system of accredited regulation was introduced, overseen by the Professional Standards Agency (PSA). Robust standards of governance apply to PSA accredited registers. The Academy for Healthcare Science Registration Council gained PSA recognition of its part of the register for practitioners earlier in 2015, and now has accreditation of the Higher Specialist Scientist part of the Register. We are working with professional bodies and other non-PSA registers in Healthcare Science to try and harmonise the regulation landscape promote the best available public protection at this time, maximising the coverage and minimizing the costs of registration.

**The benefits of Academy for Healthcare Science regulation of your Healthcare Science workforce**

Your Healthcare Science workforce is an essential part of the clinical team, with the power to do real harm to patients should things go wrong. By demanding that our registrants meet our PSA-recognised standards of proficiency and are fit to practise, we can help you to assure patient safety. Our process of fitness to practise investigations and sanctions ultimately can lead to our registrants being removed from our register (struck off) and employers notified.

We are publicising our register to patient groups. Patients have the right to raise a concern about our registrants, and can expect a fair and transparent response to our investigations. We offer all of this within the PSA- accredited framework.

Information about our register is available from <http://www.ahcs.ac.uk/the-register/>

We would invite NHS and other healthcare organisations to consider encouraging all Healthcare Science staff (who are not regulated by statute) to join our Academy Register and therefore enhance public confidence. One Register robustly managed by the Academy for Healthcare Science Regulation Council for all levels and grades of healthcare science staff (not regulated by HCPC) across the UK makes sense for everyone, most of all for patients, the public and employers.

We are happy to discuss or explain further the work of the AHCS accredited register at any time.

Yours sincerely

 

Patricia Le Rolland Dr. Kerry Tinkler

Chair Registrar

Academy for Healthcare Science Regulation Council Academy for Healthcare Science