

Understanding the prevalence of fitness to practise concerns about paramedics and social workers in England

1. About the research

- 1.1 The HCPC receives more fitness to practise concerns about paramedics and social workers in England than for other professions. In 2014-2015, for example, paramedics made up 11% of cases but only 6% of the Register; social workers in England made up 58% of cases but only 27% of the Register.
- 1.2 The HCPC has commissioned a team at the University of Surrey to explore why and what can be done in the future to address this trend.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The research involves the following.
 - A review of published literature.
 - A Delphi consultation with UK and international experts exploring reasons for fitness to practise concerns and strategies for addressing them.
 - A review of 10% of fitness to practise cases in each profession over two years.
 - Interviews and focus groups with stakeholders including paramedics and social workers.
 - Stakeholder meetings to bring together the findings and begin to explore with stakeholders what preventative steps could be put in place.

3. Outcomes

- 3.1 The research is planned to report in September 2017.
- 3.2 The HCPC hopes that the findings might identify ways that all those involved in practice, education, employment, representation and regulation in these professions could work together to prevent problems occurring in the future. For example, is there more we can do with educators and employers to highlight the issues that are raised in complaints?
- 3.3 The research will also assist the HCPC in thinking about how it might undertake similar analysis in the future about trends in other professions, or about cross-professional issues.