

# Overview of our Annual Report and Fitness to Practise Annual Report

1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017



# Key fitness to practise statistics

2016-2017

**1%**

Less than 1 percent of registered nurses and midwives had a concern raised against them.

**5476**

We received 5476 new referrals.

**60%**

We closed 60 percent of cases at the early stages of fitness to practise.

**705**

705 interim orders were imposed.

**91%**

91 percent of interim orders were imposed within 28 days of opening the case.

**78%**

78 percent of fitness to practise cases were concluded within 15 months of being opened.

**1199**

1199 sanctions imposed.



# Our activity in 2016–2017

## Our register

We are the largest professional regulator in the UK. At the end of March 2017 there were more than 690,000 registered nurses and midwives, meaning that we hold the largest professional register in the UK.

In June 2016, we introduced an option for nurses and midwives to pay their annual fee by quarterly instalment, after feedback showed that many of them wanted a more flexible means of payment. By 31 March 2017, more than 53,000 nurses and midwives had taken advantage of this way to spread the cost of registration.

We performed strongly throughout the year, completing 98.2 percent of UK registration applications within ten days and 94 percent of those from the EU/overseas within 68 days.

We also introduced two new test centres where nurses and midwives trained outside of the EEA can take the test of competence.

## Revalidation

The first year of revalidation has been a resounding success. More than 200,000 nurses and midwives have completed the process since its introduction in April 2016. Those who have revalidated say that it is simple, straightforward and beneficial.

**Our first annual revalidation report** has now been published alongside early findings from a three year **independent evaluation**.

# Education

Professor Dame Jill MacLeod Clark, Professor Emeritus at the University of Southampton and Chair of the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) Clinical Academic Research Panel, led our work to develop new pre-registration standards of education for nurses. We engaged widely with nurses, educators and members of the public to inform our decisions.

We are now consulting on these draft standards, alongside proposed **changes to our education framework**, that set out the requirements all approved education institutions (AEIs) must meet in order to deliver our approved programmes.

We have also begun early engagement work ahead of the development of new standards of education for the future midwife. This work is being led by Professor Mary Renfrew, Associate Dean in the School of Nursing and Health Sciences at the University of Dundee. We have already started gathering the views of midwives, educators, students, women and their families to help inform this work and this will continue over the coming months.

# Nursing associates

In January 2017 we agreed to the Government's request to be the regulator for a new profession – nursing associates.

We are currently working closely with Health Education England and the 35 test sites already delivering training to the 2,000 trainee nursing associates to develop standards of proficiency for the new role.

We anticipate opening our register to nursing associates in 2019.

# Changes to our midwifery legislation

We worked closely with the Department of Health to modernise midwifery regulation by removing supervision of midwives from our legislation. This change came into effect on 31 March 2017. Together with the Chief Nursing Officers and midwifery leaders, we helped to ensure a smooth transition to new arrangements for clinical supervision for midwives.

# Changes to our fitness to practise legislation

The Government agreed to our request to make changes to our fitness to practise legislation, including expanding on how and where we're able to schedule and hear cases. Some of these changes came into force in March 2017.

Further changes will give case examiners new powers to issue warnings, agree undertakings, and give advice. This change will allow us to resolve less serious cases without the need for a full hearing.

# Employer Link Service

We created the **Employer Link Service** (ELS) to advise employers who are considering making a referral against a nurse or midwife.

Approximately 2,000 calls were received by ELS in 2016-2017. ELS has also met with all 279 NHS trusts and boards across the four countries and has expanded the service to include more than 20 of the largest independent sector healthcare providers in the UK.

## Confidence in our work

We have seen growing confidence in us and in our work. In December 2016 we received our **best ever review** from the Professional Standards Authority, the organisation that oversees our work.





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The nursing and midwifery regulator for England,  
Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

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