



# Snapshot: Rehabilitation Workers Professional Network



## Accreditation decision

### ACTIVITIES & ACTIONS SHOWING HOW RWPN IS MEETING THE STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITED REGISTERS

The Rehabilitation Workers Professional Network (RWPN) registers vision rehabilitation workers and vision habilitation specialists in the UK. Both roles work to support people with sight loss to gain confidence in day-to-day activities. Rehabilitation workers work with adults over the age of 18 and habilitation specialists with children and young people between the ages of 0-25 years. These practitioners work in a range of settings including local authority social service departments, local authority education services, further education colleges and the voluntary sector.

24

accredited registers

60

occupations

100k

practitioners

#### ► Commitment to protecting the public/promoting confidence

The RWPN demonstrates it is committed to protecting the public and promoting public confidence in vision rehabilitation and vision habilitation through its Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, its registration and renewal criteria, its requirement for CPD and its processes for handling complaints.

There is separation between the register and membership functions with the Registration and Professional Standards Committee being responsible for all matters relating to the register.

#### ► Managing risk

The activities of vision rehabilitation workers and vision habilitation specialists benefit service users in helping them gain confidence in carrying out their daily activities and also to the wider health and care system by reducing the ongoing need for care.

There are some risks associated with the practice of vision rehabilitation and vision habilitation, such as risks associated with increased mobility, the use of equipment and changing technology.

#### KEY STATS

##### RWPN:

- registers Vision Rehabilitation Workers and Vision Habilitation Specialists working in the UK
- 400 registrants on UKAHP's register (as of October 2021)
- met 11/11 Standards
- first accredited on 31 March 2022



## ACTIVITIES/ACTIONS SHOWING HOW RWPN IS MEETING THE STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITED

### ►Managing risk (cont)

We found that the RWPN had identified these and put appropriate mitigations in place such as registrants being properly trained, adhering to the RWPN's Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and keeping their practice up to date through participating the in RWPN's continuing professional development scheme.

There appears to be a very low risk that practitioners will make unproven claims or mislead the public about the services they are offering. The RWPN has demonstrated a thorough understanding of the risks presented by vision rehabilitation and vision habilitation to service users and the public.

### ►Governance

The RWPN is governed by two committees, the Management Committee and the Registration and Professional Standards Committee which provides a separation for the running of the register. Both committees are made up predominantly of vision rehabilitation workers, although there are people with lived experience on the Registration and Professional Standards Committee which we welcome, we noted however that it is also in the public interest to include sighted lay representation on the different committees.

We also suggested that the RWPN review its reporting lines noting that it may be beneficial for a member of the Registration and Professional Standards Committee to attend the Management Committee to report back on key issues and to escalate any issues that may need to be considered.

### ►Handling complaints and concerns

The RWPN publishes information about how it handles complaints against registrants and complaints against itself on the website although we thought that it could improve how easy it is to find this information. The procedure allows for the Initial Investigation Panel to issue resolutions to the registrant where they have found that a case is upheld but where they have decided not to submit to the Professional Conduct Panel.



## 2022 initial accreditation

12

Conditions

24

Recommendations

### CONDITIONS:

We issued **two Conditions** relating to **Governance**. The RWPN are required to:

- review its governance arrangements to ensure that there is appropriate representation on each of its committees and that all committee members are fully equipped to make fair, consistent and transparent decisions. The RWPN should consider the use of mechanisms such as appraisals for monitoring its committee members
- update the Authority on its financial sustainability in July 2022.

We issued **three Conditions** relating to **complaints**. The RWPN are required to:

- allow the Authority to observe the next complaints hearing held by the RWPN
- review its decision making panels to ensure there is appropriate separation
- review its indicative sanctions guidance and the publication of sanctions issued by its investigatory panel.

REMEMBER TO USE OUR **CHECK-A-PRACTITIONER** TOOL TO CHECK AND CHOOSE PRACTITIONERS ON ACCREDITED REGISTERS



## ACTIVITIES/ACTIONS SHOWING HOW RWPN IS MEETING THE STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITED REGISTERS (CONT)

### ► Handling complaints and concerns (cont)

These resolutions are not published. We suggested that the RWPN should consider whether it is in the public interest to publish resolutions.

The RWPN provides opportunity for the complainant and the registrant to appeal decisions. Due to the limited number of people in the Registration and Professional Standards Committee, people who were involved in the handling of the complaint may be asked to consider an appeal. We considered that it was important that there was more separation and so issued a Condition.

### Positive findings showing how RWPN is meeting the Standards

- The RWPN is committed to public protection and promoting public confidence in vision rehabilitation and vision habilitation through its Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, its registration and renewal criteria, its requirement for CPD and its processes for handling complaints.
- The RWPN actively engages with key stakeholders to raise awareness of the register and the work of rehabilitation workers and habilitation specialists.
- The RWPN includes people with lived experience of sight loss on its Registration and Professional Standards Committee ensuring that this perspective is included in decisions made about the register.
- The RWPN has a comprehensive Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme. It carries out annual checks to ensure that its registrants are meeting its requirements.

You can find more details of how RWPN met the Standards for Accredited Registers in its [Accreditation Decision 2022](#) on our website.



### Find out more about:

- ➔ RWPN and its register
- ➔ the Accredited Registers programme
- ➔ the Standards for Accredited Registers

## 2022 accreditation

12

Condition

24

Recommendations

### CONDITIONS:

We issued **five Conditions** relating to **registration**. The RWPN must:

- review its register for consistency, accuracy and clarity of information and should develop quality assurance mechanisms to ensure its accuracy going forward
- review the information it provides on its register and the associated webpages to ensure that members of the public can make informed decisions, this should include providing explanations of key terms used and reviewing where sanctions are displayed.
- publish its registration processes to ensure these are clear to applicants
- develop and publish an appeals process for registration decisions
- review and update its application form to ensure that it includes all fitness to practice declarations and develop a policy for handling positive declarations.

We issued **two Conditions** relating to **education and training**. The RWPN are required to:

- develop criteria and a process for assessing whether courses meet its registration standards and ensure that they continue to do so
- ensure that its education and training standards are clear to the public.