

PRESS RELEASE

12 May 2016

Accredited Registers support Mental Health Awareness Week from 16-22 May

The Professional Standards Authority's Accredited Registers programme welcomes national initiatives like Mental Health Awareness Week, organized by the Mental Health Foundation.

The annual campaign aims to promote public engagement on subjects relating to mental health. This year, Mental Health Awareness Week focuses on relationships and their role in maintaining good mental health.

Christine Braithwaite, the Authority's Director of Standards and Policy said, 'It is important that people who need support are able to access counselling and psychotherapy services from people they can trust to be competent and safe. We recommend choosing someone who is either a regulated health professional or is on an Accredited Register.'

Our Accredited Registers programme was set up to help protect the public. We set standards for, and accredit registers for people in health and care occupations that are not regulated by law, such as counselling and psychotherapy.

Anyone employing, recommending or using a practitioner can now choose one from a register that has been vetted by the Professional Standards Authority – and it is important that they do so.

Many of the counsellors and psychotherapists on Accredited Registers work in roles supporting frontline NHS staff in England in implementing NICE guidelines for mental health.

Anyone can access a counsellor or psychotherapist on an Accredited Register directly via our 'Find a Register' search at [www.professionalstandards.org.uk/accredited-registers/find a register](http://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/accredited-registers/find-a-register).

ENDS

Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care

Contact:
Karen Smith
Communications & Marketing Officer

Tel +44 (0)20 7389 8008
Karen.Smith@professionalstandards.org.uk

Notes to the Editor

1. The Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care oversees nine statutory bodies that regulate health and social care professionals in the UK.
2. We assess their performance and report to Parliament. We also conduct audits and investigations and can appeal fitness to practise cases to the courts if we consider that sanctions are unduly lenient and it is in the public interest.
3. We also set standards for organisations holding registers for health and social care occupations not regulated by law and accredit those that meet them.
4. Accredited registers can encompass a wide range of occupations and organisations and the Professional Standards Authority may accredit more than one register in any particular occupation. Those accredited are entitled to use the Authority's accreditation mark so that they can be distinguished easily
5. Accredited registration is different from statutory professional registration. It is voluntary, not compulsory. Whilst practitioners can work in unregulated occupations without being on any register, the Authority's Accreditation Scheme now offers people the option of seeking practitioners on a register that has been vetted and approved.
6. We do this to promote the health, safety and well-being of users of health and social care services and the public. We are an independent body, accountable to the UK Parliament.
7. Our values are at the heart of who we are and what we do. We are committed to being impartial, fair, accessible and consistent in the application of our values.
8. More information about our work and the approach we take is available at www.professionalstandards.org.uk.