

PRESS RELEASE

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Independent quality mark for Genetic Counsellors

Today, the Genetic Counsellor Registration Board's (GCRB) register has been accredited by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care, an independent statutory body, accountable to Parliament.

Under the Accredited Registers programme, practitioners on the GCRB register will be able to display the Accredited Register quality mark, a sign that they belong to a register which meets the Professional Standards Authority's robust standards.

Diane Stirling, GCRB Chair said: "The quality mark will give extra peace of mind for anyone seeing a Registered Genetic Counsellor, letting them know that anyone who holds the mark is committed to high standards. The GCRB is pleased to offer the quality mark to Registered Genetic Counsellors that meet the far reaching standards of our register, as approved by the Professional Standards Authority."

Harry Cayton, Chief Executive of the Professional Standards Authority said: "We are very pleased to accredit the Genetic Counsellor Registration Board's register. Bringing these practitioners into a broad framework of assurance is good for patients, service users and the public and is the best way to promote quality. The programme offers a new layer of protection for people receiving health services, and gives Genetic Counsellors the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to good practice."

Accreditation does not imply that the Authority has assessed the merits of individuals on the register. This remains the responsibility of the GCRB. Accreditation means that the GCRB's register meets the Professional Standards Authority's high standards in governance, standard-setting, education and training, management of the register, complaints handling and information.

Accredited Registers encompass a growing range of occupations and organisations and the Professional Standards Authority may accredit more than one register in any particular occupation. Further information about Accredited Registers is available at www.professionalstandards.org.uk/what-we-do/accredited-registers

ENDS

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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.