



# Snapshot

Annual review of performance 2018/19

Regulator reviewed: **General Chiropractic Council**

## Key facts & figures:

- Regulates the practice of **chiropractors** in the **United Kingdom**
- **3,284** professionals on register and recognises and assures the quality of **degree programmes** at **four education institutions**
- **£750** fee for initial registration; the fee for retention is **£800**. (The GCC offers a reduced fee of **£100** for those not intending to practise.)



## Standards of good regulation

### Core functions

Annual performance review 2018/19

### Met

(number of Standards)

Guidance & Standards

4/4

Education & Training

4/4

Registration

5/6

Fitness to Practise

9/10

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[www.professionalstandards.org.uk/performancereviews](http://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/performancereviews)

# Focus on: **Activities and actions demonstrating how the GCC is meeting the Standards**

The GCC has met 22 of our Standards of Good Regulation. For this review, the GCC did not meet one of our registration Standards and one fitness to practise Standard.

## **REGISTRATION: THE RISK OF NON-REGISTRANTS USING PROTECTED TITLES IS MANAGED**

During this performance review it came to our attention that there had been a high number of section 32 (illegal practice) cases which the GCC has recently dealt with. The GCC told us that, due to senior staff changes, an office move and dealing with a large number of advertising complaints, the GCC was receiving more illegal practice cases than it was able to deal with, which led to a backlog. This backlog of cases grew over time from 2015. The GCC identified the backlog as a risk in June 2018. However, the GCC only disclosed the backlog of section 32 cases in public papers at its December 2018 Council meeting once it had identified the risk and had taken action. The GCC explained that in June 2018 it took steps to manage the backlog using temporary staff recruited for its work on advertising cases. By October 2018, it identified that this was not achieving the required outcome, and recruited additional temporary staff to work specifically on the illegal practice cases. Thereafter it made progress in reviewing and acting on cases to reduce the backlog.

It is a concern that the GCC had a historic caseload of illegal practice complaints dating back to 2015 which it did not fully begin to address until October 2018. Cases of illegal practice have the potential to put the public at risk of harm and damage public confidence in the profession. Although the GCC put efforts in place to reduce this backlog it was not able to make any significant progress in addressing this until most of the way through the review period. Taking the GCC's performance against this Standard into account over the whole performance review period, we conclude that this Standard is not met this year.

You can find out more details in the full report which is available on our website [www.professionalstandards.org.uk/performance-reviews](http://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/performance-reviews)

## **FITNESS TO PRACTISE: THE REGULATOR WILL DETERMINE IF THERE IS A CASE TO ANSWER**

Last year we reported that the GCC received a total of 339 advertising complaints. This year, the GCC explained that 306 of these complaints came from one complainant and as such these were all dealt with as part of its advertising caseload. The IC meetings were scheduled from October 2018. According to the GCC, a total of 290 cases have been considered within the review period, with the last three cases considered in August 2019.

The GCC also explained that, as part of its wider 'Fitness to Practise Review', it will be completing a lessons learned review in order to consider how such cases would be managed in the future. This is a positive step and we will comment on this in more detail when the review has been completed and published. The GCC has taken a robust and focused approach in dealing with such a large volume of complaints, the majority of which it received within a short space of time. As a result, it put measures in place to deal with these complaints. We are therefore satisfied that this Standard is met.

## **FITNESS TO PRACTISE: ALL CASES ARE REVIEWED ON RECEIPT**

During the targeted review the GCC provided us with revised data regarding interim order timeliness. It revised its annual figures from 2016/17 and 2017/18, as the figures it had previously provided were incorrect.

From the revised data we can see that since 2015/16, the annual median has increased year on year, from four weeks to six weeks. It is concerning that the median time from receipt of information indicating a need for an interim order has increased steadily over a number of years. The information provided, including the revised dataset figures, demonstrates that although the GCC appears to review serious cases on receipt, its processes are such that not all cases are put before an interim order committee in a timely manner. Any avoidable delay in this process has the potential to pose a serious risk to public protection. The dataset figures since 2015/16 evidence that this has been an ongoing issue which has slowly deteriorated over time and therefore the GCC's performance is such that we have concluded that this Standard is not met.