



Snapshot

Annual review of performance 2018/19



Regulator reviewed: **General Medical Council**

Key facts & figures:

- Regulates the practice of **doctors** in the **United Kingdom**
- **309,782** professionals on register (as at 30 September 2019)
- **£399** annual registration fee

Standards of good regulation

Core functions

Annual performance review 2018/19

Met

(number of Standards)

Guidance & Standards

4/4

Education & Training

4/4

Registration

6/6

Fitness to Practise

10/10

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www.professionalstandards.org.uk/performancereviews

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

For this review period the GMC has met all of our 24 Standards of Good Regulation.

GUIDANCE AND STANDARDS: WHEN DEVELOPING AND REVISING GUIDANCE AND STANDARDS, THE REGULATOR TAKES ACCOUNT OF STAKEHOLDERS' VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES

In this review period, the GMC published guidance for doctors on being a 'reflective practitioner'. This guidance was co-produced with the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, Medical Schools Council and the Conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans. The GMC has also signed a joint statement with nine other regulators in support of reflective practice, *Benefits of becoming a reflective practitioner*. This statement says that professionals will never be asked by their regulator to provide their reflective notes when investigating a concern about them.

REGISTRATION: ONLY THOSE WHO MEET THE REGULATOR'S REQUIREMENTS ARE REGISTERED

In last year's report we referred to a woman from New Zealand whose medical qualification was found to be forged after she had gained admission to the GMC register. In this review period, the GMC has reviewed the qualifications of all doctors who entered the register by the same route. The GMC checked the qualifications of 3,117 doctors by contacting the relevant medical schools directly and confirming that they had awarded a qualification to the individuals in question. All the doctors in this check were found to be appropriately qualified. It has also reviewed other historical registration processes and routes to registration to identify whether they too are at risk of fraudulent applications. The GMC has started carrying out further checks based on risk factors it has identified. The GMC reported to us that, to date, these checks have not identified that anyone who has not met the requirements has been added to the register. We consider that the GMC has taken appropriate action in response to this serious incident.

FITNESS TO PRACTISE: THE PROCESS IS TRANSPARENT, FAIR AND PROPORTIONATE

The GMC published its *Fair to Refer?* report. This was a piece of independent research to understand why some groups of doctors are referred to the GMC fitness to practise process more, or less, than others. The report made a number of recommendations, including some for the GMC. The GMC has welcomed the report's recommendations, and we will monitor the progress of its work in this area in next year's review.

FITNES TO PRACTISE: CASES ARE DEALT WITH AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE

We looked carefully at the data we received from the GMC about how long it takes to deal with fitness to practise cases. The GMC informed us that an increase in time taken both from receipt of a referral to the investigating committee (IC) or case examiner (CE) decision, and from IC/CE to a final hearing was due to the complexity of its cases, increased caseload and external factors which affected a significant proportion of its older cases. We saw evidence to support the GMC's explanations. During this performance review period, we have seen a reduction in the overall median time from receipt to a hearing. The GMC said this had been achieved by monitoring and improving factors such as its use of hearing rooms and panel availability. We also noted, however, that there has been an increase in the number of open cases more than a year old, which is likely to have contributed to the decrease in the time from receipt to final hearing this year. We are satisfied this Standard remains met, and we will continue to monitor the GMC's performance, including the effect of the measures it is taking to increase efficiency.

**Find out more in the GMC's full performance review on our website:
www.professionalstandards.org.uk/performance-reviews**