

Paulette Hamilton MP
Acting Chair of The Health and Social Care Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

19 September 2025

Dear Paulette Hamilton,

Regulatory performance of the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)

I am writing to update you on the GPhC's performance in terms of its fitness to practise work following our previous letter dated 18 September 2024.

Our 2024/25 performance review

On 24 September 2025, we will publish our annual review of the GPhC's performance for 2024/25, covering the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. I attach a copy of our report, which is under embargo until publication.

As you know, the PSA reports to Parliament each year on the performance of the 10 statutory health and social care regulators of professionals.¹ We judge a regulator's performance against our 18 Standards of Good Regulation, which cover the four key regulatory functions of guidance and standards, education and training, registration and fitness to practise. Each Standard is assessed as being 'met' or 'not met'.

The GPhC still takes too long to resolve fitness to practise cases and therefore the GPhC has not met our standard relating to the quality and timeliness of investigations. Although this is one Standard out of 18, it does represent a critical part of the work of the GPhC in protecting the public. Delays to fitness to practise cases also have negative impacts on registrants, complainants and witnesses and present a risk to public confidence. The GPhC has not met this Standard for fitness to practise timeliness since 2018/19.

¹ These are the General Chiropractic Council, the General Dental Council, the General Medical Council, the General Optical Council, the General Osteopathic Council, the General Pharmaceutical Council, the Health and Care Professions Council, the Nursing and Midwifery Council, the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland and Social Work England.

We recognise the GPhC's continued commitment to improving its fitness to practise process and note that it has reduced the number of open older cases (over 52 weeks) from 422 to 305 during the course of this year. The GPhC acknowledges that there is still more work to do, and we will continue to monitor the GPhC's ongoing programme of improvement.

Next steps

I would like to make it clear that the GPhC continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to tackling areas of underperformance and drive improvement. It has met 17 out of 18 Standards this year and we do not have significant concerns about any other aspect of its regulatory performance. We will continue to engage constructively with the GPhC and are strongly encouraging the GPhC to address our concerns about the timeliness of its fitness to practise processes. We would welcome your support as we take this forward with the GPhC and a number of other regulators who also continue to not meet this Standard. During our next performance review of the GPhC, we will assess in detail the impact of its fitness to practise processes and improvement work particularly in relation to case progression and the management of cases. We will keep you informed of progress.

Please let me know if you have any questions about this or would like to discuss further.

I have copied this letter to Gisela Abbam, Chair of the GPhC. I am writing in similar terms to Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and counterparts in the devolved administrations.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caroline Corby". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Caroline Corby
Chair