

Legislation to abolish the Hearing Aid Council gets Royal assent

22 July 2008

Chief Executive welcomes new legislation as key step towards the transfer to the Health Professions Council

The Hearing Aid Council (HAC) welcomed yesterday's Royal assent for the Health and Social Care Bill that will abolish the HAC and enable the transfer of responsibility for the registration of dispensers to the Health Professions Council (HPC).

The Government committed to closing the HAC following a recommendation from Philip Hampton's 2005 review, "Reducing administrative burdens: effective inspection and enforcement". It is expected that in 2009 the bulk of the HAC's responsibilities will be passed to the HPC, which already regulates over 180,000 health professionals from 13 different occupations including paramedics, physiotherapists, chiropodists and dietitians. Further legislation is needed to transfer the HAC register to the HPC however and a date for the transfer will not be set until that legislation is passed.

Commenting on the news, HAC Chief Executive Sandra Verkuyten said:

"The Hearing Aid Council strongly support the transfer to the HPC so we are delighted to have taken another key step forward. We strongly believe that consumers and the industry deserve modern, efficient regulation under the HPC and look forward to working with the Government so the public can feel those benefits as soon as possible".

-ENDS-

1. The HAC is an independent, statutory regulator set up by the Hearing Aid Council Act (1968, as amended) to register dispensers and their employers working in the private hearing aid sector. It sets the standards of education, training, conduct and performance dispensers must meet to join the register and investigates any alleged breaches of those standards. There are around 1500 hearing aid dispensers on the HAC register.
2. For further information on the implications of the proposed transfer to the HPC please contact Stuart Holland, Modernisation & Transfer Manager at stuart.holland@thehearingaidcouncil.org.uk or by telephone on 020 3102 4030.
3. For more information on the Health and Social Care Bill 2007-08 please see the Parliament website <http://www.parliament.uk/>