

20 July 2009

The statutory regulation of psychotherapists and counsellors

We are writing to you regarding the potential regulation of psychotherapists and counsellors.

The 2007 White Paper 'Trust Assurance and Safety – the Regulation of Health Professionals in the 21st Century', recommended that, subject to legislative approval, psychotherapists and counsellors should be regulated by the Health Professions Council (HPC).

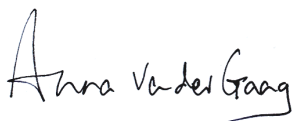
The July 2009 report 'Extending Professional and Occupational Regulation', the final report of the Department of Health Extending Professional Regulation Working Group, supports this commitment to regulate psychotherapists and counsellors and 'recommends that the ongoing work to implement statutory regulation should continue.'

Following the White Paper, the HPC established a working group to consider how psychotherapists and counsellors might be regulated. The group consisted of 17 members including representatives from professional bodies and education providers, and service users. Their report has now been published and we have launched a three-month consultation. The key issues we are consulting on are the titles to be protected, the standards for safe and effective practice – known as the standards of proficiency – and the threshold level of qualification for entry to our Register.

The outcome of this consultation will help inform our Council's recommendations on the regulation of some 50,000 psychotherapists and counsellors. These will be made to the Secretary of State for Health and Ministers in the devolved administrations in December.

These are important proposals aimed at ensuring the protection of the public and we anticipate a high level of interest in this consultation. Please contact us if you require further information about this issue. The consultation document can be found at www.hpc-uk.org/aboutus/consultations.

Yours sincerely



Anna van der Gaag
Chair



Marc Seale
Chief Executive and Registrar