

HAC welcomes legislation as a vital step towards to the HPC

23 April 08, 16.40

The Hearing Aid Council (HAC) welcomes last week's proposed amendment to the Health and Social Care Bill 2007-08 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.

Sandra Verkuyten, Chief Executive of the HAC, said:

"The HAC has strongly supported the transfer to the HPC since it was announced by the Government in 2005. It will strengthen consumer protection but at the same time reduce the financial burden of regulation on the industry. The HPC has broader powers than the HAC which will be a real benefit for our often vulnerable consumers. However, the tremendous economies of scale at the HPC mean that our registrants' retention fees will fall from £695 a year to around £72.

"We have been working very closely with the Government, consumer groups, professional bodies, the HPC and our registrants to make sure the transfer is a success and we welcome the proposed legislation that will enable this to happen".

- ENDS -

Notes to Editors

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. For more information on the Health and Social Care Bill 2007-08 please see the Parliament website <http://www.parliament.uk/>