

Communications Committee 24 October 2007

External Exhibition Evaluation Report  
Thomas Heiser

## **Executive Summary and Recommendations**

### **Introduction**

Each year, the Communications Department organises a stand at up to 6 external exhibitions. The aim is to promote the work of the HPC and raise our profile with our key audiences including registrants and the public.

### **Decision**

This paper is for information only. No decision is required.

### **Background information**

The attached evaluation reports relate to the Primary Care 2007 conference in May, the College of Occupational Therapists Annual Conference in June, and the Institute of Biomedical Sciences Congress in September.

We will be exhibiting at the following exhibitions in 2007 – 2008:

- Primary Care Live, 9 -10 October 2007, London. Launching new GP facing promotional materials.
- NHS Employers annual conference and exhibition, 9-11 October, Birmingham. Promoting registration, CPD and FTP information to employers.
- Health and Wellbeing at Work, 5-6 March 2008, Birmingham. Promoting HPC to occupational health and HR professionals, Physios and OTs.

### **Resource implications**

None

### **Financial implications**

None

### **Appendices**

External Exhibition Evaluation Report for Primary Care 2007

External Exhibition Evaluation Report for the College of Occupational Therapists

External Exhibition Evaluation Report for the Institute of Biomedical Scientists

### **Date of paper**

24 October 2007

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## External Exhibition Evaluation Report

**Name of Event:** Primary Care 2007

**Date:** 10-11 May 2007

**Location:** NEC, Birmingham

**Details:**

- Approx. 4800 over the two days
- Mixed group but included high numbers of Midwives, Nurses, GPs, Physios, SLTs, Dietitians, OTs, Chiropodists, and others.
- 221 stands
- Contact time was high as the exhibition drew visitors in its own right. People tended to go to sessions but there were always people in the exhibition hall
- Over 150 visits to the stand
- HPC used small stand in a 2x2m stand
- Laptop showing website and HPCheck
- Registrant and patient facing literature
- Three members of staff: Thomas Heiser and Jacqueline Ladds both days plus Sarah Giles and Andrea Kanaris on alternate days

**Publications distributed:**

- |                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| • Returning to practise             | 21 |
| • CPD – Long                        | 62 |
| Short                               | 42 |
| • 10 Benefits of registration       | 1  |
| • Standards of Education            | 11 |
| • Welcome to the HPC                | 9  |
| • Standards of C/P/E                | 42 |
| • SOP – OTs                         | 3  |
| Physiotherapists                    | 35 |
| Chiropodists                        | 19 |
| Dietitians                          | 25 |
| SLT                                 | 29 |
| • Making a complaint                | 13 |
| • What happens if a complaint is... | 3  |
| • “Be safe, Be sure”                | 95 |
| • Car stickers                      | 12 |
| • Posters                           | 5  |

**General thoughts:**

The event was very well attended and although the main delegate groups appeared to be Nurses and Midwives there were a substantial number of registrants present and also interest from GPs. Many people approached the stand who were not aware of the HPC but who worked with registrants. These

people left the stand with a better understanding of the regulatory environment and many took away patient-facing leaflets for distribution. Many of the registrant enquiries we received concerned CPD and the audit process and a large amount of CPD publications were distributed. It was interesting to note that many people were taking copies of the SOPs relevant to their professions although they should already have had them. Many people also took the opportunity to take away the Standards of C/P/E. A few of the delegates were frustrated with issues such as the fees rise and also the difficulty of finding time for CPD. Although we were not always able to offer the solutions they wanted to hear our presence and willingness to discuss the issues was welcomed.

#### **Contact made:**

- Enquiry as to the tax status of the registration fee. Can tax on the fee be claimed back?  
[Finance confirmed that yes – the income tax can be claimed back for the payment of registration fees]
- Physiotherapist – Enquiring as to the exams that “HPC” were going to set for entry onto the register. Apparently this information is being circulated however he was not sure where it originated. This will be monitored.
- Enquiry into the CPD renewal dates.
- Representative from the Commission for Social Care Inspection was interested in the process for referring to FTP. Relevant publications were provided. [This may be a good body to target via the Public Affairs Manager].
- SLT complained that the coding of CPD elements required is too confusing. We explained that this was not a requirement of the HPC but she seemed convinced that it was. [Looking at the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists website it seems that their own process for CPD is much more complicated than the HPC’s which may be leading to this confusion. There is also no clear distinction as to which are HPC requirements and which originate from the RCSLT. [Victoria Smyth to email Anna Van der Gaag].
- SLT had a query regarding when to apply for registration if returning to practise. Should this be before or after the updating period has been completed? The “Returning to practise” publication provided the information but this seems to be contradicting what the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists were saying. [The information on their website is not as up to date as it could be – again, Victoria Smyth to take this forward]
- Biomedical Scientist wanted to know about maintaining CPD while non-practising.
- Query about paramedics on the Isle of Wight going through FTP processes. [Referred to FTP directly for further information].
- Individual wanted to know about the appointments of CPD Partner Assessors. [Jacqueline Ladds followed up via Partner Manager].

#### **Comments received:**

- No specific comments were received. The above people did have queries but these were generally answered.

### **Questions raised:**

- A question came up about the timeline for the registration of Emergency Care Practitioners.

### **Benefits:**

Aside from giving out the HPC publications our presence conveyed a concrete attempt at engaging with registrants. We were able to provide a face to the organisation and to discuss issues of concern. Even when we were unable to help, as in issues of job scarcity, delegates felt reassured that we understood their situations. This is a very valuable outcome. In addition, many people took away copies of the “Be safe, Be sure” leaflets and the importance of checking that professionals are registered was communicated to referrers and service providers.

### **Drawbacks:**

The stand space was small and so limited the amount of information we were able to display. That said the use of the publication holders allowed more effective use of the space we had. We should probably invest in some additional holders.

At points during the day having three staff on the stand was unnecessary. During lunches however the extra person was invaluable in allowing breaks to be taken away from the stand.

The hotels at the NEC booked up extremely quickly. This resulted in staff having to stay in Birmingham town centre and travel in by train each morning.

### **Conclusions:**

Although the largest group of delegates were not registrants of the HPC the stand generated a lot of interest. The publications proved very popular and provided the answers to many queries. Of those questions that we were unable to answer the majority regarded specific registration issues. It may be worth considering taking a member of the registration along to future events.

### **Recommendations for the future:**

- Accommodation must be reserved far in advance to be able to stay on site at the NEC
- For larger events three staff members are required however if the show was more quiet you would be able to manage with just two
- Consider taking a member of the registration department along to answer specific questions
- It may be worth investing in some give away gifts – fridge magnets were suggested – as a means of drawing people to the stand and of publicising the HPC
- Purchase additional literature holders

- Develop more of an introductory text on the HPC for general distribution
- Ensure that a more complete version of the website is available off-line, perhaps also including a test version of the register
- Look at the branding of the stand for the events we take part in – to be discussed as part of the update to visual identity

**Repeat the Exhibition?:** Yes

Providing the opportunity to meet HPC representatives and take away HPC publications, coupled with the relatively high amount of visits to the stand made attendance worthwhile.

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## External Exhibition Evaluation Report

**Name of Event:** College of Occupational Therapists Annual Conference & Exhibition 2007  
**Date:** 20-22 June 2007  
**Location:** Manchester Central, Manchester  
**Details:**

- Approx. 550 delegates over three days
- Mixed group of OTs: Students, new to the profession, experienced practitioners, managers, NHS and freelance
- 91 stands
- Over 86 visits to the stand
- HPC used small banner in a 2x2m stand
- Laptop showing website and HPCheck
- Registrant and patient facing literature, concentrating on CPD and registration guidance
- Two/three members of staff: Thomas Heiser and Adam Mawson (UK Reg Team Leader) plus Jacqueline Ladds on the second day

### Publications distributed:

- Confidentiality: guidance for registrants. Consultation document 16
- Standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Consultation document 37
- SOP – OTs 79
- Standards of C/P/E 55
- Returning to practice 22
- What happens if a complaint... 29
- Making a complaint 19
- 10 Benefits of registration 10
- Welcome to the HPC 9
- CPD – Long 165
- Short 29

### General thoughts:

Advertised delegate numbers of “up to 1000” appear to have been exaggerated and overall the feeling in the exhibition was that numbers were low. The majority of the delegates, however, were our key audience and the contact was good.

Although it was expected that the proximity of the renewal period for OTs would prompt enquiries about the registration process the main subject of discussion was CPD. Concerns included the process involved, selection of auditors, definition of “continuing to practice”, the general perceived “openness” of the

criteria for CPD activity, and also the point at which students should start CPD. This seems to be a confusing issue for many people as universities are prompting students to get into the habit of CPD record keeping while studying, however students then become concerned as to how this fits with HPC registration and continuing CPD. "Why do we have to do CPD if we are not yet on the register" was a question that came up a few times. Over the course of the event 165 copies of the CPD long guide were distributed.

Of the registration queries received many were from students who appeared unsure about the initial registration processes. Some students reported that their universities were telling people not to apply until they had got their results.

While most other people seemed quite happy and informed about the process, some reported that colleagues (probably those not visiting our stand) had problems last year as they were under the impression that as they paid by DD they didn't have to complete the declaration [The correct procedure is to be stated in all newsletters during the renewal period]. Other queries related to registration when moving abroad and the scope of "continuing to practise".

One of the key benefits of attending the meeting was the opportunity to meet with members of the College of OTs' Council. The members we spoke to seemed very happy to have us there and were pleased that we had been given a positive reception by the delegates. It seems that they felt the fees rise and CPD process may have caused a negative reaction to the HPC.

#### **Contact made:**

- Contact at College of OTs. The possibility of a joint session at the 2007 conference was discussed and will be taken forward. As long as the college retain control of content they seemed quite happy for us to get involved. [This has since been rejected by the College of OTs. If we want to take part we would have to pay for a sponsored session].
- Contact interested in working with HPC to offer ongoing assessment of CPD profiles in the College of OT Journal. OTs would submit, one would be chosen and we would offer comments. Also interested in organising a CPD talk in Ulster. [Kelly to contact Thomas Heiser with details].
- University of Salford. Developing a Masters in advanced OT via e-learning. Interested in developing some sort of accreditation with HPC to allow assisted access to the Register for course graduates [Adam Mawson from UK Reg to take forward].
- Individual contacted HPC to report the work of an unregistered music therapist and was told that there was nothing that could be done [Kelly Johnson from FTP to contact and see if there is anything we can take up at this point].
- Shoe manufacturer "People being trained as foot health professionals are in effect working as podiatrists. When will the HPC take action against the two known training facilities?" [UK Reg to respond].

#### **Comments received:**

- The only real comment received – as opposed to a query – was regarding the difficulty of finding time for recording CDP activities.

**Questions raised:**

- When and if to register if moving abroad
- Time line for registering for the first time
- Scope of continuing to practice

**Benefits:**

As mentioned, the numbers were below what was expected however as usual we were able to provide good information to those we spoke to. In addition, having a member of the registrations team available was useful in providing answers to the more specific registration queries. The distribution of the CPD guides was beneficial, as was the distribution of the current consultation documents. Attending an exhibition such as this helps in the development of HPC's image as a regulator that is involved in the ongoing lives of registrants. Over time this will lead to more constructive relationships with our registrants.

**Drawbacks:**

As the numbers were low we did not need the third member of staff on the second day. Again, the stand was not as appealing as some and we would benefit from being visually updated [to be carried out once the visual identity is approved] and perhaps the investment in some economical give away items to draw people to the stand (i.e. HPC key-rings / Post-IT pad). The location of the stand could also be improved had we decided to attend earlier in the year.

**Conclusions:**

This was a worthwhile exhibition providing a valuable opportunity to engage with registrants. Although attendance was lower than expected the interaction and amount of information distributed was good. In addition, the contacts made with the College Council add to the positive and proactive image of the HPC and may lead to future involvement.

**Recommendations for the future:**

- For larger events three staff members are required however if the show was quieter you could manage with just two
- Registration staff member a good aid in answering specific questions
- It may be worth investing in some give away gifts – key-rings, post-it notes – as a means of drawing people to the stand and of publicising the HPC
- Ensure that a more complete version of the website is available off-line, perhaps also including a test version of the register
- Look at the branding of the stand for the events we take part in – to be discussed as part of the update to visual identity

**Repeat the Exhibition?:** Yes

This was a worthwhile exhibition that could be improved upon. However it is probably only a viable option during the OT renewal periods as otherwise there are alternative professional body events which generate larger audiences.



## External Exhibition Evaluation Report

**Name of Event:** Institute of Biomedical Sciences Annual Congress and Exhibition 2007  
**Date:** 24-26 September 2007  
**Location:** ICC, Birmingham  
**Details:**

- Approx. 3000 over three days
- Majority were registered Biomedical Scientists but also some students.
- 120 stands spread over three main areas
- Over 200 visits to the stand
- HPC used new 1500mm banner in a 2x2m stand
- Laptop showing website and HPCheck
- Relevant registrant literature and some examples of patient facing literature
- Two members of staff: Thomas Heiser and David Waddle. Representative from Education present for first two days. Rachel Tripp present on second day as she was presenting a session

### Publications distributed:

- |                                     |     |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| • Returning to practise             | 21  |
| • CPD – Long                        | 240 |
| • CPD – Short                       | 60  |
| • Standards of C/P/E                | 42  |
| • Biomedical Scientist SOP          | 84  |
| • What happens if a complaint is... | 35  |
| • CPD Profile handout               | 50  |
| • CPD FAQ handout                   | 38  |

### General thoughts:

The decision to attend the IBMS conference, as opposed to the many other available, was due to the renewal period for Biomedical Scientists coinciding with the event. It was assumed that this would generate additional traffic to the stand and enable us to provide additional benefit to the attendees. We found however that the main queries and information requested concerned CPD and as a result distributed a lot of information on this subject. In particular people were interested in the sample profiles and the CPD FAQ handouts.

As the meeting attendees were registrants the vast majority were aware of the HPC and generally appeared to have positive views of the organisation. A few more negative comments were received however these were handled well.

Contact time with attendees was high as the stand was located in the main foyer area. Delegates had to pass through this area to register and to get to sessions

and so the stand had a constant stream of visitors. Contact was also helped by having a member of HPC staff presenting a session at the event. Attendees made their way to the stand after the session to obtain further information and to meet the speaker.

#### **Contact made:**

- Many delegates collecting information were departmental Training Officers. These would be valuable outlets for future HPC communications however from speaking with them there did not seem to be an established network [To be investigated further]
- Other contacts were made with regard to specific queries but no long term contacts were developed

#### **Comments received:**

- Generally feedback was good. Delegates seemed to appreciate our presence and were glad for the opportunity to talk with us.
- Several delegates mentioned low standards of practical experience of people entering the register via the international route [Feedback passed on to the international Registrations department]

#### **Questions raised:**

- Query regarding the circumstances in which a registrant is required to inform the HPC if they are cautioned by their employer
- CPD for registrants working in industry / management / new students / newly retired
- Several requests about returning to practice and the definition of continuing to practise
- Request for information on the health references and eating disorders
- Query regarding identification of registrants involved in FTP hearings so as to be able to take appropriate action regarding membership of a professional body [details forwarded to FTP department]
- Three people wanted to know about the appointments of CPD Partner Assessors [Details forwarded to Partner Manager]
- Three people made requests for CPD presentations [Details forwarded to CPD Communications Manager]
- Are Biomedical Scientists allowed to provide clinical advice or make clinical judgements as under the CPSM they were not allowed to do this [Forwarded to Policy and Standards department]
- Are non-registered Clinical Scientists able to sign/authorise clinical reports? [Forwarded to Policy and Standards department]
- Are medical consultants able to carry out elements of Biomedical Science work without becoming registered? [Forwarded to Policy and Standards department]

#### **Benefits:**

The high number of visits to the stand and amount of literature distributed clearly demonstrate that attendance was beneficial. Understanding of CPD was

increased and it could be assumed that the image of the HPC as a positive, engaging and proactive organisation will have been further developed.

### **Drawbacks:**

The stand space was small but was used effectively. Due to the location of the stand the size was not as much of an issue as it has been at previous events. The numbers of visits to the stand was lower on the last day but this is to be expected.

### **Conclusions:**

The number of visits to the stand, the amount of literature distributed, and the feedback from speaking to delegates clearly demonstrate the value of attending this conference. Having a member of staff speaking at the event was also a very effective way of generating interest and opportunities will continue to be developed.

### **Recommendations for the future:**

- Staff member from Registrations is useful and should be continued
- Opportunities to have speakers in the main programme should be pursued
- Give away gifts should be investigated
- Purchase additional literature holders
- Develop more of an introductory text on the HPC for general distribution

**Repeat the Exhibition?:** Yes

Using renewal dates to help decide which professional body's conferences to attend may not be as useful as first assumed. It would appear that attendance at professional body conferences are of benefit in their own right and this should be considered while developing the events programme.