

**Department of Education & Policy**

**Forward Programme of Approvals Visits**

**Executive Summary and Recommendations**

**1. Introduction**

Between January and July 2005 a total of 52 programmes will be the subject of an Approvals event to be undertaken within 35 visits, the majority of which will occur between March and June. Details of these can be found in the Appendix to this paper. Requests are still being received for visits in May and June 2005. Once additional staff have been appointed and trained, the forward programme from September onwards will be addressed. It is unlikely that many visits will take place during July and August due to the summer holiday period for educational institutions but consideration is being given to undertaking some of the paramedic training centres during this period. Volume of work for the staff in the Department will determine how many visits can take place over the summer period due to a necessity for internal staff holidays and in dealing with the post-visit processes for the 40 to 50 visits which will have taken place by that time.

It would appear that the two periods between March to June and September to December will be the busiest times with approval events for new programmes being requested to meet the two main start dates for health programmes of September and January of each academic year. Every attempt will be made to fit in with education providers' own timetables but it should be noted that there is a finite resource within the Education & Policy Department and it may not always be possible to undertake requested visits at a specific time. Requests will be dealt with on a first-come, first-served basis unless there is a strong business reason why a visit has to take place sooner rather than later.

At present we are being reactive in our forward programming, scheduling visits as a result of requests from education providers, but once the new staff have started and received training we will begin to be proactive for those programmes which require a visit to be initiated by the HPC.

Education providers are being requested to let us know as soon as possible about any programme development which will require an Approvals visit. We are booking visits for as far in advance as 2007 and beyond should requests be received.

**2. Decision**

The Committee is asked **to note** the contents of the paper. No decision is required.

**3. Background information**

None

**4. Resource implications**

It is anticipated that with one Education Manager and 4 Education Officers approximately 100 visits can be undertaken in a 12 month period. This will be piloted over the next

financial year (April 2005 – Mar 2006). During this time the operational processes will be firmed up and the workload monitored with a view to service levels and volume. This means that there will still be 58 required visits outstanding, not including any new programme requests which are received in the intervening time (it is thought that up to 40 applications could be received for Approvals visits for Supplementary Prescribing courses in addition to any new BSc or MSc programmes), ad-hoc visits required, or new professions coming onto the Register whose programmes will require initial approval.

## **5. Financial implications**

It should be noted that resourcing for the Department takes place within the overall budget limitations of the company and the staffing levels mentioned above do not yet include work on Annual Monitoring. Staffing for the coming year will be part of the budget discussions to take place shortly.

## **6. Background papers**

None

## **7. Appendices**

Forward Calendar of Events.

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