
Fitness to Practice Forum, 17 September 2008

Fitness to Practice training for Chairs and Panel members

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

Refresher training for panel chairs took place on 27 June 2008 and on 31 July and 1 August 2008 for new panel members.

Panel Chair refresher training is held every six months and aims to provide a forum for discussion and learning for the 12 Partners involved. The half day session tackled, amongst many issues: new HPC Standards of Conduct Performance and Ethics, a Fitness to Practise update, CHRE learning points, new Practice Notes, reasons and ICP decision making.

The new Panel Member two day training session was attended by 13 new FTP Partners. The two day session covered areas of; relevant legislation, conduct of hearings, equality and diversity, as well as practical sessions including engagement skills, decision making and sanctions.

Both sessions received very positive feedback from evaluation forms.

Decision

The Forum is requested to note the document. No decision is required.

Background information

Further refresher training days for existing panel members has been scheduled between September 2008 and March 2009. Around 120 panel members have accepted invitations to three sessions during this period.

A legal assessor review day is scheduled to take place on 5 September 2008.

Resource implications

The Partner team organise the training.

The Director of Fitness to Practise, Head of Case Management and Hearings Manager lead the training and organise the appropriate resources.

Financial implications

Partners receive a daily attendance fee and their expenses for attending the sessions. This has been budgeted for by the Partner's department.

Jonathan Bracken and Diane Hodgson attend some parts of the training sessions where appropriate.

Appendices

None

Date of paper

20 August 2008

Fitness to Practice Forum, 17 September 2008

Fitness to Practice hearings feedback from Chairs and Legal Assessors

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

Panel and legal assessor feedback forms were introduced to CCC and HC hearings in February 2008. Forms are to be completed at the conclusion of each hearing. They are designed as a mechanism to record operational, strategic or case specific information that can be used to improve future services at FTP hearings. Forms are an important tool in the monitoring and review of services provided at HPC hearings. 90 forms had been returned and completed by mid August 2008.

Forms also provide the opportunity for panels and legal assessors to comment on all parties involved in the hearing. Positive feedback is communicated to those involved and any concerns raised can be acted upon after full investigation. Comments made about presenting officers, including presenters from Kingsley and Napley and FTP Case Managers have been fed back to their managers for discussion. The vast majority of comments about case presenters has been positive in nature.

Feedback from forms has been collated and reports run to provide feedback to different members involved in hearings. This report attached details some of the measures taken to improve areas of concern that had been highlighted.

Decision

This paper is for information only, no decision is required.

Background information

| Issue | Frequency | Description- action |
|---|-----------|--|
| Operational: Rooms- negative | 15 | Most negative comments related to venues outside London. Work has been undertaken to source new, less expensive venues for out of London hearings. Size and number of rooms also mentioned- usually problems are unavoidable. Budget constraints mean we sometimes use venues which are smaller or have fewer rooms, but ensure this will never compromise proceedings. |
| Rooms- positive | 4 | Partners commented on facilities available and their approval of using the new Council Chamber. |
| Travel | 3 | Portman issues. Cooperative Travel now being piloted with a group of Partners. |
| Strategic: Case papers- negative positive | 11 1 | Quality and delivery- FTP's print supplier has been notified and extra checks implemented within FTP to check papers before they are dispatched for print. Transcripts- both transcription agencies have agreed to update HPC templates, document formatting and to correct mistakes free of charge. |
| Allegations drafting | 2 | Allegations are checked by Lead Case Managers in the first instance. At ICP the panel can choose to amend allegations, as long as it does not substantially change the allegation's meaning. Panel chairs have been notified of their power to amend allegations at a recent review day. |
| Notice of hearing | 2 | Accuracy of details within- all templates have been reviewed to ensure notices are correct. |
| Legislation | 5 | Concern about cases in the continuing loop of suspension under Article 30. Paper to be considered by Council to review current interpretation of legislation. |
| Registrants/ Representatives | 3 | Concern raised about papers being submitted on the morning of hearing. This has been raised at a quarterly meeting held with Union representatives. Correspondence also advises that papers should be submitted in advance. |

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| | 2 | Comment that registrants who represented themselves took longer than if they were represented. Raised at meeting with Unions. |
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Resource implications

None

Financial implications

None

Appendices

None

Date of paper

29 August 2008