



## **Unite response to the HCPC consultation on standards of prescribing**

**This response is submitted by Unite the Union - the country's largest trade union. The union's members work in a range of industries including manufacturing, financial services, print, media, construction and not-for-profit sectors, local government, education and health services.**

**Unite is the third largest trade union in the National Health Service and represents approximately 100,000 health sector workers. This includes seven professional associations - the Community Practitioners and Health Visitors' Association (CPHVA), Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists (GHP), Medical Practitioners Union (MPU), Society of Sexual Health Advisors (SSHA), Hospital Physicians Association (HPA), College of Health care Chaplains (CHCC) and the Mental Health Nurses Association (MNHA) – and members in occupations such as allied health professions, health care science, family of psychology, counsellors and psychotherapists, the family of dental professions, audiology, optometrists, opticians, estates and maintenance, ancillary and ambulance workers .**

## **Introduction**

1. This is the Unite the Union response to the Health and Care Professions Council consultation on standards for prescribing.

### **Question 1 - Do you think the standards are set at the level necessary for safe and effective prescribing practice?**

2. Yes. However the standards need to be strengthened with the provision of Additional Standards and Guidance for the protection of the prescribers and the public.

### **Question 2 - Do you think any additional standards are necessary?**

3. There is a great need for additional standards in prescribing. Additional standards will strengthen the standards of prescribing by offering additional safety to both the prescribers and the public.
4. Additional standards will cater for the practical complexity in prescribing that is not straight forward.
5. Additional standards will help to fine tune the existing standards of prescribing offering clear definitions, guidelines, boundaries and a practical framework for the prescribers within the prescribing context (for example prescribing unlicensed medicines, off labels medicines, private prescribing, self and family prescribing, Insurance, gifts and interests. etc).
6. Additional Standards will facilitate and inform, the national and agreed local standards of prescribing by offering clear guidance and a reference point in achieving and maintaining a consistent level. It will also improve accountability and good management of prescribing errors and incidences.

### **Question 3 - Do you think there are any standards which should be reworded or removed?**

7. No, not necessarily but we would suggest some additions as follows.
  - Pre Admission - CRB on the potential prescribers.

- The length of the course to be stated.

*Programmes admission column 1.2*

- To include numeracy.

*Curriculum to include*

- Legislation/legal framework, policies and standards informing prescribing.
- Standards of prescribing to include prescribing within the prescribers scope of practice.
- Safe and effective storage and disposal of prescription pads and medicines.
- Prescribing ethically

**Question 4 - Do you have any comments about the language used in the standards?**

8. No.

**Question 5 - Do you have any other comments on the standard?**

9. We suggest that the HCPC establishes a system that ensures/mandates prescribers receive adequate supervision and mentoring, regular updates and sets the time frame for the routine update.

10. HCPC should also have a mechanism in place whereby they work collaboratively with education, practice and employers to enhance sound prescribing, safe practice and public safety.

**This evidence was submitted on behalf of Unite the Union**

**For further information, please contact:**

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