

Mann recommendations agreed in consultation on GMC overhaul

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The most significant overhaul of the regulation of medical professionals since 1983 will be set out in a consultation on the General Medical Council Order.

- Biggest reform of General Medical Council (GMC) for over 40 years
- First tranche of Lord John Mann recommendations published
- Boost to NHS patient and staff safety

Major reform to the General Medical Council (GMC) is being put in motion today [24 March] to modernise the regulation of doctors, making the system faster, less bureaucratic and better equipped to protect both patients and NHS staff.

The most significant overhaul of the regulation of medical professionals since 1983 will be set out in a consultation on the General Medical Council (GMC) Order - the legislation governing the regulation of doctors - which has been launched today.

There have been too many recent examples of doctors using intolerably racist and antisemitic language, particularly on social media, without regulators taking swift enough action to effectively protect patients and NHS staff. It is clear that the current regulatory landscape is outdated and too bureaucratic, hampering the GMC's ability to act decisively when doctors contravene their code of conduct.

That is why the government asked Lord John Mann to conduct a rapid review into antisemitism and other forms of racism in the health service in November. Alongside the wider modernisation proposals, the government is consulting on the first tranche of recommendations from Lord Mann's review.

The GMC Order will consult on delivering these recommendations into law, introducing three key changes:

- The GMC will retain its existing right to appeal decisions made by the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service (MPTS) to the Courts, ensuring there remains a robust check on fitness to practise outcomes.
- The Professional Standards Authority (PSA) — the body that oversees all healthcare regulators — will receive new powers to challenge interim decisions made by the MPTS, and the GMC will receive equivalent powers.
- Regulators will be required to share information with the PSA when requested, strengthening the PSA's ability to scrutinise regulatory decisions and intervene where necessary.

These changes will increase oversight of the GMC and make it easier for regulators and oversight

bodies to act where decisions are not strong enough to keep the public safe.

Beyond the Mann recommendations, in order to drive positive change and strengthen sexual safety in the NHS, the consultation also proposes removing the current rule which prevents regulators from being able to consider fitness to practise concerns involving allegations of historic sexual abuse after 5 years have passed.

Health and Social Care Secretary Wes Streeting said:

The NHS is a universal health service, which means that everyone, regardless of race, religion, or belief, should feel safe seeking its care. It is unacceptable that this is not the current reality for many patients and staff, and I will not allow it to continue.

I am grateful to Lord John Mann for his rapid investigation into how we can overhaul the current system and I look forward to setting his common-sense recommendations in motion to ensure NHS patients and staff get the protection they expect.

Lord John Mann said:

Racism, including anti-Jewish racism, has no place in the health sector or our NHS, and those who engage in it should face swift and meaningful consequences. For too long, the system has been too slow and too cumbersome to deliver that. These reforms will help deliver change. I am pleased that the government has moved quickly to act on my recommendations, and I look forward to working with it to implement the rest of my review.

The consultation also proposes reforms to make the regulatory system more efficient and fit for the future, including greater flexibility on education and training standards and increased autonomy for regulators to respond to future workforce needs.

This includes overhauling the fitness to practise process to make it swifter, fairer and less adversarial, strengthening public protection and improving the experience for all parties involved. This will further support the work GMC has already done to eliminate bias in its fitness to practice processes.

GMC Chief Executive and Registrar, Charlie Massey, said:

Patients rightly expect assurance that doctors, PAs and AAs are safe to practise and can be held to account if serious concerns are raised. These proposed reforms will allow us to respond more quickly and flexibly when patient safety is at risk.

They will also allow us to further improve our efficiency and effectiveness, while at the same time enabling us to help patients navigate the complaints and concerns process more easily.

This is an important and long-awaited step towards a more responsive and compassionate approach to healthcare regulation.

Together, these changes are designed to reduce bureaucracy, improve patient and staff safety and support the NHS workforce.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/mann-recommendations-agreed-in-consultation-on-gmc-overhaul>