

# The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

## Professional Registration

Effective: May 2011

Review: April 2014

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Statutory regulation of healthcare professionals exists to ensure standards of practice by regulated practitioners and to protect the public as far as possible against the risk of poor practice.
- 1.2 It works by setting agreed standards of practice and competence by registering those who are competent to practice and restricting the use of specified titles to those who are registered. It can also apply sanctions, such as removing from the register any practitioner whose fitness to practice is impaired.
- 1.3 The Trust recognises its duty of care to patients and will take appropriate measures to verify the professional registration of all employees covered by this policy, both before appointment and at regular intervals thereafter. Records of professionally registered staff will be maintained on ESR by the HR Department (pre-employment checks), and by managers thereafter (on-going employment).

### 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees, excluding doctors and dentists (see Maintenance of General Medical/Dental Council Registration Policy), who are required to hold appropriate professional registration as part of their employment with the Trust.
- 2.2 The policy also applies to Nurse Bank staff engaged to work in roles which require professional registration with a regulatory body.
- 2.3 The table below shows the staff groups covered and the relevant regulatory body:

<b>Staff Covered</b>	<b>Regulatory Body</b>
Dental Hygienists, Dental Nurses, Dental Technicians, Clinical Dental Technicians, Orthodontic Therapists	General Dental Council (GDC)
Art Therapists, Biomedical Scientists Chiropodists/Podiatrists, Clinical Scientists, Dietitians, Hearing Aid Dispensers, Occupational Therapists, Operating Department Practitioners, Orthoptists, Prosthetists, Orthotists, Paramedics, Physiotherapists, Practitioner Psychologists, Radiographers,	Health Professions Council (HPC)

Speech & Language Therapists	
Nurses, Midwives and Specialist Community Public Health Nurses	Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC)
Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians	General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)
Registered Optometrist, Dispensing Technician (including students)	General Optical Council (GOC)

### 3. Responsibilities

#### 3.1 Employee

All employees covered under Section 2 above are responsible for maintaining their professional registration and for ensuring that they comply with its requirements. This includes notifying their regulatory body of any changes in their circumstances, particularly a change of address.

#### 3.2 Human Resources Department

- a) The Human Resources Department is responsible for carrying out pre-employment checks on all qualified recruits to ensure they hold appropriate professional registration for their employment and are not currently subject to action which may affect their appointment e.g. restrictions, fitness to practice investigation, suspension.
- b) Pre-employment checking will also include a check of the recruit against information received via practitioner lists from professional bodies and the NHS Alert Notice process.
- c) Professional body lists and Alert Notices will also be used to check that they do not relate to existing employees.

#### 3.3 Directorates/Departments

##### a) Employed Staff

Managers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are competent to practice at all times and maintain the necessary professional registration and fitness to practice for their employment. Managers have a responsibility to implement an appropriate process in order to monitor professional registration renewal dates for their staff and to verify they have renewed registration at the appropriate time. Once the manager has verified the renewal they must input the new expiry date to ESR.

##### b) Agency Workers

Authorised Bookers within Directorates/Departments are responsible for verifying that an agency has carried out pre-engagement checks on their

workers to ensure they hold appropriate professional registration for the role they are required to undertake and that they are not currently subject to action which may affect their ability to work within the Trust (e.g. restrictions, fitness to practice investigations, suspension).

The Authorised Booker must contact the HR Department to undertake a check of Alert Notices prior to the worker commencing work in the Trust. If a worker's professional registration expiry date falls within the period of their placement with the Trust, the Authorised Booker should assure themselves that the worker's registration has been renewed.

### 3.4 Agency Worker Suppliers

- a) Agencies are responsible for ensuring the professional workers they supply are subjected to pre-employment checks; are competent to practice at all times; and maintain their professional registration and fitness to practice at all times.
- b) Agencies have a responsibility to implement an appropriate process in order to monitor the professional registration expiry dates of their workers and to verify registration is renewed at the appropriate time.

## 4. Process for Checking – Pre-Employment

- 4.1 The HR Department is responsible for verifying the professional registration of new recruits, and existing staff when appointed to a new position, before they start work. The relevant HR Advisor will evidence the individual's professional registration on-line via the relevant regulatory body's website and place a copy of the details in the individual's personal file. Fitness to practice checks will be undertaken via the appropriate processes for each regulatory body.
- 4.2 The HR Department will perform a check against information received via practitioner lists from professional bodies and the NHS Alert Notice process.
- 4.3 The HR Department will state the employee's professional registration number and expiry date in their Principal Statement of Main Terms and Conditions of Employment – Schedule of Particulars. The Schedule will also state that the employee must provide their manager with evidence of registration each time it is renewed.
- 4.4 The HR Department will also record the professional registration number and expiry date in ESR.
- 4.5 A copy of the Schedule of Particulars will be sent to the manager to record the expiry date for monitoring purposes.

## 5. Process for Checking – During Employment

Managers are responsible for ensuring professional registration expiry dates for all professionally registered staff within their area(s) of responsibility are recorded and maintained in ESR.

When checks are carried out a record must be made as follows:

Check	Record
Online	Print off result and retain for reference
Registration renewal certificate	Photocopy and retain for reference
ESR	Record renewal date (not required for NMC renewals which have been confirmed via email from NMC – see 5.1e)

The HR Department will send Directorate Managers a monthly report of registrations that are due to expire. Managers are responsible for taking appropriate action in respect of these reports to prevent a registration lapse.

If a password/ID is required to access a professional body's registration records, it can be obtained from the Directorate Manager, or the HR Department. This is a secure password and should not be disclosed to unauthorised personnel.

### 5.1 Nursing & Midwifery

- a) Professionally registered employees are contractually required to ensure they maintain their professional registration at all times. Managers should be aware of the risks associated with a lapse in registration, therefore, they should ensure monthly checks are completed to prevent a lapse occurring. Registration renewals must be evidenced via the NMC's employer on-line confirmation service, a record must be kept and ESR must be updated.
- b) The NMC regularly issues details highlighting changes to the register in respect of individual practitioners. For example, a practitioner may be removed or suspended from the register, or have conditions imposed on their practice. The HR Department is responsible for checking these details and alerting the appropriate Head of Nursing if an employee is listed. Where an employee is listed, the Head of Nursing in conjunction with the HR Department will ensure appropriate action is taken to safeguard patients.
- c) An electronic interface exists between the NMC register and ESR so that when an employee's registration expiry date is updated by the NMC the new date is automatically updated in ESR. An email is sent by the NMC to the identified ESR first level supervisor in the relevant Directorate/Department to notify them of the change.

## 5.2 All Other Staff Groups

Managers are responsible for records and checking as described in 5.1 above with the exception of section c) which applies only to staff registered with the NMC

5.3 ESR will automatically provide a notification to all first level supervisors one month prior to an employee's registration renewal date.

5.4 If the first level supervisor is not responsible for recording professional registrations, then local management arrangements must be communicated to ensure the notifications are forwarded to the appropriate manager.

5.5 The points covered in 5 and 5.4 will not substitute a manager's responsibility for undertaking monthly checks and maintaining their own records of registration expiry dates.

## 6. Registration Renewal Process

### 6.1 General Dental Council (GDC)

- a) The GDC requires registrants to re-register every year on 1 August. They must pay a fee and complete a form including a declaration.
- b) A registrant's details can be checked online at: [www.gdc-uk.org](http://www.gdc-uk.org)
- c) You can also contact the GDC on: Tel 020 78873800

### 6.2 Health Professions Councils (HPC)

- a) The HPC requires registrants to re-register every two years. They must pay a fee and complete a form including a declaration.
- b) The current re-registration dates for each of the professions currently covered by the HPC are as follows:

<b>Professions</b>	<b>Registration Renewal Date</b>
Art Therapists	1 June 2012
Biomedical Scientists	1 December 2011
Chiropodists/Podiatrists	1 August 2012
Clinical Scientists	1 October 2011
Dietitians	1 July 2012
Occupational Therapists	1 November 2011
Operating Department Practitioners	1 December 2012
Orthoptists	1 September 2011
Paramedics	1 September 2011
Physiotherapists	1 May 2012

Prosthetists & Orthotists	1 October 2011
Radiographers	1 March 2012
Speech & Language Therapists	1 October 2011

- c) The HPC sends a registrant a renewal notice 3 months and \*1 month (\*if not renewed by then) before registration renewal is due. The registrant is responsible for returning the necessary documentation and payment to the HPC in time to enable renewal to occur before the expiry date.
- d) If registration lapses, the registrant will be removed from the register and will not be able to practice using a protected title.
- e) A registrant's details can be checked on-line at: [www.hpc-uk.org](http://www.hpc-uk.org) Search the relevant professional group by entering the registrant's surname or their registration number (this is up to 6 numbers long and starts with 2 letters e.g. PH123456).
- f) Contact HPC on Tel 0845 3004472 or 0207 8409802.

### 6.3 Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC)

- a) The NMC requires registrants to re-register every year. They must pay a fee and complete a form including a declaration of health and good character.
- b) The registration expiry date is the last day of the month stated on their current registration.
- c) The NMC sends a registrant a renewal notice 45 days before registration renewal is due. The registrant is responsible for returning the necessary documentation and payment to the NMC in time to enable renewal to occur before the expiry date.
- d) Each time registration is renewed the employee must provide evidence to their manager. Note: the practitioner's PIN card is not proof of registration. The manager also has a continuing responsibility to prevent a lapse in registration using the systems referred to in this policy.
- e) If registration lapses, the NMC will letter the registrant 3 months after their registration expiry date to inform them that they have been removed from the register.
- f) A registrant's details can be checked online at: [www.nmc-uk.org](http://www.nmc-uk.org) using the employer's confirmation service. The individual's date of birth and PIN number will be required

### 6.4 General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)

- a) The GPhC requires registrants to re-register every year. Registration is effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> of any month and is valid for 12 months from the re-registration date.. They must pay a fee and complete an online form including a declaration or follow an automated telephone process.
- b) A registrant's details can be checked online at: [www.pharmacyregulation.org](http://www.pharmacyregulation.org)
- c) Contact the GPhC on Tel: 020 33653400.

#### 6.5 General Optical Council (GOC)

- a) The GOC requires registrants to re-register every year on 1 April. They must pay a fee and complete a form including a declaration.
- b) A registrant's details can be checked online at: [www.optical.org](http://www.optical.org)
- c) Contact the GOC on Tel: 020 75803898.

#### 7. Action to be taken if registration is not maintained

- a) An employee who is aware that their registration has lapsed must notify their manager immediately.
- b) On notification or discovery of a lapsed registration the manager must inform the HR Department.
- c) The individual whose registration has lapsed will be required to work with immediate effect in a non-professional [unqualified] position and their pay will be adjusted accordingly i.e. to the maximum of the lowest band for the particular staff group. For example, a nurse will be required to work as a Health Care Assistant (payment at band 2 or 3 will be dependent upon whether the ward/dept can accommodate a HCA at band 3) a Biomedical Scientist will be required to work as a Medical Laboratory Assistant.
- d) Paragraph c) above will apply regardless of whether the employee continues to work, or is absent for any reason including, for example, annual leave, sickness absence, special leave and/or study leave.
- e) The Trust regards any lapse in registration as a serious matter and will carry out an investigation in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure. This may include referral to the employee's regulatory body.
- f) Anyone found to be practicing whilst unregistered may be subject to prosecution by their professional body and a possible fine of £5,000.

## **8. Voluntary Registration**

- 8.1 Where a voluntary register exists for a particular professional group (e.g. Clinical Perfusionists, Genetic Counsellors, Clinical Physiologists) the manager should ensure staff are registered. Where staff are not registered, the manager must ensure the relevant individuals are appropriately supervised.
- 8.2 Supervision should be determined by the manager with due consideration to a practitioner's relevant experience, training and competence. A manager may determine that an employee does not require supervision as they are a long standing practitioner who can clearly demonstrate they possess the required level of training and competence to practice. In such cases, the manager should document their decision on the practitioner's personal file.
- 8.3 Areas of concern regarding a practitioner (e.g. conduct or professional matter) should be referred to the voluntary registering body. If the individual is removed from the register then a note will be placed on the register. If an individual requests to be removed from the register in circumstances where concerns have been raised, the registering body will make a note on the register.
- 8.4 In some cases, employers can also make a referral of individuals who are not registered and a note can be placed on the 'refused registration' page of the relevant bodies website – in all cases information should be sought from the relevant body regarding this.
- 8.5 As registers are voluntary, the registering bodies are unable to formally impose restrictions on individuals' fitness to practice and can only alert practice concerns via the register or a letter to the Chief Executive Officer.
- 8.6 Pre-employment checking of individuals where voluntary registration is an essential requirement of the role will be carried out as per section 4 via the appropriate arrangements of the body e.g. via an on line register, email or telephone.
- 8.7 Registration renewal requirements differ between the various bodies. Managers should ensure they are aware of each employee's renewal date and carry out on-going checks during employment as per section 5.

## **9. Bank Nurses**

- a) The Nurse Bank is responsible for all matters relating to professional registration checks for Bank Nurses.
- b) The Nurse Bank will carry out all pre-employment checks as well as checks during

employment for Bank Nurses (processes as detailed in sections 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4 and 5.1 above).

- c) An employee who is aware that their registration has lapsed must notify the Nurse Bank Manager immediately.
- d) The individual whose registration has lapsed will not be allowed to work in any capacity until confirmation is received that they have renewed their registration.
- e) If the employee has not taken steps to renew their registration within one month of the Nurse Bank being notified of the lapse, they will be removed from the Nurse Bank.

## **10. Agency Staff and Contractors**

- 10.1 Arrangements will only be made with agency worker suppliers and contractors where they confirm – prior to the worker’s commencement in the Trust – that their workers are professionally registered with the relevant regulatory body.
- 10.2 Prior to commencement the relevant authorised booker will verify with the agency that they have obtained proof of professional registration and fitness to practice from the relevant regulatory body’s website, and ensured that the agency worker is not currently subject to action which may affect their appointment (e.g. restrictions or suspension). A record of the verification should be placed with the individuals booking documentation.
- 10.3 A check of the NHS Alert Notices will also be conducted - authorised bookers should contact the HR Recruitment Team who will perform the check and notify the booker of the outcome.

## **11. Self-Employed**

- a) Managers who use any self-employed professionals who fall within the remit of this policy must check and verify their professional registration and fitness to practice before they start work in accordance with the procedural steps in section 4. above.
- b) Depending on the duration of the individual’s deployment and/or when their registration is due to expire, managers must ensure they verify the practitioner’s re-registration and fitness to practice each time it is renewed in accordance with section 5. above.

## **12. Monitoring and Audit**

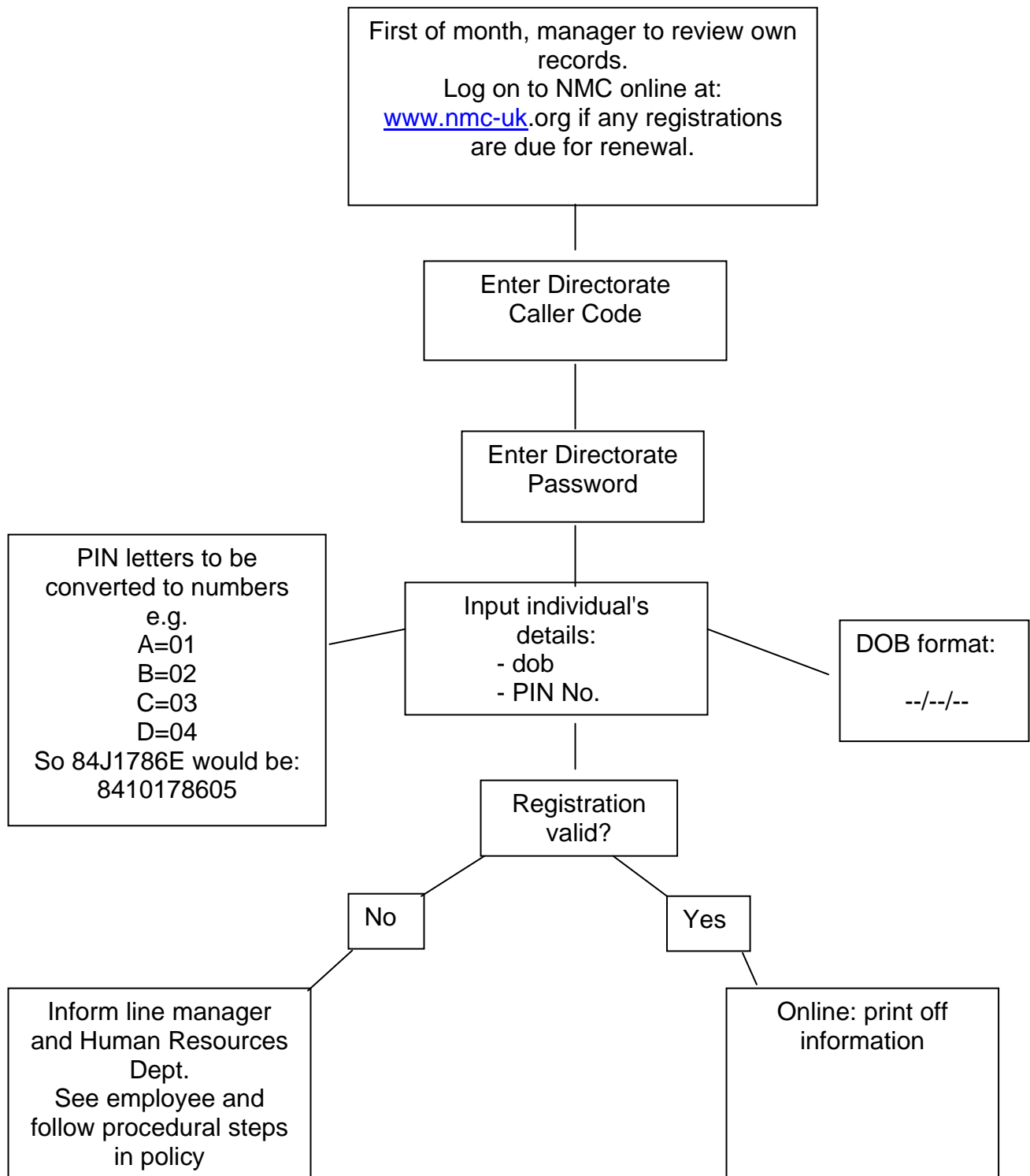
- 12.1 Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the Director of Human Resources. An audit of ESR records and personal files will be undertaken quarterly to show the following:
- That a professional registration check was completed and recorded for all new starters and internal appointments prior to commencement
  - That documentary evidence to support the above was recorded in the personal file
  - Whether any lapses in registration occurred and how they were dealt with
- 12.2 The findings will be reported to the Corporate Governance Committee on an annual basis.
- 12.3 The number of referrals to professional bodies made by the Trust will also be reported to the Corporate Governance Committee on an annual basis.
- 12.4 The Corporate Governance Committee will identify appropriate action plans to address areas of the process which can be improved upon. These will be implemented accordingly.

## **13. Further Advice and Guidance**

Please contact a Human Resources Officer in the Human Resources Department.

Author: Director of Human Resources

## Flowchart for Nursing & Midwifery Registration Checks



**THE NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**  
**IMPACT ASSESSMENT – SCREENING FORM A**

This form must be completed and attached to any procedural document when submitted to the appropriate committee for consideration and approval.

Policy Title:	Professional Registration	Policy Author:	Karen Pearce
		Yes/No?	You must provide evidence to support your response:
1.	Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of the following: (* denotes protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010)	No	Procedure applies to all non medical employees requiring registration and is in accordance with the NHS Employment Check Standards. It is underpinned by Trust's overriding policy on Equal Opportunities and Diversity
	• Race *	No	
	• Ethnic origins (including gypsies and travellers)	No	
	• Nationality	No	
	• Gender *	No	
	• Culture	No	
	• Religion or belief *	No	
	• Sexual orientation including lesbian, gay and bisexual people *	No	
	• Age *	No	
	• Disability – learning difficulties, physical disability, sensory impairment and mental health problems *	No	
	• Gender reassignment *	No	
	• Marriage and civil partnership *	No	
2.	Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?	No	There is no evidence to support any group was affected differently
3.	If you have identified potential discrimination which can include associative discrimination i.e. direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?		
4(a).	Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative? <i>(If "yes", please answer sections 4(b) to 4(d)).</i>	No	
4(b).	If so can the impact be avoided?		
4(c).	What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?		
4(d).	Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?		

<b>Comments:</b>	<b>Action Plan due (or Not Applicable):</b>
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Name and Designation of Person responsible for completion of this form: ..... Karen Pearce Senior HR Manager (Projects) Date: .... 31/03/2011 .....

Names & Designations of those involved in the impact assessment screening process: .... Employment Policies and Procedures Consultation Group .....

If any reader of this procedural document identifies a potential discriminatory impact that has not been identified on this form, please refer to the Policy Author identified above, together with any suggestions for the actions required to avoid/reduce this impact.)