



Department
of Health

Language Controls for Doctors - Proposed Changes to the Medical Act 1983

Please fill in and/or tick the appropriate response.

Response form

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Freedom of Information

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes. The relevant legislation in this context is the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in most circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. However, the information you send us may need to be passed on to colleagues within the UK Health Departments and/or published in a summary of responses to this consultation.

I do not wish my response to be published in a summary of responses

- Are you responding:
- *as a member of the public*
 - *as a health or social care professional*
 - *on behalf of an organisation* ✓

If you are responding as a health or social care professional, please supply the following details:

Country of qualification

Please indicate as appropriate:

UK **Other EEA** **Rest of World**

Area of work

- NHS**
- Social Care**
- Private Health**
- Voluntary**
- Regulatory Body**
- Professional Body** ✓
- Education**
- Union**
- Local Authority**
- Trade Body**
- Other** (please give details)

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please supply details:

Organisation

Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh

Language Controls for Doctors - Proposed Changes to the Medical Act 1983

Consultation questions

Proposals to strengthen language controls for doctors

Q1: Do you agree that strengthening language checks as proposed will improve quality of care and patient safety?

Agree (X)

Disagree ()

Unsure ()

Comments

Licence to practise – Explanation

Q2: Do you agree with the proposed changes for applicants in relation to registration and licence to practise in terms of language competency?

Agree (X)

Disagree ()

Unsure ()

Comments

Fitness to practise – Explanation

Q3: Do you agree with the proposed changes for doctors in relation to fitness to practise in terms of language competency?

Agree (X)

Disagree ()

Unsure ()

Comments

Q4: Do you agree that changes to the Medical Act, as set out in this consultation document, will strengthen the language competence of doctors in the UK?

Agree (X)

Disagree ()

Unsure ()

Comments

Q5: Do you think that changes to legislation are necessary to strengthen the language competence of doctors in the UK or is there an alternative that does not require a change to legislation?

Agree (X)

Disagree ()

Unsure ()

Comments

Costs and benefits and equality analysis

Q6: Do you have views or evidence as to the likely effect on costs or the administrative burden of the proposed changes?

Yes ()

No (X)

Unsure ()

Comments

Q7: Do you think there are any benefits that are not already discussed relating to the proposed changes?

Yes (X)

No ()

Unsure ()

Comments

We are aware of some doctors outside of Europe, particularly in South Asia, feeling discriminated against with the current system, particularly where their education has been in English and they are required to sit IELTS/PLAB, whereas (mainly white) European doctors are not, despite less of their education having been in English.

Q8: Do you have any evidence of harm caused to patients due to the language proficiency of a doctor?

Yes ()

No (X)

Unsure ()

Comments

Q9: Are you aware of any particular groups who will be affected by this legislation, other than European doctors?

Yes ()

No (X)

Unsure ()

Comments

Q10: Are you aware of any groups for whom the proposed policy could have a detrimental effect?

Yes ()

No (X)

Unsure ()

Comments