

The Public Support Service

**A person centred approach to
Fitness to Practise**

Public Support Service

- The Public Support Service puts **patients, families, carers and the public front and centre** of the way we operate and the support we offer.
- It provides guidance and a systematic approach to how we will **support people who are involved in our cases to ensure they are protected, valued, cared for, respected and held as important partners** throughout the fitness to practise process.
- Taking a person-centred approach to fitness to practise will help us to **properly understand what has happened, to make sure concerns raised by patients and families are listened to and addressed**, and to explain to them what action we can take and why.

What people have told us: areas for on-going improvement

- Recognising the impact our actions have on patients, families and the public
- Being empathetic and compassionate in the way we deal with people every step of the way
- Understanding and valuing the patient and family experience as integral to assessing fitness to practise
- Making what we do and our processes clear and easy to understand so people know what to expect
- Being open and transparent about our decisions
- Being willing to learn from our mistakes and work with people where possible to implement improvements



A STORY OF PUBLIC SUPPORT

Public Support Service

1. Ensure that the **voice of patients, families and the public is heard** in Fitness to Practise
2. Co-produce a set of **person-centred principles**
3. A focus on **safeguarding**
4. A systematic process for **identifying people who need support**
5. **Useful and accessible information** available to people every step of the fitness to practise process
6. **Training** to make sure our people understand and feel confident to deliver a person-centred approach
7. Seeking and acting on **feedback to constantly improve what we do**

7 PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

Getting on with it ...

- A steering group to guide, steer and hold us to account for delivery against the Public Support Service – *first meeting October 2nd*
- 12 month pilot to test holding face to face meetings with patient and family member referrers. Meetings to be offered to all patient and family complainants at the beginning of an investigation and then again at the close of the case – *new roles in place ready to commence pilot in October*
- Needs assessment for those who need additional support – being launched with new phone calls to patient/family/public referrers *in September*
- *New emotional support line for patient and family complainants and witnesses (in partnership with the GMC) – service to commence January 1st*
- Work to develop the use of patient/family impact statements as part of fitness to practice – *paper going to our policy steering group in September*

Getting on with it ...

- On line training programme for all FtP staff to support safeguarding and identify people who are vulnerable and to support them appropriately – *due for launch in October with introduction of the new safeguarding policy*
- Public Support Service Network of champions to embed confidence and skills across FtP and to make it everybody's job to provide support to the public – *Network of 60 staff members now established, second workshop on October 10th*
- Training in mental health awareness, safeguarding, handling conversations with vulnerable people, bereavement awareness – *underway – on-going programme*
- Scoping external specialist support to provide mental health and learning disability advocacy and support – *service level agreement in development, aiming to commence a pilot in October/November*

Getting on with it ...

- A programme of work to develop relationships and two way communication with the 150 strong Healthwatch Network and other patient organisations – *attendance at Healthwatch conference October 3rd/4th, further work to commence late Autumn*
- A new section of the website developed specifically for patients, family members and the public to guide them through FtP and provide signposting to help and support – also useful for staff. <https://www.nmc.org.uk/concerns-nurses-midwives/support-for-patients-families-and-public/>
- A new film to explain what it is like to be a witness at a hearing – *complete and on new web pages this week*
- Staff briefings and induction – *ongoing*
- Engaging patients and families in the on-going work of the Public Support Service – *on-going*



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6HWKAs4GHk>

Thank you

Jessie Cunnett, Head of Public Support Service.
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