

Re: The NHS HEE Consultation

The recently released proposed standards are subject to consultation. They are 'threshold' fundamental standards and explicitly state that further learning and occupational advancement can be pursued and will be recognised. They actually contain the input that we put in whilst the College and Alliance were members of the consortium and we have a open invitation to re-join the consortium at any time. No existing practitioner will be disadvantaged - quite the contrary. It is the very outcome for which we could have wished.

This is the best thing to have happened to FHP since I first coined the term back in 2001 and established the occupation under that title. It has taken this long to receive formal acceptance and recognition of our existence by the NHS and HCPC but it is now plain that we are not only acknowledged but that our skills and remit are at last recognised and appreciated. The Accredited Register is likely to become more important to us.

There is no suggestion of limitation of our scope of practice. FHPs will have access points to the degree programme if they should so wish and there is also the possibility that they could be recruited or utilised to help in the delivery of the podiatry service if their skills can be assured. Far from restricting FHP, the prospects for us all are better than ever.