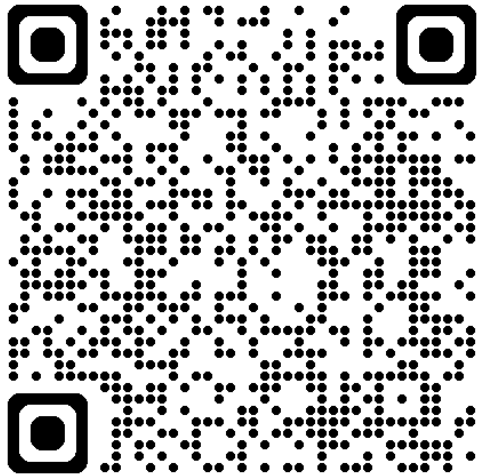


Professionalism in Practice

Iain Spink, Professional Liaison Consultant (England)

My role – Professional Liaison consultant

Design and deliver a range of engagements and materials that educate, influence and empower different stakeholders, promote professionalism and help to embed Standards and prevent harm.



[Professional Liaison Service | \(hcpc-uk.org\)](https://www.hcpc-uk.org)

Professional Liaison Service

My HCPC colleagues

- Policy – policy@hcpc-uk.org
- Fitness to practise – ftp@hcpc-uk.org
- Registration – registration@hcpc-uk.org
- Education – education@hcpc-uk.org
- Feedback – feedback@hcpc-uk.org

What do you think of when you hear the word ‘regulation’?



What do you think of when you hear the word 'regulation'?

Professional Liaison Service



Health Care Regulation



Professional Liaison Service

General
Medical
Council



Medicines &
Healthcare products
Regulatory Agency

Regulated by



About the HCPC

Professional Liaison Service

Protection of the public

- Protect, promote and maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of the public
- Promote and maintain public confidence in the professions we regulate
- Promote and maintain proper professional standards and conduct for the professions we regulate



Fair



Compassionate



Inclusive



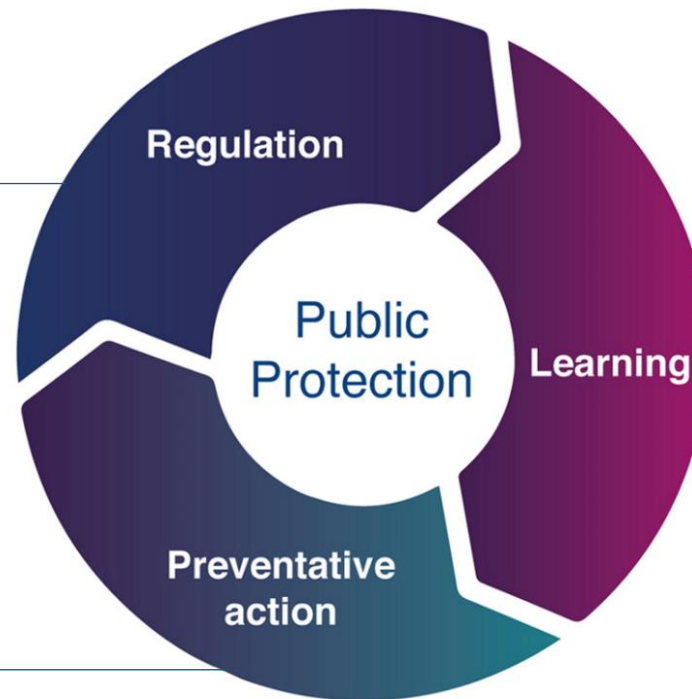
Enterprising

About the HCPC

Professional Liaison Service

- Maintain and publish a Register
- Set appropriate standards
- Quality assure education and training programmes
- Take action to protect the public

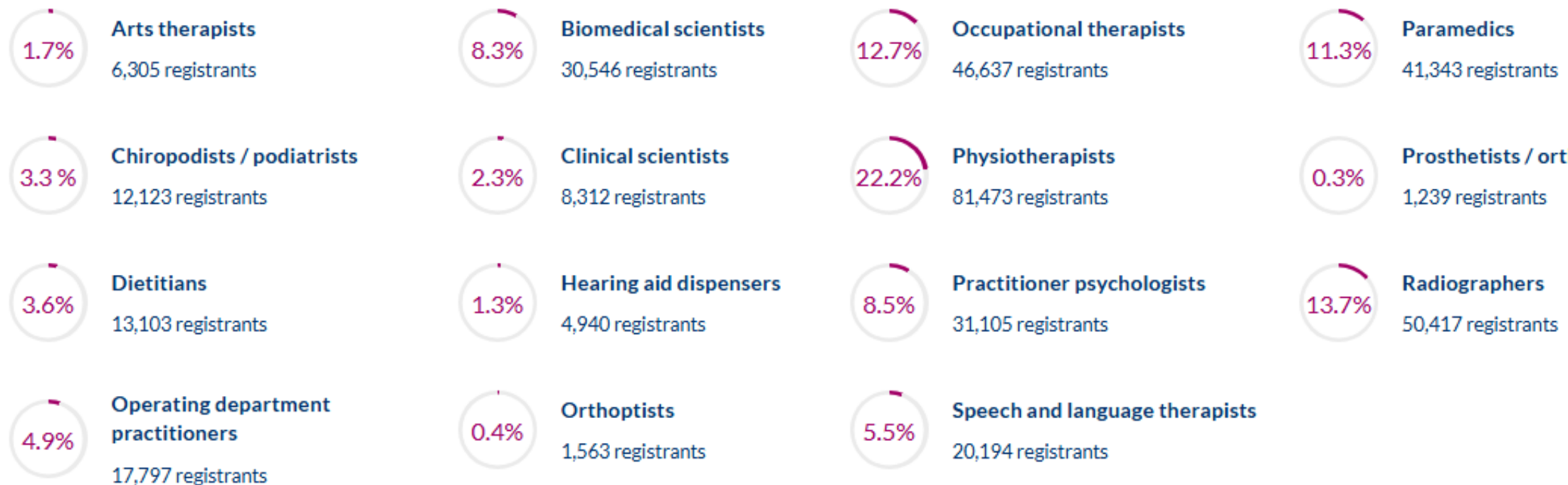
- Use our learning
- Address conditions that contribute to service user harm
- Support quality practice
- Help registrants overcome barriers to meeting standards



- Harness our data
- Develop insights
- Use learning
- Promote positive, inclusive and professional working environments

About the HCPC

Number of registrants by profession, showing percentage of the overall HCPC Register:

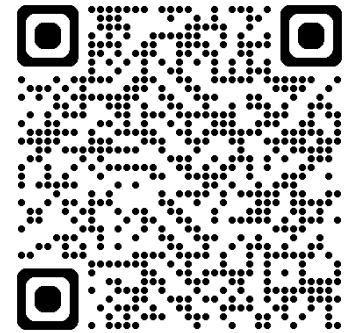


HCPC Register



366,097

Total number of registrants across 15 professions



All HCPC standards

Professional Liaison Service

hcpc health & care
professions
council

Your duties as an education provider

Standards of
education
and training

hcpc health & care
professions
council

Standards of proficiency

Prosthetists /
orthotists

hcpc health & care
professions
council

Your duties as a registrant

Standards of
conduct,
performance
and ethics

hcpc health & care
professions
council

Information for registrants

Continuing
professional
development
and your
registration

Standards of conduct, performance and ethics

Professional Liaison Service

Belong to registrants

High level framework

Outline public expectations

Support HCPC registration
decisions

hcpc health & care
professions
council

Your duties as a registrant

Standards of
conduct,
performance
and ethics

Support how HCPC deal with
concerns

Not prescriptive

Provide autonomy and flexibility

Professional judgement required

Why focus on professionalism?

NHS Staff Survey

Professional Liaison Service

Survey
Coordination
Centre



NHS Staff Survey 2024
National results briefing



Version 1
Published: March 2025

Inclusion sub-score: 2024: 6.88 (2023: 6.92, 2022: 6.89, 2021: 6.86)

Part of a team

69.88% of staff said they felt **valued by their team** (q7h)
(2023: 70.45%, 2022: 69.44%, 2021: 68.74%)

63.19% of staff said they felt a **strong personal attachment to their team** (q7i) (2023: 64.08%, 2022: 63.85%, 2021: 63.66%)

Respect and civility

The following percentage of staff reported that the people they work with are:

70.53% ... **understanding and kind to one another** (q8b) (2023: 71.24%, 2022: 71.10%, 2021: 70.57%)

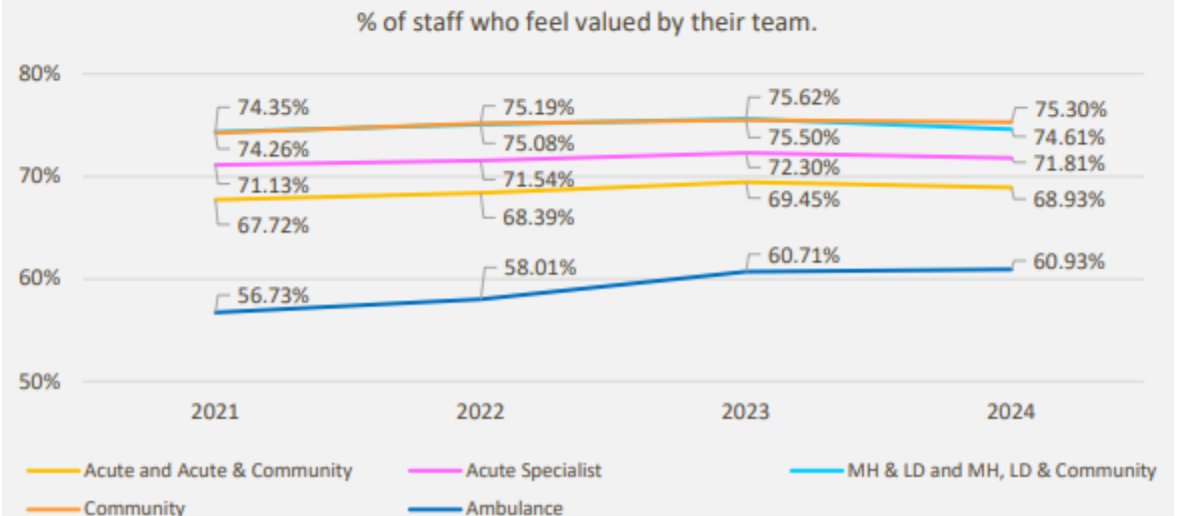
71.68% ... **polite and treat each other with respect** (q8c) (2023: 72.34%, 2022: 72.39%, 2021: 71.98%)

Feeling valued by your team

The 'Inclusion' sub-score and each of its constituent measures have remained similar from 2021 to present.

Nationally, the percentage of staff agreeing that they feel valued by their team is 69.88% which is similar to 2023 (70.45%) and remains above 2021 (68.74%).

For staff at Ambulance Trusts the proportion of staff that feel valued by their team is at a five-year high in 2024 at 60.93%. Meanwhile for staff at Mental Health & Learning Disability and Mental Health, Learning Disability and Community Trusts the percentage of staff reporting that they feel valued by their team has declined from 75.62% to 74.61% this year.



Raising concerns sub-score: 2024: 6.45 (2023: 6.46, 2022: 6.44, 2021: 6.54)

Concerns about clinical safety

The following percentage of staff said they...

71.53% ...would feel secure raising concerns about unsafe clinical practice (q20a) (2023: 71.45%, 2022: 72.05%, 2021: 75.13%, 2020: 72.82%)

56.83% ...were confident that their organisation would address their concern (q20b) (2023: 56.87%, 2022: 56.76%, 2021: 59.51%, 2020: 60.57%)

Speaking up about concerns

The following percentage of staff said they...

61.82% ...feel safe to speak up about anything that concerns them in their organisation (q25e) (2023: 62.34%, 2022: 61.53%, 2021: 62.07%, 2020: 65.70%)

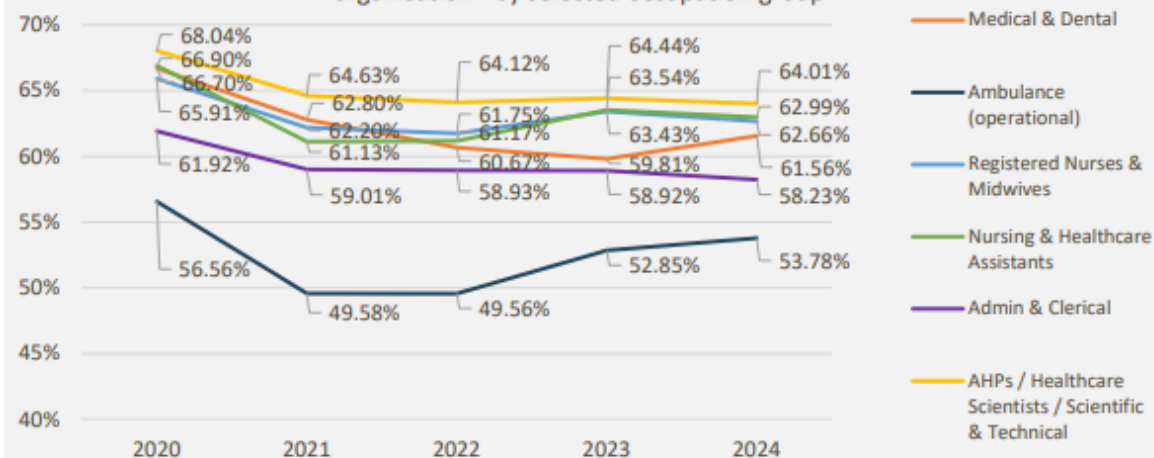
49.52% ...were confident that their organisation would address their concern (q25f) (2023: 50.08%, 2022: 48.67%, 2021: 49.77%)

Feeling safe to speak up

At 6.45, the 'Raising concerns' sub-score remains similar compared to the 2023 result of 6.46.

The proportion of staff saying they would feel secure raising concerns about unsafe clinical practice remains similar this year at more than seven in ten, while the proportion of staff that would feel safe to speak up about anything that concerns them in their organisation stays at more than six in ten in 2024. For medical & dental staff, the percentage agreeing that they would feel safe to speak up about anything that concerns them in their organisation has increased this year from 59.81% to 61.56%. This percentage is 58.23% for admin & clerical staff which is a five-year low.

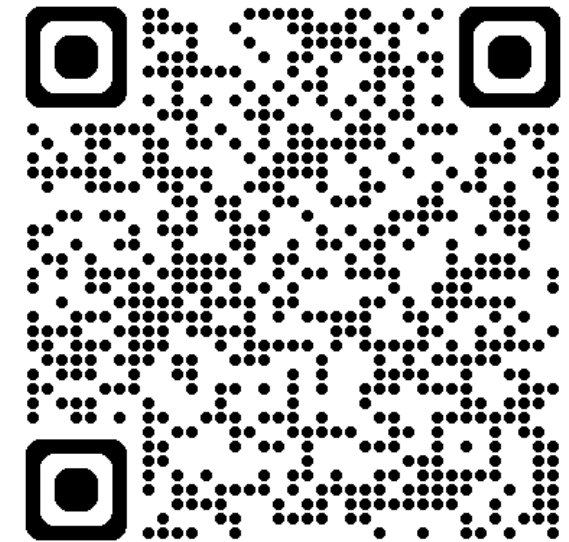
% of staff that feel safe to speak up about anything that concerns them in their organisation - by selected occupation group*



*Chart shows selected occupation groups only. For other groups see www.nhsstaffsurveys.com/results/

National Guardian - Freedom to Speak Up

- 2024/25 saw the highest number of cases reported to guardians since the programme began.
- 38,158 cases were raised with Freedom to Speak Up Guardians
- 18.6% increase from the previous year.
- Inappropriate attitudes and behaviours remain the most common theme of concern
- Concerns related to worker safety and wellbeing are increasing



Speaking up annual data report
2024/2025
National Guardian's Office

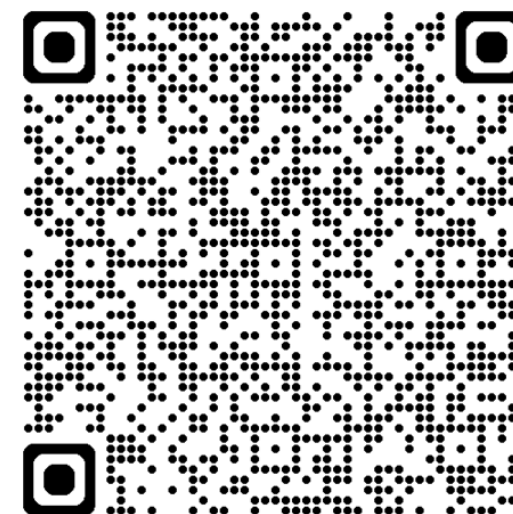
HCPC Fitness To Practise Annual Report 2024 - 25

Statistical summary³

Number of concerns

The total number of concerns received in 2024–25 increased from the previous year. The total number of registrants on our Register increased by 16,822 during the same period. There are no discernible themes behind the increase but it is a trend being experienced by other professional regulators across the healthcare system. It may be the case that the public are becoming more aware of and engaged with whistleblowing procedures. This increase makes it even more challenging to progress cases at pace, however we identified the trend in new referrals early and have taken action to plan our resources and adapt our ways of working to respond to it.

Professional Liaison Service



Total number of concerns



2,226
2023–24

2,409
2024–25

Concerns that met triage

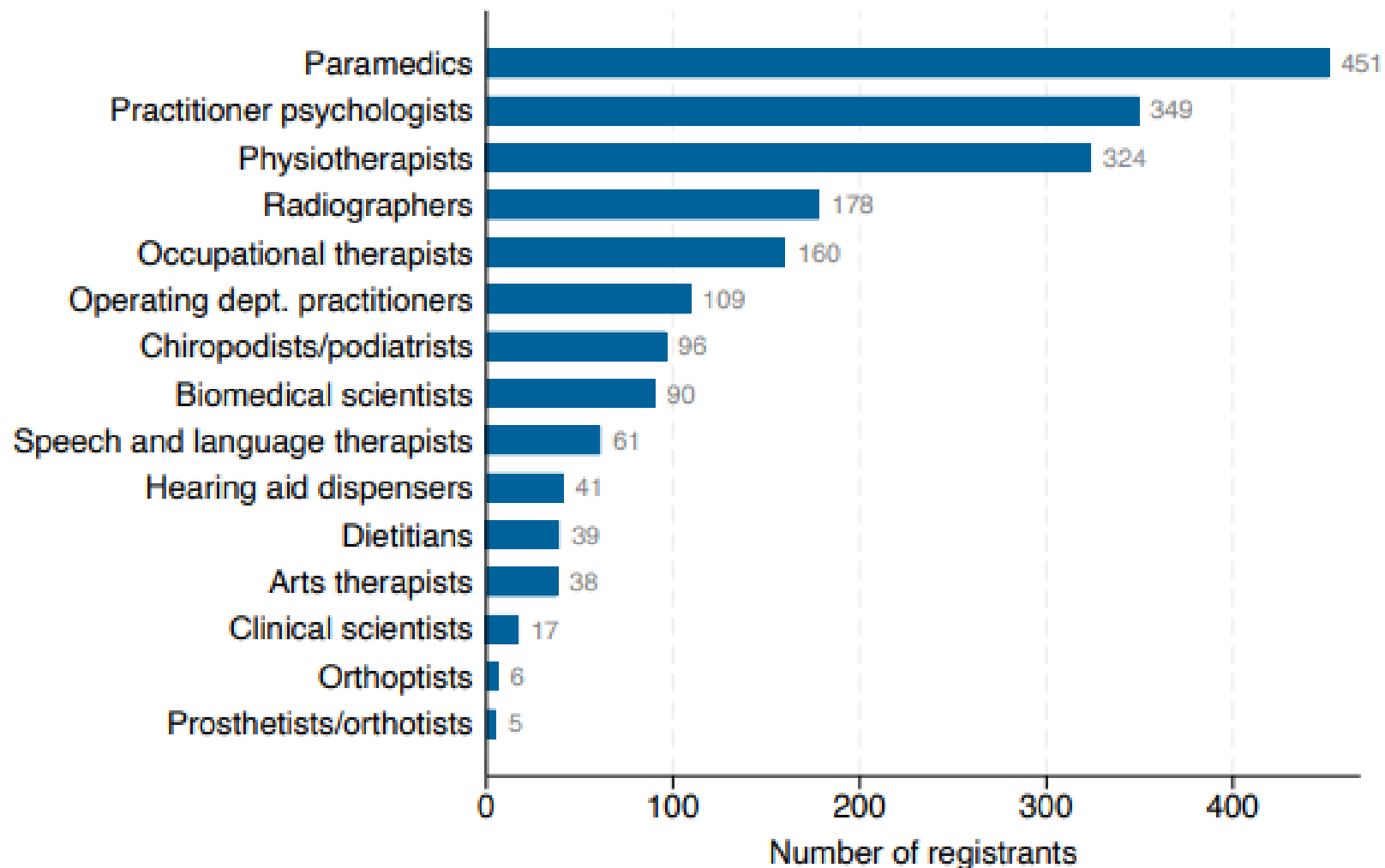


1,953
2023–24

2,044
2024–25

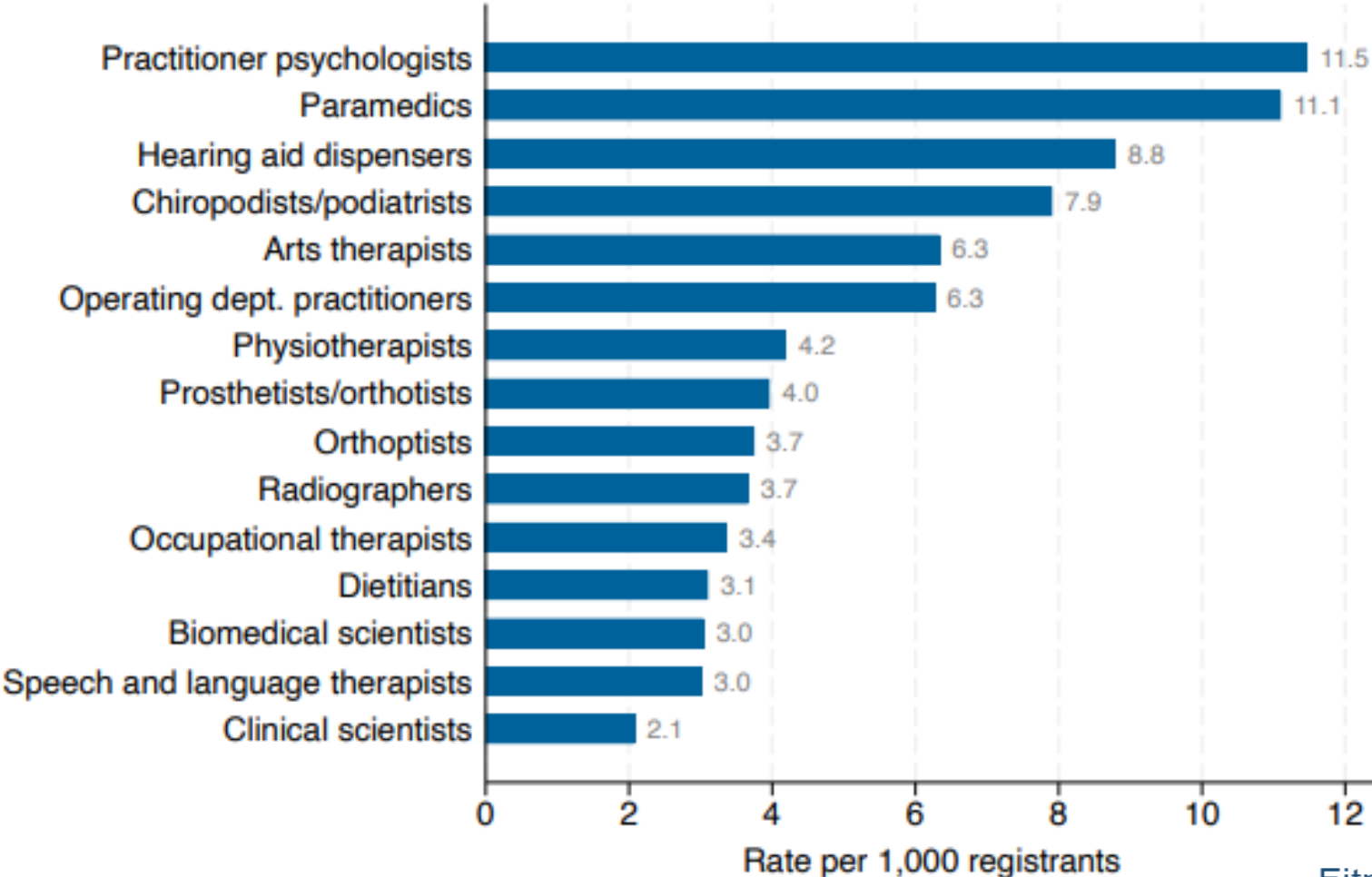
Who are concerns raised about?

Professional Liaison Service



Who are concerns raised about?

Professional Liaison Service



Professionalism in Practice

Professionalism and you

What words come to mind for you
when you think about the term
'professionalism'?



Professionalism and you



Competence?

Standards?

Values?

Characteristics?

Role models?

Other?

Defining professionalism

Professional Liaison Service



Defining professionalism

Professional Liaison Service

“Professionalism is the set of values, behaviours and relationships which underpins the trust the public has in doctors, nurses and health and social care professionals.”

Harkin, 2023

Professionalism and you

When did you last reflect on your own professionalism?

When did you last receive feedback from others about your professionalism?



A definition of professionalism

Professional Liaison Service

Research report

Professionalism
in healthcare
professionals

“professionalism may be better regarded as a meta-skill of situational awareness and contextual judgement, allowing individuals to draw on a range of communication, technical and practical skills, and apply the appropriate skills for a given professional scenario.”



(HCPC, 2011)

Professionalism: safety for all

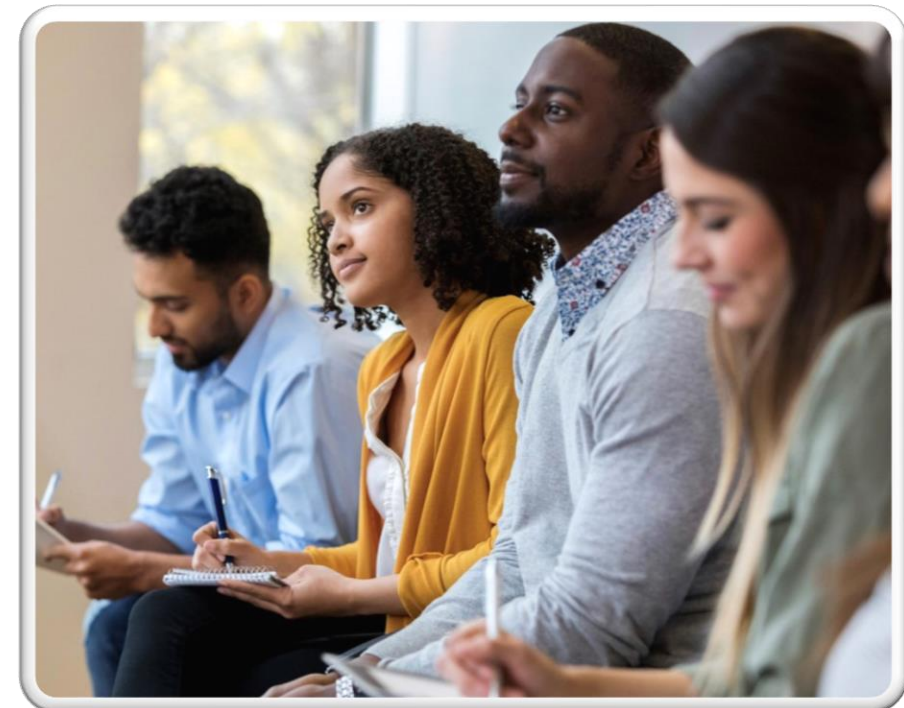
Professional Liaison Service

Professional behaviours are a primary determinant of positive patient experience (Adams et al, 2024)

Professional behaviours play a vital role in safety culture (Maben et al 2022)

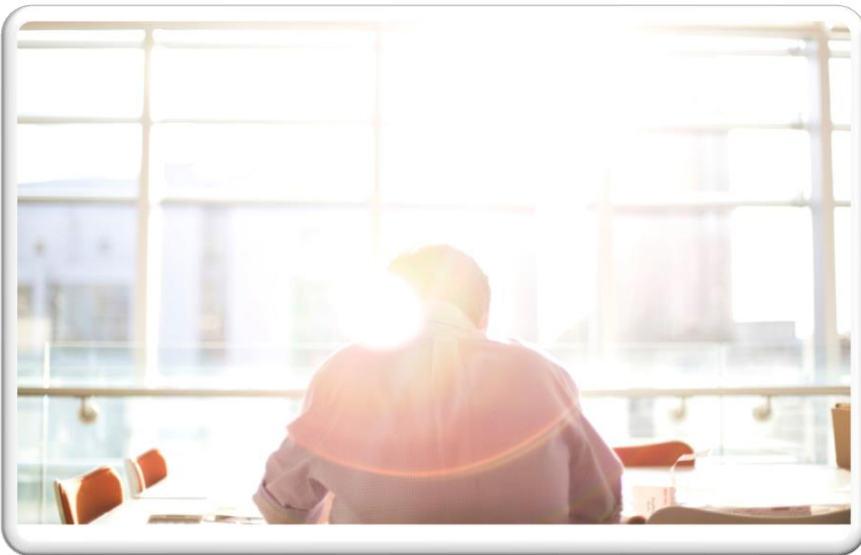
Professionalism in teams impacts positively on staff morale and well-being behaviours (Hicks et al 2022)

Professional behaviours linked to lower staff absence and increased retention in teams (Dabekaussen et al 2023)



When things go wrong

Professional Liaison Service



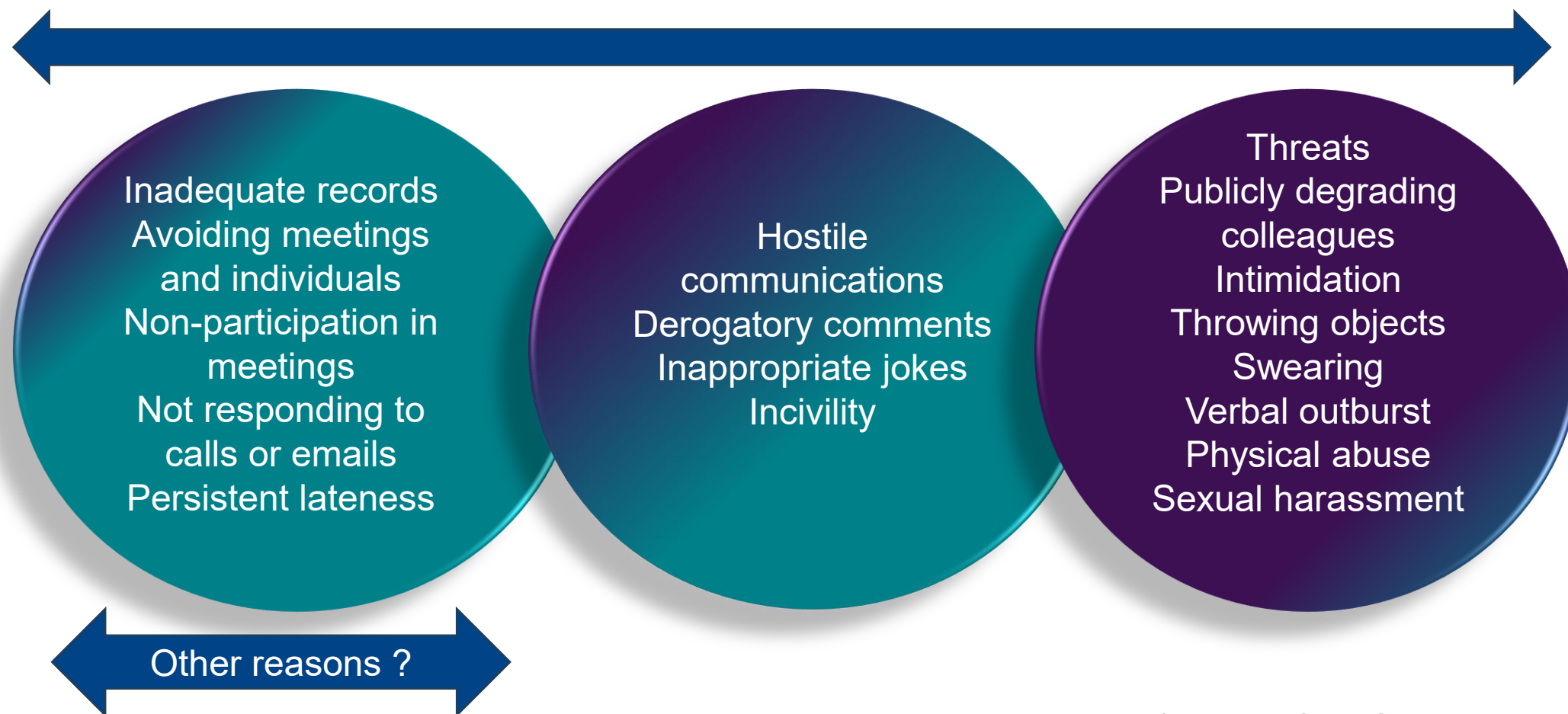
Unprofessional behaviours are any interpersonal behaviour by staff that causes distress or harm to patients or other staff in the health care workplace (Aunger et al 2023; Maben et al, 2022)

Includes a large range of behaviours (e.g incivility; microaggressions; harassment, and bullying) (Aunger et al 2023).

Cultures in which unprofessional behaviour is tolerated contribute to safety breaches and poor patient outcomes (Francis, 2013 MacLean 2014)

Spectrum of unprofessional behaviours

Professional Liaison Service



(Adapted from Stewart et al, 2011)

HCPC research on disengagement



Research report

Preventing small
problems from
becoming big
problems in
health and care

“Identifying signs of disengagement early on was possible in the right circumstances, for example where a culture of no blame was encouraged, where professional networks were strong and where managers were offering appropriate support for staff”

(HCPC, 2016)



Impact on the patient



Direct negative impact on patient care: errors; neglect of needs; unexpected complications (Hicks et al, 2022)

Diminished patient trust (Stewart, 2011) (Maben et al 2022)

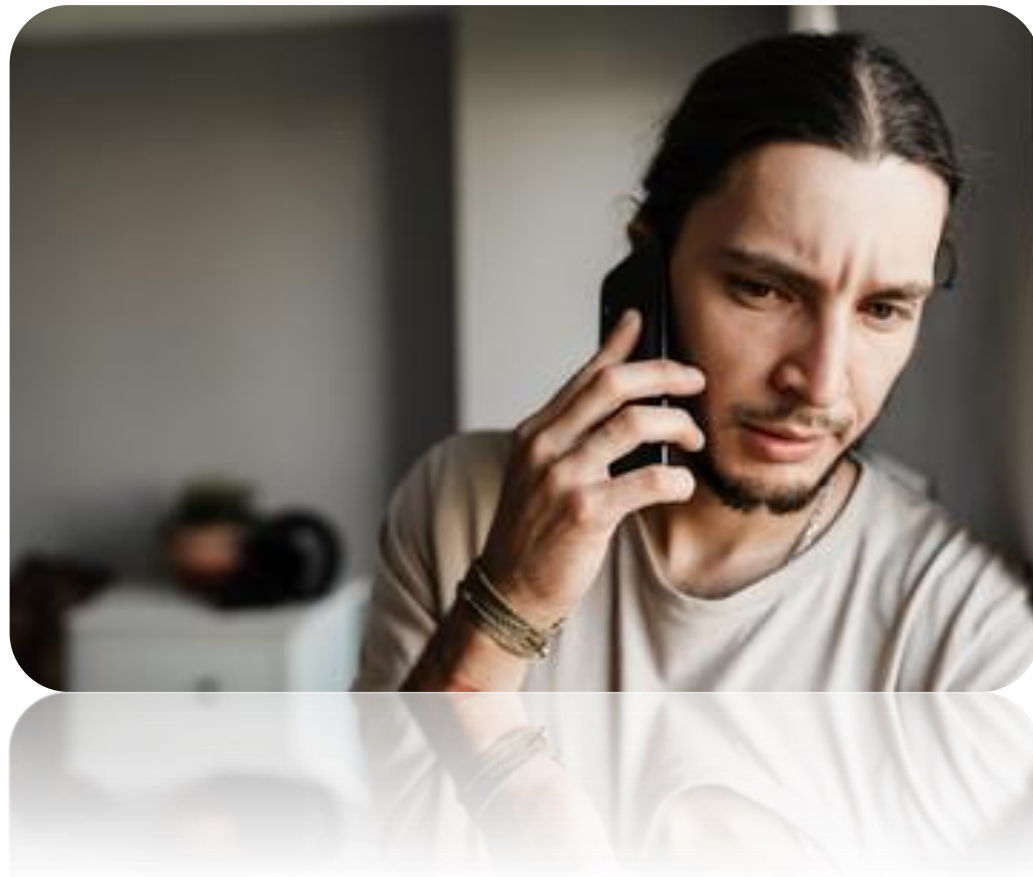
Patients and families less likely to share crucial information (Aunger et al 2023)

Variance in care received (Maben et al 2022)

Impact on colleagues



Impact on self



Professional Liaison Service

Reduced psychological well-being (Maben et al 2022)

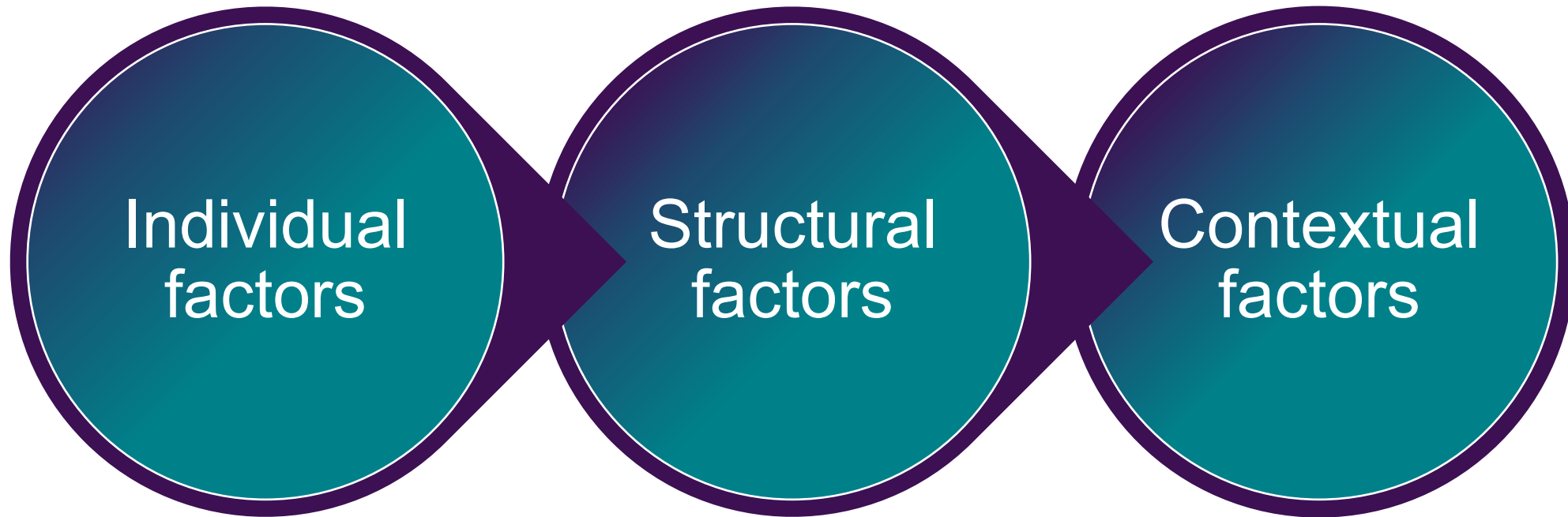
Moral distress (Owens et al 2024)

Isolation (Adams et al 2024)

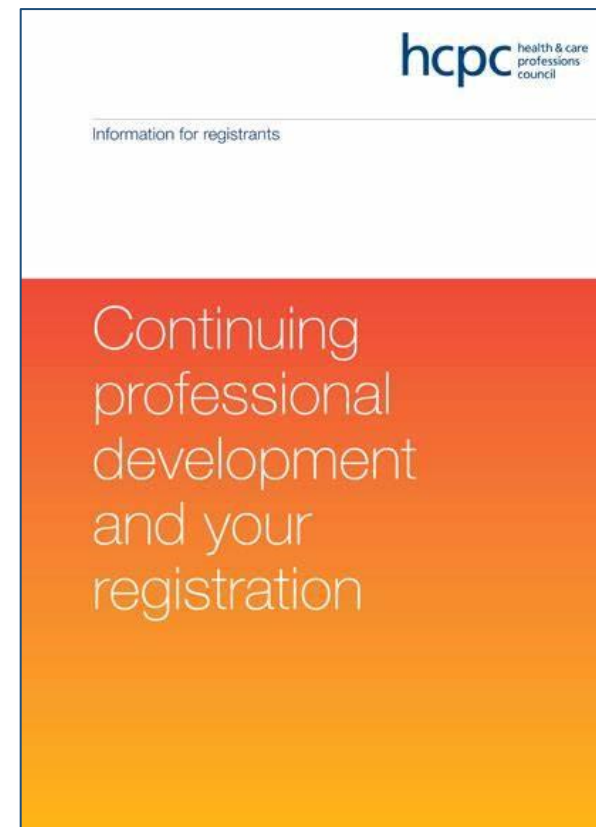
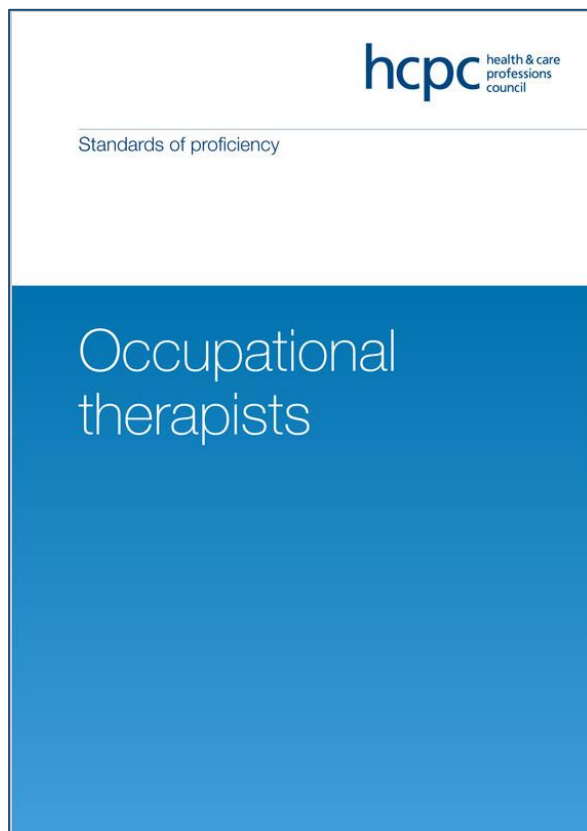
Burnout (Aunger et al 2023)

Suicide (Westbrook et al 2021)

What influences professionalism?



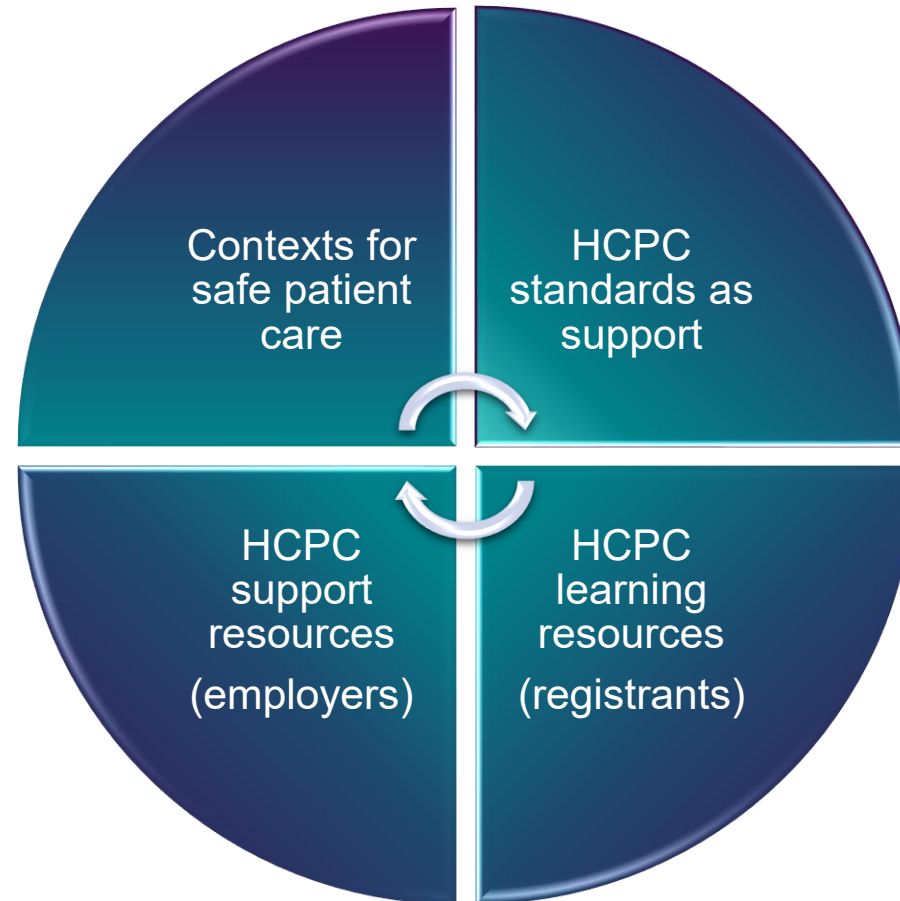
HCPC standards: a professionalism resource



HCPC support

- Refreshed conversations
- Safe spaces
- Career long discourse
- Cultural curiosity

- Insights for Employers (workshops, webinars, newsletter)



Professional Liaison Service

- Re-exploring standards
- Normalise conversations
- Embedded in supervision

- Professionalism in practice programme
- 'In-Focus'
- Online resources

Employer hub

Professional Liaison Service

Employer hub

This hub provides information for employers or managers of health and care professionals who are on our Register

The HCPC principles for preceptorship

The preceptorship principles and supporting information were written to support our registrants to access preceptorship when and where they need it, including at key transition moments in their careers. [Read more >](#)



The role of an employer

Hear employers talking about their role in managing HCPC registrants.

[Read more >](#)

Subscribe - Employer Insights newsletter

Information for employers of HCPC registrants delivered to your inbox [>](#)



Professionalism - summary

- Professional skills and behaviours are central to safety for everyone in or receiving healthcare
- When professional behaviours go wrong, the impacts are far-reaching
- Professionalism is a multi-faceted and flexible construct
- Accountability is not *only* about people: it is about systems, places and processes
- Reflecting on one's own professionalism should be a career long conversation
- Leadership responsibility for cultures in which professionalism thrives