

E: OfficeoftheChiefScientificOfficer@gov.scot

By email

19 May 2026

Dear Colleagues,

HEALTHCARE SCIENCE IN SCOTLAND - RIGHT TOUCH ASSURANCE ASSESSMENT

I am writing to update you on work relating to 'Healthcare Science in Scotland' and the theme of 'quality, safety and, assurance' as set out in [Healthcare Science in Scotland: Defining Our Strategic Approach](#).

The Scottish Government is absolutely clear about the need for the highest standards of quality, safety and assurance within our NHS. Whilst some roles within the Healthcare Science professional group are subject to statutory regulation in the UK, a significant number of roles are not.

We deem that it is now an appropriate time to assess the risk of harm which may be presented by the Healthcare Science profession to inform future discussions regarding potential statutory regulation.

The fundamental purpose of statutory regulation of healthcare professionals is to protect the public. It does this by setting good standards for practice and conduct, by monitoring continuous professional development and by taking action when these are not met. It is therefore vital that we evaluate the risk associated with the absence of a consistent approach to regulation of the Healthcare Science workforce.

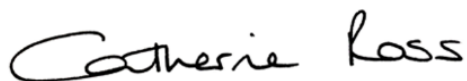
To achieve this, we have commissioned the Professional Standards Authority to undertake a 'Right Touch Assurance Assessment' for Healthcare Science. The Right Touch Assurance Assessment process is a well-recognised method of assessing the risk of harm presented by different health and care professions, and can be used to help inform future discussions on appropriate regulation.

We anticipate that this work will conclude with a report being delivered to the Scottish Government by Spring 2027.

Both the Scottish Government and the Professional Standards Authority are eager to ensure that the views of stakeholders are heard in relation to this work and that evidence is gathered to help ensure that risks are fully considered as part of any recommendations that may be made. As such, the Scottish Government and the Professional Standards Authority are working closely together to ensure the right level of stakeholder engagement takes place. Further details in relation to this will be communicated in due course.

It is important to recognise that the commissioning of this work does not mean a decision has been taken in relation to statutory regulation of Healthcare Scientists at this time. The Scottish Government will fully consider any recommendations made by the Professional Standards Authority on completion of the Right Touch Assurance Assessment. We are also committed to discussing on a four nation basis any recommendations that may be made, in line with our longstanding commitment to cross-government communication on any matters of professional healthcare regulation.

Kind regards,



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Chief Scientific Officer for Scotland