

## UK Public Health Register says its stance on statutory regulation of public health specialists vindicated by new report

Last week's publication by Professional Standards Authority of its report "Rethinking regulation" confirms UKPHR's view that current public policy towards regulating public health specialists needs changing.

The Authority argues that the way we regulate health and social care is out of date, over-complicated and too expensive. It calls for radical overhaul of regulation. It calls for "deregulation, less regulation and better regulation".

The report explains why regulation isn't fit for purpose now and needs to be reformed so that it better supports professionals providing health and care. *Rethinking regulation* makes a series of recommendations intended to reshape how regulation works so that it is able to face the challenges of the future.

UKPHR's Chair Professor Bryan Stoten hails the report as a breath of fresh air in a regulatory environment that has become stifling:

"The Professional Standards Authority speaks of an aim to create a regulatory framework for health and care fit for a community-based health and care service run by a flexible and diversified workforce. This is a vision UKPHR can support because it fits with our view of our prime purpose.

"We regulate public health practice in order to provide public protection. We find that employers of public health professionals, and this includes local authorities and the NHS, trust the standards of the workforce we assure.

"We share the scepticism set out in the report about the Department of Health plan to create statutory regulation by the Health & Care Professions Council (in place of UKPHR) for 600-or-so public health specialists. The report describes this policy position of the department as "against the evidence of the existence of any risk for which statutory regulation was the appropriate instrument". This is precisely what UKPHR has been arguing for the past 2 years."