

Memorandum

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General
Medical
CouncilRegulating doctors
Ensuring good medical practice**To:** Peter Rubin**From:** Laura Nelson

Code A

Copy: Archy Kirkwood

Code A

Date: 16 September 2009**GMC dinner at the 2009 Liberal Democrat Party conference****Contents**

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Logistics

Travel

1. You are booked on the 16:35 from London Waterloo which arrives in Bournemouth at 18:22. The taxi rank is located outside the station.

2. A car had been booked for the return journey to London for you and Code A It will pick you both up at the Royal Bath at 22:00.

GMC dinner

Date: Monday 21 September 2009**Time:** 19:30**Venue:** Terrace Suite, De Vere Royal Bath Hotel, Bath Road, Bournemouth

Timings

- 18:30 GMC representatives arrive at the Royal Bath Hotel
- 19:20-19:40 Guests arrive for dinner
- 19:45 Sit down for dinner. Welcome and introductory remarks from Peter Rubin.
- 21:30 Dinner ends to enable guests to attend the Health Hotel reception (which begins at 21:30) and other evening events.

Objectives

3. The dinners provide an opportunity for GMC staff to meet with a small group of interested politicians in a relaxed environment. Our objectives for the dinner are to:

- a. introduce you to political stakeholders as the new chair of the GMC
- b. increase awareness and understanding of the GMC's statutory roles
- c. reinforce our commitment to independent, accountable, efficient and effective regulation which supports doctors throughout their careers
- d. increase awareness and understanding of, and support for, the introduction of the licence to practise and revalidation
- e. gain feedback from politicians on how they view the introduction of licensing and revalidation
- f. highlight areas for future parliamentary engagement, for example secondary legislation relating to the merger of PMETB with the GMC and the establishment of OHPA
- g. promote forthcoming GMC consultations and new initiatives and inform parliamentarians of the GMC's "surgery day" in Parliament on Tuesday 10 November 2009.

Opening remarks

4. As the host, we suggest that you begin the dinners with short opening remarks to welcome the guests and provide an update on the work of the GMC and a look forward to the year ahead. Suggested speaking notes are outlined below:

- a. Thank attendees for coming to our dinner.

b. It has been another busy year for the GMC, beginning with our reconstituted Council taking office in January. For the first time there are equal numbers of medical and lay members, all appointed by the Appointments Commission. I was elected by the Council as chair in April and we look forward to welcoming Niall Dickson, the current Chief Executive of the King's Fund, as our Chief Executive from January 2010.

c. In the coming months many of the reforms to medical regulation which have been discussed over the last few years will come to fruition. The GMC is embarking on the introduction of revalidation for doctors – a major new way that the GMC will support doctors during their careers. This will be phased in from 2011 and is a positive change for the patients, the NHS and doctors.

d. With revalidation, doctors will need to renew their license to practise every 5 years by proving to the GMC that they are practising in line with our standards and, if applicable, meet the clinical standards for their specialty, for example as GPs, surgeons or anaesthetists. This will reassure patients that their doctor is up-to-date and fit to practise. The first step to revalidation will be the introduction of the license to practise which will take place on 16 November.

e. I'm sure you will agree that it is vital that revalidation is not overly bureaucratic or costly. We are ensuring that it will build on existing local systems and for most doctors it will be an extension of their existing annual appraisals.

f. In April 2010 the Postgraduate Medical Education Training Board will merge with the GMC, subject to parliamentary approval. PMETB is the regulator for postgraduate medical education within the UK, approving training posts and specialist curricula leading to specialist and general practice registration, needed to work as a consultant or GP in the NHS.

g. The merger was recommended by Code A in his report on modernising medical careers. It will mean that a single body, the GMC, will be responsible for undergraduate and postgraduate medical education and by integrating it with other regulatory functions enables us take an overall approach to every stage of a doctor's career. The draft legislation is currently out for consultation and we expect that it will be debated in Parliament later this year.

h. In 2011 our adjudication functions will transfer to the new Office of the Health Professional Adjudicator (OHPA) which will mean that for the first time adjudication will be separated from investigation. This will require secondary legislation and we will of course continue to update you on this.

i. We have just launched a completely revised edition of *Tomorrow's Doctors*, the GMC's standards and outcomes for basic medical education in

the UK following a detailed two year review and full consultation. Revised guidance on confidentiality and end of life care are also due to be published later this month and early next year.

j. We have continued to develop a variety of online initiatives to support both patients and doctors. We will be holding a “surgery day” in Parliament on 10 November 2009 so parliamentarians and their staff can drop in to ask questions and we can demonstrate these online services and explain how the GMC can help with constituency casework about doctors and healthcare.

k. We hope you enjoy the meal – please ask any questions and do keep in touch throughout the next year.

Attendees

5. Tim, Laura and Claire will attend the dinner.
6. The following have accepted the invitation:

Name	Position
Sandra Gidley MP	Liberal Democrat Shadow Minister for Health
Greg Mulholland MP	Liberal Democrat Shadow Minister for Health
Dr John Pugh MP	Liberal Democrat Shadow Minister for the Treasury and Shadow Minister for Health
Dr Evan Harris MP	Liberal Democrat Shadow Minister for Science
Paul Burstow MP	Liberal Democrat Chief Whip
Lord Kirkwood of Kirkhope	GMC Council Member
Baroness Maddock	Vice-chair of all party universities group
Ross Finnie MSP	Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing
Joe Moran	Researcher to Sandra Gidley MP

Biographies

Sandra Gidley MP – Liberal Democrat Shadow Health Minister



Sandra Gidley has been MP for Romsey, Hampshire, since a by-election in 2000. Her current majority of just 125 means that this seat is a key Conservative target, with Caroline Oakes, who stood in 2005, due to stand again for that party. Her shadow ministerial responsibilities focus on public health issues, including dentistry. Although Norman Lamb MP, Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for Health, has overall responsibility for professional regulation, she led for the Liberal Democrats during the committee stage of the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

A qualified pharmacist, she has been Liberal Democrat Shadow Minister for Health since 2006 and has twice served on the Health Select Committee, initially from 2001-

03 and again from 2006 until the present. Her previous front bench positions include spokesperson for health and women's issues (2001-02) and spokesperson for older people (2003-06).

Ms Gidley has chaired the all party group on mental health since 2001 and the primary care and public health group since 2007. She is also vice-chair of the health all party group (since 2003) and the patient safety group (since 2005).

She began her political career as a councillor on Test Valley Borough Council in 1995 and in 1997 became the youngest ever mayor of Romsey Town. She also sat on the steering committee of the local hospital.

The public affairs team are in regular contact with Ms Gidley. She attended the GMC parliamentary consultation discussion on confidentiality, she is one of the sponsors of the GMC 'parliamentary surgery' to be held this November and she is speaking at our conference fringe at lunchtime on Monday 21 September on patient safety (held in partnership with CQC, HPC and NMC).

However, during the GMC's evidence to the Health Select Committee on 5 March 2009 as part of their inquiry into patient safety, Sandra Gidley questioned Finlay Scott on where the GMC 'draws the line' between blaming the system or the individual for errors. She also asked how revalidation fits into the GMC's fitness to practise work.

Sandra Gidley will be accompanied by her researcher, Joe Moran.

Greg Mulholland MP – Liberal Democrat Shadow Health Minister



Elected to Parliament in 2005, Greg Mulholland has been Shadow Minister for Health for the Liberal Democrats since 2007 and his responsibilities focus on social and elderly care. Formerly the shadow minister for international development (2005-06) and schools (2006-07), Mr Mulholland has also been a member of the Work and Pensions Select Committee since 2005.

He lists his main political interests as social care, higher education and work and pensions and is the vice chair of the all party groups on rugby league and balanced and sustainable communities.

Following a BA in Politics and an MA in Public Administration and Public Policy at York University, Mr Mulholland worked in marketing before becoming a city councillor in Leeds in 2003, standing down on his election to Parliament. He is a practising Roman Catholic and campaigns for the Catholic charity Cafod.

As a shadow minister, Mr Mulholland receives updates from the public affairs team about the GMC's work but he has not attended any of our recent events. He was a member of the Commons committee which considered the Health and Social Care

Act during its passage through Parliament in 2007-08 and received regular briefings from the GMC. We have also written to Mr Mulholland in 2009 to inform him of relevant GMC fitness to practise cases as part of our constituency engagement programme.

Dr John Pugh MP – Liberal Democrat Shadow Minister for the Treasury and Shadow Health Minister



Dr John Pugh has been MP for Southport since the 2001 general election and was appointed as Shadow Minister for the Treasury in 2008. Previously the shadow minister for health (2006-07), he was reappointed to the shadow health team this year with specific responsibility for NHS IT systems.

A Roman Catholic, Dr Pugh is currently the vice-chair of the all party pro-life group and recently sat on the public bill committee for the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill. He supported Nick Clegg in the 2007 leadership contest. Before becoming an MP, he was head of philosophy and religious studies at Merchant Taylors' School in Crosby. He holds a doctorate in logic from Manchester University.

Dr Pugh both spoke at our fringe *Who knows best? Patient and public involvement in healthcare* at the 2007 party conference and also attended our dinners at the 2007 and 2008 conferences. We have also written to Dr Pugh in 2009 to inform him of relevant GMC fitness to practise cases as part of our constituency engagement programme.

Dr Evan Harris MP – Liberal Democrat Shadow Minister for Science



Formerly the Liberal Democrat spokesperson for health (2001-03), Dr Evan Harris became spokesperson for science in 2005 before becoming Shadow Minister for Science in 2007. Dr Harris was appointed as spokesperson for the NHS almost immediately upon his election to Parliament in 1997 and is also a member of the joint committee on human rights and the innovation, universities, science and skills select committee.

Dr Harris met Sir Graeme Catto and Paul Philip in September 2007 for an update on the Wakefield case and our work around the White Paper, especially relating to the standard of proof. He also spoke extensively during a Westminster Hall debate on the Shipman inquiry in 2007 and was a member of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill committee.

Dr Harris has corresponded frequently with the GMC over recent years and although supportive of our actions relating to **Code A** (he attended hearings at the GMC) he was critical of our handling of **Code A**. We have written to him on a range of issues,

including our children's guidance, abortion and the changes to the age exemption regulations.

More recently, he attended our parliamentary roundtable on the *Tomorrow's Doctors* consultation in March 2009 where he made a number of comments about areas including consent and reporting concerns and complaints, but he was happy with the overall approach of the guidance. We have sent him a copy of the revised version. He attended our dinner at the 2008 Liberal Democrat Party conference and briefly attended our parliamentary event as part of the confidentiality guidance consultation in November 2008. We have also written to Dr Harris in 2009 to inform him of relevant GMC fitness to practise cases as part of our constituency engagement programme.

Mr Paul Burstow MP – Liberal Democrat Chief Whip



The Liberal Democrat Chief Whip since 2006, Paul Burstow MP was formerly the party's shadow secretary of state for health (2003-05). He has twice served on the Health Select Committee and was also previously the party's spokesperson for disabled people (1997-99) and older people (1999-03).

He was elected as MP for Sutton and Cheam in 1997, having previously served as a local councillor since 1986. His political interests include disability and ageing, and he regularly speaks in Parliament on a range of health related issues. In particular, he is a committed campaigner on the inappropriate prescription of antipsychotic drugs in care homes. He is active in a range of all party groups, including chair of the APPG on ageing and older people, vice-chair of the disability APPG and secretary of the carers group.

Jane O'Brien and Laura Nelson met Mr Burstow and representatives from Alzheimers UK in June 2008 to discuss his latest report into the inappropriate prescription of antipsychotic drugs in care homes. In April 2008 Mr Burstow argued that the GMC's guidance on prescribing off-licence drugs is routinely being ignored by GPs, who regularly prescribe off-licence anti-psychotic drugs to care home residents. Mr Burstow also attended the GMC's dinners at the 2006, 2007 and 2008 Liberal Democrat party conferences and we have written to him regarding a range of GMC guidance, including *Good Medical Practice*, children's guidance and consent.

Lord Kirkwood of Kirkhope – GMC Council Member



Archy Kirkwood was appointed as a lay member of the GMC Council by the Appointments Commission in January 2009. He has been a member of the House of Lords since 2005.

From 1983 until 2005 he was the Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Roxburgh and Berwickshire. During that time he held a number of positions including the Party's spokesman on health,

social security, Scotland and international development. From 1992 until 1997 he was the Liberal Democrat chief whip and from 1997 until 2005 he chaired the Social Security Select Committee/Work and Pensions Select Committee. He is a former solicitor.

Lord Kirkwood chaired the GMC's roundtable parliamentary event in 24 March 2009 as part of the *Tomorrow's Doctors* consultation. Earlier on Monday 21 September he is speaking at the GMC's fringe on patient safety and quality.

Baroness Maddock – Vice-chair of all party universities group



Baroness Maddock was created a life peer in 1997 and was previously the Liberal Democrat MP for Christchurch from 1993-97. During her time as an MP, she served on a number of bill committees covering housing, finance and building societies and was also Liberal Democrat spokesperson on housing, the family and women's issues.

Baroness Maddock is an active member of a number of all party groups relating to housing and energy conservation. She is the President of the National Housing Forum and the Vice-President of the National Housing Federation, National Energy Action and the National Home Improvement Council.

She was the president of the Liberal Democrat Party between 1998 and 2000 and is married to Alan Beith, the Member of Parliament for Berwick-upon-Tweed.

Baroness Maddock attended the GMC's dinner at the 2007 Liberal Democrat Party conference and the public affairs team included her in our recent engagement around the *Tomorrow's Doctors* consultation and subsequent launch of the new guidance on 1 September 2009.

Mr Ross Finnie MSP – Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing



Ross Finnie is the Liberal Democrat Regional List MSP for the West of Scotland. He is currently the party's Shadow Secretary for Health and Wellbeing and vice convener of the parliamentary committee on health and sport. Ross Finnie served as minister for rural affairs (1999-2001) and then as minister for environment and rural development (2001-2007).

A member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland, Ross worked in the financial services sector, latterly running his own firm providing corporate finance advice until he was elected to the Scottish Parliament. He was born in Greenock in 1947 where he still lives and is an ardent rugby supporter and past president of Greenock Wanderers RFC.

He attended the GMC Edinburgh council dinner in April 2008 and the GMC dinner at the 2007 and 2008 Liberal Democrat conferences. Mr Finnie regularly receives copies of GMC guidance and consultations and is supportive of the GMC's work.

Liberal Democrat health policy

7. Speaking at a Reform conference in June 2009, Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for Health Norman Lamb outlined some of the key points of the Liberal Democrat's health policy which argues for the pursuit of improved efficiency through a liberal and people focused health service.

8. These include: decentralising power to elected local health boards; better preventative care which focuses on keeping people healthy and managing chronic conditions; managing care closer to home; integrating health and social care; liberating workforces to run and improve their own organisations; and empowering patients by giving them the budget to determine priorities (where appropriate).

9. Norman Lamb has previously called for a shift of power from Whitehall to local communities and during his speech to the Liberal Democrat Party conference in 2008 he argued for the dismantling of 'wasteful and centralised NHS bureaucracy' including 'NHS quangos' such as CHRE.

10. Paul Philip met Norman Lamb in June 2009 to discuss Mr Lamb's comments about the GMC and his call for a public inquiry in relation to the case of Dr Jane Barton, accused of inappropriate prescribing in relation to the deaths of several elderly patients at Gosport War Memorial Hospital near Portsmouth. They also discussed a Liberal Democrat press release criticising the cost to the NHS of suspended doctors.

To note: Dying Matters fringe

11. The GMC is a member of the Dying Matters Coalition which is a national coalition to promote public awareness around death, dying and bereavement. The National Council for Palliative Care and the Dying Matters Coalition are holding joint fringes at this year's party conferences (20:00 on Tuesday 22 September at the Liberal Democrat Party conference). It is possible that the GMC's membership of the coalition will be mentioned and we may be questioned on this by parliamentarians with an interest in this area such as Dr Evan Harris MP and Paul Burstow MP.

12. If asked about the GMC's contribution to the Dying Well Coalition or our work in this area, we can remind people of the recent consultation on our end of life care guidance. The responses to the new guidance were largely positive, with individuals and organisations able to participate in the consultation in a variety of ways – a short and long consultation document, round table meetings held across the UK, a national conference and a survey in association with mumsnet, an information sharing and discussion based website for parents.

13. We are considering how we can contribute to the work of the coalition as part of our implementation work following the publication of the new end of life care guidance (expected to be spring 2010).