



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

March 2019.

Dear Constituent,

A Response to the HCPC Fees Increase Campaign

Thank you for contacting me about the increase in the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Fee.

First, I would like to recognise the important work done by independent regulators like the HCPC. These organisations help to protect the public and to ensure high levels of service and professionalism.

As I understand, the proposals put forward by HCPC would increase renewal fees from £90 per year to £106 per year (on the basis that that payment is only taken once every two years, this works out at an increase from £180 to £212 every other year). While this does represent an increase of 18 per cent, my understanding is that this fee remains the lowest among all regulators of health and care professionals overseen by the Professional Standards Authority.

This increase has been precipitated by a number of factors, including the need to reduce the likelihood of fitness to practice cases through earlier engagement, to keep pace with the cost of inflation, and to offset the impact of the establishment of Social Workers England in 2019 and the subsequent decrease in subscribers. The regulation of social workers and social service workers is devolved here in Scotland and carried out by the Scottish Social Services Council. HCPC has also taken steps to reduce their internal costs in response to these changes.

Although I recognise that any increase in subscription can have an impact on the individuals required to pay for membership in order to work, the importance of an independent regulator in this sector cannot be underestimated and helps to protect workers as well as the British public. These fees are tax deductible, and the fee rise will amount to just over £1 a month extra for most of HCPC's registrants.

Members of the Government do not, by convention, sign any Early Day Motions, as doing so is likely to breach the Ministerial Code's rules on collective responsibility. I am therefore unable to sign the EDM.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alister Jack".

Alister Jack DL MP
Dumfries and Galloway constituency.