

**Some background information on the Professional Standards Authority**

**Why did the Society decide to apply for PSA accreditation?**

The Society had explored regulatory options over a number of years, including a voluntary single register with other UK homeopathy registers, and statutory regulation for homeopathy. The government closed the door on statutory regulation for any additional professions in 2011.

For many years, the Society has developed and maintained standards for education, registration, practice and professional conduct, and welcomed the transparency of independent oversight.

Building on member consultations from 2009 and 2011, the Board formally agreed to apply for accreditation with the PSA in February 2013.Members were updated regularly via the Newsletter.

**What is the PSA?**

“The **Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care** promotes the health, safety and wellbeing of patients, service users and the public by raising standards of regulation and voluntary registration of people working in health and care. It is an independent body, accountable to the UK Parliament.”

[https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/professional-standards-authority-for-health-and-social-care -](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/professional-standards-authority-for-health-and-social-care#:~:text=The%20Professional%20Standards%20Authority%20for,working%20in%20health%20and%20care)

**What does the Professional Standards Authority do?**

The PSA has two roles:

**1. Oversees Statutory registers**

The PSA oversees the 10 health and care regulators which ‘register’ health and care professionals working in occupations that Parliament has said must be regulated.   
These are called statutory regulated professions: GMC (doctors), Social Work England, General Optical Council, General Dental Council, Nursing and Midwifery Council, Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland, General Osteopathy Council, General Chiropractic Council, Health and Care Professions Council.

**2. Accredits non statutory regulated health registers on a voluntary basis.**

[Accredited registers](http://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/what-we-do/accredited-registers/about-accredited-registers)

“The Professional Standards Authority is here to protect the public and help ensure their health and wellbeing. We assess organisations that register health and social care practitioners who are not regulated by law so that you can choose a practitioner to meet your needs with confidence.”

Currently **26 registers** choose to be accredited with the PSA including:

British Acupuncture Council

Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

Federation of Holistic Therapists (includes homeopaths)

Society of Homeopaths

**Would Homeopathy ever be statutory regulated?**

This is uncertain. A few years ago the government closed the door on statutory regulation for any additional healthcare professions, including acupuncture and herbal medicine who had been working towards this since the House of Lords recommendation that the 5 ‘discrete’ CAM professions should have statutory regulation : Acupuncture, Chiropractic, Herbal Medicine, Homeopathy and Osteopathy.

Chiropractic and Osteopathy have already achieved Statutory regulation.

**Does the PSA have powers to recommend statutory regulation?**

Yes

Following a consultation in 2019 the government published a report “Promoting Professionalism, Reforming Regulation”. Extracts include:

*5.7 The UK and Devolved Governments believe that the PSA is best placed to provide independent advice on which groups of healthcare professionals should be regulated.*

*5.8. The PSA accredits organisations that register health and social care practitioners who are not subject to statutory regulation. The PSA charges for this accreditation. Professions that are not statutorily regulated may choose to seek PSA accredited status and this could create an incentive for the PSA to recommend that such groups should not be subject to statutory regulation.*

*5.9. The UK and Devolved Governments believe that this potential conflict of interest is mitigated by the fact that the process for regulating professions is transparent and subject to a statutory requirement to consult.*

**How much does PSA accreditation cost?**

The Society is re-accredited annually and the cost was £12,000 in 2020 and is expected to be £13,000 in 2021. This is within an overall budget spend on developing, setting and maintaining standards in education, registration and practice.

**Conditions imposed in 2020**

Since the initial accreditation of our register in 2014, there have been Annual Reviews leading to further recommendations and conditions, which is usual in any accreditation programme. In recent years, pressure from sceptic groups has created a public challenge to some practices that relate to the wider vaccination debate. This in turn led to ongoing discussions with PSA about our position statements.

The 4H collaboration issued a statement in Autumn 2019 affirming that

* Homeopathy and Vaccination are separate topics
* patients’ questions about vaccination should be referred to “those medically trained to answer.”

After consultation with members in November 2019, the Society issued a statement on CEASE\* and vaccination in December 2019 in line with this statement, with the intention of quelling adverse media attention.

In 2020 the PSA stepped up their requirements by imposing a four-part condition and eight recommendations on the Society’s accreditation.

**The PSA conditions**

* ask for stronger statements on CEASE and vaccination
* ask for evidence of how the Society monitors members’ adherence to these statements
* require monitoring of Society checks on whether members still offer CEASE therapy
* ask the Society to complete and make available to the public its guidance on adjunctive and supplementary therapies.

For the full report <https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/news-and-blog/latest-news/detail/2020/06/10/society-of-homeopaths-meets-conditions-for-renewal-of-accreditation>

*\*CEASE was an issue because:*

*As a brand, it stated ‘complete elimination of Autistic Spectrum Disorder’ which was an unreasonable claim, plus it was regarded as discriminatory.*

*It involved ‘megadoses’ of vitamins and supplements which could be argued were outside our scope of practice.*

*It was seen as targeting the vulnerable, including children.*

*It was seen as based on a belief that vaccinations (and other medical interventions) are toxic.*

*By implication, the Homeopathic Detox brand was similar in that it pre-supposes toxicity caused by medical interventions, and a claim that homeopaths can remove this.*

July, 2020