

Joint statement in support of the Law Commissions Bill

We are calling on all political parties to commit to introducing fundamental reforms to the legislation that governs how healthcare professionals are regulated and how patients are protected in the UK.

In April 2014 the Law Commissions of the UK published the draft Regulation of Health and Social Care Professions Bill. This would enable the professional regulators to introduce a range of long awaited reforms that would be good for patients, healthcare professionals and the healthcare system.

If the Bill is implemented, the Nursing and Midwifery Council and other healthcare regulators would be able to:

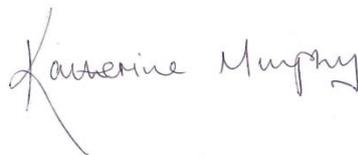
- **Speed up and simplify processes to protect the public** – Processes for dealing with complaints about healthcare professionals can be long and stressful for patients and the professionals. The Bill would enable a number of reforms that are badly needed but are prevented by current legislation. It would also provide for greater consistency across all regulators and help to make decision making more transparent.
- **Better protect patients** – The Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry called for regulators to focus on promoting safe, compassionate care rather than intervening only after patients have suffered harm. The new law would enable them to focus more resources on education and effective registration and to promote professional standards.
- **Increase efficiency** – The Bill will enable (and require) regulators to co-operate more closely with each other and will help all of them to keep their costs down.

Realising these aims is essential in order to retain the trust and confidence of the public, healthcare professionals and the health service in which those professionals work.

We recognise that some amendments may be needed to the Law Commissions' original draft bill but we are clear that it represents a once in a generation opportunity to make sure that healthcare professionals throughout the UK are properly trained, competent and up to date.



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Dame Julie Mellor DBE
**Parliamentary and Health Service
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Professor Dame Jessica Corner
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Royal College of Nursing



Cathy Warwick
Chief Executive
Royal College of Midwives



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