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Susan Lapworth
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Office for Students

11 May 2022

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Dear Susan Lapworth

The Association of LGBTQ+ Doctors and Dentists has published a “UK Medical Schools Charter on So-Called LGBTQ+ ‘Conversion Therapy’”, which it is urging medical schools to sign.

The Deans of 23 of the UK’s 42 medical schools have already done so. **We wish to raise a concern with you about each of those medical schools.** They are named in the attached copy of the Charter.¹

The Charter defines “conversion therapy” as:

an umbrella term for a therapeutic approach, or any model or individual viewpoint that demonstrates an assumption that any sexual orientation or gender identity is inherently preferable to any other, and which attempts to bring about a change of sexual orientation or gender identity, or seeks to suppress an individual’s expression of sexual orientation or gender identity on that basis.

It goes on to commit signatories to five specific declarations, as follows:

¹ <https://gladd.co.uk/activism-conversion-therapy-charter/>

1. *Support the banning of LGBTQ+ so-called 'conversion therapy'*
2. *Formally call on the GMC to recognise the harm of 'conversion therapy', and how participation in the delivery of 'conversion therapy' breaches the core idea of a doctor to "do no harm"*
3. *Agrees medical school students and staff should, under no circumstances, participate in the provision of any form of 'conversion therapy'*
4. *Ensure that curricula include authentic and joyful representation of LGBTQ+ people within their curricula to challenge stigma and stereotyping*
5. *Ensure that curricula include an awareness of 'conversion therapy', its harms and the importance of working with LGBTQ+ patients to respect and affirm their gender and/or sexual identity.*

Conditions E1 and E2 of your Regulatory Framework require regulated institutions' governing documents to uphold the Public Interest Governance Principles that apply to them, and require those institutions to have in place adequate and effective management and governance arrangements to deliver the principles in practice.

The Public Interest Governance Principles include the following:

I Academic freedom: Academic staff at an English higher education provider have freedom within the law:

- *to question and test received wisdom; and*
- *to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have at the provider.*

VII Freedom of speech: The governing body takes such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured within the provider.

The GLADD Charter commits signatory institutions to the particular received wisdom that "conversion therapy" as defined is necessarily wrong and harmful, and to a particular kind of representation of "LGBTQ+ people" in curricula. These are matters of intense current debate, as is demonstrated – among many other things – by the ongoing review by Dr Hilary Cass into the treatment of childhood gender dysphoria, and the government's decision not to include gender identity in their plan to ban "conversion therapy", and the EHRC's observation that there is a lack of evidence.

We believe that by signing the Charter, the institutions that have done so signal to their academics and students that beliefs, arguments or research contrary to the Charter are not

to be tolerated. The Charter is a deliberate attempt to stifle debate on this subject, and is inimical to academic freedom and to freedom of speech within the signatory institutions. Signing it is a breach of the signatory institutions' obligation under section 43 of the Education (No.2) Act 1986 to take "reasonably practicable steps to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for their members, students and employees, and for visiting speakers".

We urge you to investigate these concerns and consider whether enhanced monitoring, imposition of specific ongoing conditions of registration and/or formal sanctions against these providers are warranted.

Yours sincerely



Maya Forstater
Executive Director



Helen Joyce
Director of Advocacy



Naomi Cunningham
Chair

Charter signatories

Lancaster University Medical School
Brighton and Sussex Medical School
University of Southampton
University of Liverpool School of Medicine
UCL Medical School
University of Dundee School of Medicine
University of Sunderland School of Medicine
Keele University School of Medicine
University of Warwick Medical School
University of Plymouth Peninsula Schools of Medicine and Dentistry
University of Glasgow School of Medicine, Dentistry and Nursing
Swansea University Faculty of Medicine, Health & Life Science
The University of Manchester School of Medical Sciences
The University of Nottingham School of Medicine
St Andrews University Medical School
Lincoln University Medical School
The University of Sheffield Medical School
University of Edinburgh Medical School
University of Bristol Medical School
Kings College London Medical School
University of Exeter Medical School
University of Leicester Medical School
Association for the Study of Medical Education

Letter cc to:

Professor George Boyne, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, University of Aberdeen

Professor Karl Leydecker, Senior Vice Principal, University of Aberdeen School of Medicine and Dentistry

Ms Tracey Slaven, University Secretary and COO, University of Aberdeen

Professor Roderick Watkins, Vice-Chancellor, Anglia Ruskin University

Doctor Sanjiv Ahluwalia, Head / Principal, Anglia Ruskin University School of Medicine and Dentistry

Mr James Rolfe, COO, Anglia Ruskin University

Professor Anthony Hilton, Principal Vice-Chancellor & Executive Dean, Aston University Medical School

Professor Helen Cameron, Head of Aston Medical School, Aston University Medical School

Professor Colin Bailey, President and Principal, Queen Mary University

Professor Steve Thornton, Vice Principal, Queen Mary University Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

Dr Rob Bennett, COO, Queen Mary University Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry (Barts)

Professor Adam Tickell, Vice Chancellor & Principal, University of Birmingham

Professor Una Martin, Dean, University of Birmingham College of Medical and Dental Sciences

Professor David Adams, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College of Medicine and Dental Sciences, University of Birmingham College of Medical and Dental Sciences

Professor Debra Humphris, Vice Chancellor, Brighton University

Professor Malcolm Reed, Dean, Brighton and Sussex Medical School

Mr Stephen Dudderidge, Registrar and Secretary, Brighton and Sussex Medical School

Professor Jane Norman, Dean, University of Bristol Medical School

Ms Lucinda Parr, Registrar and Secretary, University of Bristol Medical School

Professor Andrew Jones, Vice Chancellor and President, Brunel University London

Professor Naomi Low-Ber, Dean, Brunel Medical School

Sir Richard SYkes, Chancellor, Brunel University London

Professor James Tooley, Vice Chancellor, The University of Buckingham

Professor Joanne Harris, Dean of Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences,, The University of Buckingham

Dame Mary Archer, Chancellor, The University of Buckingham

Professor Stephen Toope, Vice-Chancellor, The University of Cambridge

Doctor Paul Wilkinson, Clinical Dean, University of Cambridge School of Clinical Medicine

Professor Ian Leslie, Director, University of Cambridge School of Clinical Medicine

Professor Graham Baldwin, Vice Chancellor, University of Central Lancashire

Professor Cathy Jackson, Executive Dean, University of Central Lancashire Medical School
Mr Ian Fisher, University Secretary and General Counsel, University of Central Lancashire
Professor Eunice Simmons, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, University of Chester
Professor John Alcolado, Executive Dean, University of Chester Medical School
Professor Iain Gillespie, Vice-Chancellor, University of Dundee
Professor Rory McCrimmon, Dean, University of Dundee School of Medicine
Umran Sarwar, Director of Legal, University of Dundee
Dr John Cater, Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive, Edge Hill University
Seth Crofts, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean of the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Medicine, Edge Hill University Medical School (Faculty of Health, Social Care & Medicine)
Professor Peter Mathieson, Principal and Vice Chancellor, University of Edinburgh
Professor Moira Whyte, Head of Edinburgh Medical School, University of Edinburgh Medical School
Professor David Kluth, Dean of Undergraduate Medicine, University of Edinburgh Medical School
Professor Lisa Roberts, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive, University of Exeter
Professor Clive Ballard, Pro Vice Chancellor and Executive Dean, University of Exeter Medical School
Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, University of Glasgow School of Medicine, Dentistry and Nursing
Dr John Paul Leach, Head of Undergraduate School, University of Glasgow School of Medicine, Dentistry and Nursing
Dr David Duncan, Deputy Vice Chancellor – Operations and Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary (Governance), University of Glasgow School of Medicine
Professor Susan Lea, Incumbent to Aug 2022, Hull York Medical School
Professor Una McLeod, Dean, Hull University
Dr Christopher Ince, Secretary and Chief Compliance Officer, University of Hull
Professor Alice Gast, Vice-Chancellor, President and Rector, Imperial College London
Professor Jonathan Weber, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Imperial College London Faculty of Medicine
Professor Trevor Mcmillan, Vice-Chancellor, Keele University
Professor Pauline Walsh, Pro Vice Chancellor and Executive Dean, Keele University School of Medicine
Professor Karen Cox, Vice-Chancellor and President, University of Kent
Professor Chris Holland, Dean, Kent and Medway Medical School
Professor Shitij Kapur, President and Principal, King's College London
Professor Tim Lancaster, Dean, GKT School of Medical Education

Professor Andy Schofield, Vice-Chancellor, Lancaster University

Professor Jo Ryecroft-Malone, Dean for the Faculty of Health and Medicine, Lancaster University

Professor Simone Buitendijk, Vice Chancellor, University of Leeds

Professor Mark Kearney, Executive Dean, University of Leeds Faculty of Medicine and Health

Dr Tim Peakman, COO, University of Leeds

Professor Nishan Canagarajah, Vice-Chancellor, University of Leicester

Professor Richard Holland, Head of Leicester Medical School, University of Leicester Medical School

Martyn Riddleston, COO, University of Leicester

Professor Neal Juster, Vice Chancellor, University of Lincoln

Professor Danny McLaughlin, Associate Dean, University of Lincoln Medical School

Professor Dame Janet Beer, Vice-Chancellor, University of Liverpool

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Professor Louise Richardson, Vice Chancellor, University of Oxford

Professor Dean Screatton, Head of Medical Sciences Division, University of Oxford Medical Sciences Division

Professor Judith Petts, Vice-Chancellor, University of Plymouth

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Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences

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Professor Keith Lloyd, Executive Dean and Pro Vice Chancellor, Swansea University Faculty of Medicine, Health & Life Science

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Professor Sudhesh Kumar, Dean, University of Warwick Medical School

Professor Dame Carrie MacEwan, Acting Chair, General Medical Council

Professor Malcolm Reed, Lead Co-Chair, Medical Schools Council

Professor John Atherton, Co Chair, Medical Schools Council