

Following the Government's announcement today (December 2 2010) that it will repeal the legislation setting up the Office of the Health Professions Adjudicator (OHPA), the chair of OHPA, Walter Merricks, said:

“OHPA offered genuinely independent adjudications, in a reformed system, operating across all health and social care professions. Such a system would have assured the public that their protection from those who are not fit to practise medicine and related professions was in the hands of a wholly independent tribunal. Given that this was a key recommendation of the Shipman Inquiry, it is a regrettable that the Government has decided not to proceed with the OHPA programme. That said, it is a matter of pride that so much of what OHPA first promoted in terms of modern case management will now be taken on board by the General Medical Council.

“As we are a statutory body, OHPA will continue in existence for some time to come. We will be using that time to work with colleagues in the GMC, the other regulators, and the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence, to maximise the learning from OHPA's work. We will approach this task in an open and constructive spirit. While OHPA itself will not go ahead, it is clear that there is an appetite in many of the professions for the package of reforms that we had hoped to introduce.”

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