
International Briefs

INDIA

Court Case Over the Use of “Dr.” Title

The Kerala High Court has ruled that courts do not have the authority to determine who may use the “Dr.” prefix, holding that decisions about titles and professional designations are for the legislature or government to regulate, not the judiciary.

In a case involving a petitioner seeking to use “Dr.” based on a non-medical doctoral degree, the court said it cannot step into debates over who is entitled to a title without clear statutory backing and noted that unsettled rules on use of academic and professional titles may invite public confusion. The judgment emphasized that the government and legislature are responsible for setting standards and qualifications tied to professional titles and suggested that any disputes over misuse should be addressed through appropriate regulatory frameworks rather than through judicial fiat.

Further information is available at <https://thelegalaffair.com/news/courts-cannot-decide-who-can-use-dr-prefix-it-is-for-government-or-legislature-to-determine-kerala-high-court/>

PAKISTAN

Regulation of Allied Health Professionals

Pakistan has announced that all allied health professionals must be formally registered with the Allied Health Professionals Council (AHPC) by June 30, 2026, as part of a nationwide effort to standardize and legally regulate the technical healthcare workforce. Under a government directive issued in January 2026, healthcare facilities, including hospitals, laboratories, and educational institutions, are required to ensure that technicians, therapists, and other allied health workers complete their AHPC registration by the deadline, and unregistered individuals cannot be employed after that date.

The move, grounded in the Allied Health Professionals Council Act, aims to improve consistency of practice, strengthen patient safety, and professional accountability across a wide range of allied health disciplines that support doctors and other clinicians throughout Pakistan’s health system. The regulation applies to numerous fields such as laboratory technology, physiotherapy, radiography, dental technology, and nutrition, among others.

Further information is available at <https://www.dentalnews.pk/29-Jan-2026/pakistan-mandatory-registration-allied-health-professionals>

UNITED KINGDOM

Joint Statement on Principles Relating to the Use of AI in Education and Training

The General Osteopathic Council has published a joint statement on principles relating to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and training, together with five other health and care regulators.

The statement includes a set of guiding principles for providers of health and care education to proactively consider during the design and delivery of their educational programs.

Published together with the Health and Care Professions Council, General Chiropractic Council General Optical Council, General Pharmaceutical Council, and Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, the statement helps to provide education providers with clarity and an understanding of regulator views on the use of AI in health and care professional education.

Clarity around regulator expectations also helps to ensure that the use of AI in teaching and learning does not impact on education provider's ability to produce safe, skillful, and competent practitioners.

The principles outline responsibilities with respect to accountability, academic integrity, development of AI literacy for staff and learners, and preparation for future practice. Although technology is developing rapidly, the stakeholders have agreed to come together periodically to ensure the statement remains up to date.

The statement is intended to complement existing guidance on the use of AI in education.

The full statement is available at <https://www.osteopathy.org.uk/news-and-resources/document-library/about-the-gosc/joint-statement-from-statutory-regulators-of-health-and-care/>