

Guidance on reporting matters to the GDC

An important part of being a professional is recognising when patient safety might be compromised by your conduct, performance, or any health issues you are experiencing. You should be able to recognise when a matter arises that requires you to assess your own fitness to practise or the fitness to practise of those you work with.

This guidance covers matters you must report to the General Dental Council (GDC), including if you have concerns about your own fitness to practise, the fitness to practise of others, or if you are subject to regulatory investigations or criminal proceedings anywhere in the world.

Failure to report any of these matters in a timely manner may result in the opening of formal fitness to practise proceedings by the GDC. If you are in doubt about whether to report a matter to the GDC, you should [contact us](#).

1. Concerns about the fitness to practise of yourself or others - what you must do

1.1 You must inform the GDC if you have concerns about your conduct, performance or health that impact on your fitness to practise.

a) Health

If patients may be at risk because you have a health condition that could impact on your practice, you must take action to address this.

You should consider whether you are able to manage your health condition in an effective way so that it does not impact your ability to practise safely and effectively and maintain public confidence in the profession. You may wish to seek advice from peers or your indemnifier, or to take further action including changing, adapting or limiting your practice, and making reasonable adjustments.

If you remain concerned that your fitness to practise is impacted and you may be putting patients at risk or reducing trust in the profession, you must inform the GDC immediately.

b) Conduct and Performance

If patients may be at risk because of a conduct or performance issue, you must take action to address this.

You should consider whether you are able to address the issue yourself, such as managing it locally with your employer or manager.

If you remain concerned that your fitness to practise is impacted and you may be putting patients at risk or reducing trust in the profession, you must inform the GDC immediately.

1.2 You must inform the GDC if you have concerns about the health, conduct or performance of a colleague

Where you are concerned that a colleague's health, conduct, or performance is putting patients at risk or that it could reduce trust in the profession you should act to address this. Actions you might take include speaking to the individual to better understand the situation, encouraging them to get help, and notifying their employer.

If you remain concerned that another dental professional may be putting patients at risk or reducing trust in the profession, you must inform the GDC immediately.

2. Proceedings by a regulatory or other public body – what you must do

2.1 You must inform the GDC immediately if you are subject to the fitness to practise procedures of another healthcare regulator, either in the United Kingdom or anywhere else in the world.

2.2 You must also notify the GDC of any finding that may indicate a concern about your fitness to practise, by a governmental or public body, including:

- Commissioners of health across the four nations, NHS England, NHS Scotland, NHS Wales and Health and Social Care Northern Ireland.
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- Healthcare systems regulators, for example, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW), Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS), the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA); including against the registration of premises for which you are responsible.
- Other healthcare regulators.
- The Coroner or Procurator Fiscal acting to investigate a death.
- Any other regulatory body, for example, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the Advertising Standards Agency (ASA).
- Police forces from across the UK.
- Equivalent governmental or public body anywhere else in the world.

3. Criminal proceedings – what you must do

3.1 You must inform the GDC immediately if anywhere in the world you:

- are charged with a criminal offence, including road traffic offences.
- are found guilty of a criminal offence, including road traffic offences.
- receive a conditional discharge for an offence.
- accept a criminal caution (including a conditional caution), or otherwise formally admit to committing a criminal offence.
- receive a formal adult warning (in Scotland).
- receive a caution (you were under 18 when the caution was issued).
- you are placed on a barred list held by either the Disclosure and Barring Service or Disclosure Scotland

You are not obliged to inform us of notices or orders such as the following:

- a fixed penalty notice for a road traffic offence
- a fixed penalty notice issued by local authorities (for example for offences such as dog fouling, or graffiti)
- an anti-social behaviour, preventative justice, or other social order.

However, you will need to consider whether the behaviour which led to you being given such a notice or order, represents a fitness to practise concern including whether public confidence could be undermined by such behaviour. In these circumstances you should notify the GDC.

You should also be aware that if someone else tells us about the offence we may consider this as a fitness to practise issue.

If you need advice as to whether you should declare you should contact your indemnifier, or the GDC at <https://www.gdc-uk.org/contact-us>

3.2 Reporting past charges and convictions

You must report past convictions and cautions, unless they are protected from the normal disclosure requirements.

Please note for the purposes of calculating protection periods in relation to disclosure, the GDC follows the requirements that are set for England and Wales.

You must report all convictions for offences on the specified offences list kept by [the Disclosure and Barring Service](#) and all convictions for which you received a custodial sentence, including when that sentence was suspended.

You must report all other convictions unless:

- eleven years have passed since the date of conviction; or
- five and a half years have passed and you were under 18 at the date of conviction

You must report all cautions for offences on the specified offences list unless:

- it was issued six or more years ago; or
- you were under 18 years at the time the caution was given

4. Cooperating with an investigation from the GDC or other public body – what you must do

If you are contacted by the GDC you must respond in full within the time specified. If the communication is about concerns with your fitness to practise, you must notify your indemnity/ insurance provider promptly. You may also wish to seek advice from your indemnity provider or professional association regarding any situation where you are required to cooperate with an investigation.

When a concern is raised by you or about you, in relation to sections 1 – 3 of this guidance, you have a professional obligation to cooperate with any investigation or comply with any sanction (for example conditions on your practice) that may follow.