

Revalidation

Post-consultation statement on revalidation for dentists



Introduction

We conducted a public consultation in late 2010 to capture thoughts and opinions on our emerging thinking about how dentists in the future might demonstrate their fitness to practise through a process of revalidation. We are very grateful for the responses and comments we received.

Revalidation will mark an important change in the way dentists are regulated. We are therefore committed to developing an approach that works well for dentists at the same time as providing assurance to patients and the public that dentists are up to date and practising in accordance with the GDC's standards.

The 2010 consultation focused on a three stage model of revalidation for dentists. Since then the context surrounding revalidation has continued to evolve. For example, the NHS in England is being reorganised and the Government has signalled a range of changes for the way healthcare regulators operate. In relation to revalidation, the Government is putting a renewed stress on proportionality and has asked the GDC and other healthcare regulators to gather a sufficient evidence base to inform the further development of proposals. We are responding to this by embarking on a range of research activity and exploring how our existing continuing professional development requirements for registrants might be modified to ensure they support the revalidation process. The key aim is to ensure revalidation for dentists passes the test of both proportionality and cost effectiveness.

Inevitably our plans for revalidation will continue to evolve in the light of the findings of the 2010 consultation, research activity and ongoing engagement with registrants and stakeholders. This means the proposals that were set out in the consultation are likely to undergo some change.

Some of the key themes emerging from the consultation provide clear points to the GDC on how the scheme might be modified. These are set out below.

Our response following the revalidation for dentists consultation

Reducing administrative burdens

We heard from respondents that they want to avoid revalidation imposing an administrative burden and duplicating the existing requirements of other bodies. We also heard that respondents want our revalidation proposals to be evidence-based.

We are committed to developing a model of revalidation that is workable, proportionate and cost-effective. As our proposals develop further, we will consider how existing methods of performance management, quality assurance and regulation in dentistry may effectively contribute to revalidation, including avoiding unnecessary duplication.

We are also committed to making decisions about revalidation that are informed, where appropriate, by independent research. As part of ongoing policy development, we plan to deliver a programme of research that will inform our revalidation proposals. We will publish the findings on our website as they become available.

Supporting a three-stage process

Generally respondents supported the three-stage approach to revalidation although there were some concerns about our proposals for third party verification at stage 1.

The three stage model is our current working model of revalidation. However, this will be subject to further development and potential change where our ongoing research, consultation and engagement with registrants and stakeholders shows there is a more workable, proportionate and cost-effective approach. It is clear that there is more work to do to establish the adequacy and workability of the component parts of any proposed revalidation process, including through research, piloting and testing.

Ensuring system assurance

We heard from respondents that revalidation systems must be free from bias. We also received questions about how revalidation will apply to different forms of practice and workplaces.

We must have confidence that all necessary elements and supporting structures of revalidation are fit for purpose and robust enough to demonstrate that a registrant is up to date and practising in accordance with our standards. We recognise that for revalidation to have the trust and confidence of the dental profession, and of patients and the public, it must be free from unfair bias. We will further reflect on our proposals in the light of our various research findings, information-gathering, and dialogue with stakeholders.

It will also be important that our revalidation proposals are workable across all forms of dentistry and workplaces and we are committed to undertaking piloting and testing. Revalidation should be capable of consistent and fair application across a range of circumstances.

Maintaining public and patient involvement

Most respondents agreed that there should be patient and public involvement in revalidation.

Patient and public involvement contributes to an accountable, transparent and patient-focused approach to regulation. There are a variety of ways that patients and members of the public may help to shape revalidation. We are committed to exploring these and building them into our proposals where they contribute to an effective and proportionate approach to revalidation.

Next steps

As our proposals for revalidation continue to develop and evolve it is vital we engage closely with registrants and stakeholders and listen to a wide range of views and perspectives. It is also crucial that any final plans for revalidation for dentists are workable, cost-effective and free from unnecessary regulatory burdens. We will undertake further consultation as our model of revalidation continues to develop.



For more information about revalidation please visit our website,
www.gdc-uk.org or email **revalidation@gdc-uk.org**