

Annual Report on Committee Effectiveness – Policy and Research Board (PRB)

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Type of business	To note
For Council only:	Public Session
Issue	In accordance with the General Dental Council Standing Orders for the Non-Statutory Committees of Council 2018, clause 8.4, Committees are required to report annually on expenditure, progress against work programmes and planned work programmes for the following year. This report was circulated to the Committee for comment on 6 January 2020.
Recommendation	The Council is asked to note the 2019 annual report on effectiveness from the Policy and Research Board (PRB).

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 It is the role of the Policy and Research Board (PRB) to assist the Council in fulfilling its oversight of the development and implementation of strategy, policy and research initiatives and report on them to the Council.
- 1.2 The current membership of the PRB is Kirstie Moons (Chair and registrant Council member), Caroline Logan (registrant Council member), Catherine Brady (registrant Council member), Geraldine Campbell (lay Council member), Margaret Kellett (registrant Council member) and Simon Morrow (registrant Council member). Jeyanthi John (registrant Council member) left the Board to join the Remuneration Committee on 3 October 2019 and her last Board meeting was on 12 September 2019. This year, the Board held four meetings. A further meeting was due to take place on 14 November 2019 but was subsequently cancelled.
- 1.3 The key purpose of the Board is defined in its Terms of Reference (**Appendix 1**) and this includes to:
 - a. Engage with the GDC's key stakeholders in the key activities of the Board including, the development and dissemination of research, the development and implementation of current and future policy and GDC strategy.
 - b. Oversee a programme of research to inform the GDC's work.

- c. Oversee the development of an ‘upstream’ regulatory model, based on promoting professionalism, including in relation to education and training and reducing reliance on enforcement activities.
- d. Ensure effective horizon scanning is undertaken in relation to changing stakeholder expectations, variations in models of dental care delivery, use of new technology and wider changes in the regulation of healthcare and other relevant sectors.
- e. Work with the Executive on changes to the Corporate Strategy for approval by the Council.

2. Expenditure

- 2.1 The only costs associated with the Committee in 2019 were those relating to travel and subsistence of Council members for the meetings held.

3. Engagement

- 3.1 The Board engaged with a number of the GDC’s key stakeholders and actively sought opportunities to collaborate. Discussions were held with, amongst others, NHS England and registrant and patient groups.
- 3.2 Stakeholders were invited to attend workshops to facilitate engagement and collaborative opportunities; These workshops held in 2019 included:
 - a. NHS England: The Board received a presentation from NHS England about SNOMED CT (Systematized Nomenclature of Medicine Clinical Terms) which was the single terminology of choice for health and care in England. The briefing included the details around the assurance and governance framework of the nomenclature which was owned by the Chief Dental Officer. The Office of Chief Dental Officer planned for all NHS dental practices in England to be using this system by April 2020.
 - b. Registrant Workshop: The Board hosted a workshop with 15 invited registrants which included: dentists, dental nurses, dental hygienists, dental therapists and dental technicians. The aim of the workshop was to provide registrants with an opportunity for open discussion with Council members on the key issues in dentistry that mattered to them. Discussions included the future of dentistry, challenges for the dental team and issues that the GDC should prioritise.
 - c. Clinical Dental Fellows Workshop: Clinical Dental Fellows were invited to attend a workshop which provided the Board with an opportunity to hear from them about their experiences over the past year and supporting young leaders within the profession. This provided the Board with an overview of the English Clinical Dental Fellows Scheme and the breadth of training provided which is developing key leaders and networks in dentistry.

4. Oversight of the Research Programme

- 4.1 In 2019, the Board oversaw and contributed both formally and informally to a range of research-related activity. This included the following:
 - a. Research updates. The Board received research updates at each meeting, which included a report on progress, forward planning and areas for consideration and further development. Through discussion and consideration of these progress reports, the Board actively contributed towards the development of the research programme.

- b. Co-production, dialogue and engagement. In February 2019, a workshop was held with the Board, GDC colleagues, members of the public, stakeholders and research contractors which focused on the definitions and understanding of the term ‘co-production’, its relevance to research at the GDC and plans for employing dialogue and engagement throughout the programme of work.
- c. Scope of Practice review (SoP). An independent research organisation was commissioned to conduct a review of the SoP. The Board were represented at a workshop which discussed the outcomes from the scoping phase of the research.
- d. Patients and Public annual survey. The Board were represented at a workshop which was also attended by GDC colleagues and stakeholders. Discussions took place around the key findings from the Patient and Public annual survey. Consideration was also given to the potential implications of this year’s reporting and the work of the GDC, as well as looking to the content of future surveys.
- e. Stakeholder research. The Board hosted a workshop to hear and discuss the findings from stakeholder research.
- f. Barts NHS workshop. In June 2019, Barts NHS delivered a presentation as part of a PRB workshop, which explored correlations between Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) undergraduate dental students and the differences in the outcomes they currently attain, compared to their non BAME peers. Facilitated discussions enabled participants to consider how this work aligned with the strategic direction of moving regulation upstream and also in relation to the risk-based Quality Assurance of Education.
- g. Preparedness for Practice: The Head of Education Policy and Quality Assurance published a blog titled ‘Ensuring UK graduates are prepared for practice’ on 1 August 2019. A ‘Preparedness for Practice of UK graduates’ conference was then held on 5 November 2019 where members of the Board attended and presented. The Board heard that this work will continue in 2020 as part of a thematic review of education.

5. Oversight of Developing an ‘Upstream’ Regulatory Model

- 5.1 The Board had oversight of various GDC workstreams designed to achieve the regulatory aim of moving our regulatory approach ‘upstream’. This included those set out below.

Shifting the Balance:

- 5.2 The Board received a ‘Shifting the Balance’ programme update as a standing item at each meeting. Updates on some of the main workstreams in ‘Shifting the Balance’ included:
- a. FTP end-to-end review: The Board heard that the End to End Review – Phase 1 had closed in June 2019, with a small number of activities carried over as post programme projects. These projects were currently being managed by the Senior Programme and Portfolio Manager.
 - b. Material for new registrants: In September 2019, the Board heard that a new information pack for new registrants was being produced with the expected completion date for the project being March 2020. The Board were advised that information would be updated on the website for new registrants. New information would be incorporated into the existing pack between now and March 2020.
 - c. GDC Website: In September 2018, the Board heard that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had agreed to the funding of the new GDC website and this went live

on 16 August. It had received positive feedback from GDC staff based on their user experience of navigating around the site. Anecdotally, there was a significant decrease in negative feedback from external users in comparison with the old website.

- d. Student Engagement: In June 2019, the Board heard that all pilot visits had been concluded in relation to this workstream, and that an engagement plan had been approved by the SLT which meant that work would continue in 2020. The Board were also informed that future plans to capture all DCP students would be developed.
- e. Continuing professional development (CPD): In June 2019, the Board heard that there had been a meeting with the CPD Advisory Group in January, and a communication plan was devised to include stakeholder events. Part of this work looked towards producing a model for lifelong learning. Participants at the workshops felt that more could be done to link learning to appraisal systems, and that employers had a role in improving access to good quality training. Consultation for this took place between June and September 2019 and the Board heard that work would continue in 2020.
- f. Developing a comprehensive model for complaints handling: In June 2019, the Board heard that the project consisted of two phases running concurrently. Part of the initial phase involved extensive engagement with stakeholders which explored their roles and remits within the system. A commissioned Dental Complaints Service (DCS) satisfaction survey showed that 87% of registrant participants were satisfied with their experience with the DCS. In relation to the expansion of the Dental Complaints Service, this would be included for consideration in the current workstream on developing a comprehensive complaints-handling model.

5.3 In relation to Education, the Board received updates on work in this area.

Review of Education:

5.4 In June 2019, the Board received proposed changes to the style and content of the Review of Education document. The Board welcomed the new, more streamlined approach and this was subsequently approved by the SLT in October 2019 and by the Council in December 2019. The updated Review of Education document will be published at the end in January 2020.

Speciality Developments:

5.5 The Board heard that the consultation for the principles of speciality listing launched on 31 January 2019 and closed on 25 April 2019. In June 2019, the Board received an update which included the implementation of a project plan and working group, with plans to review the mediated entry process for speciality applications. The draft response to the consultation on the principles of specialist listing for publication was approved at the December meeting of the Council and the response will be published in January 2020.

5.6 The Board heard that research regarding the Specialist List Assessed Application route (also known as mediated entry), was undertaken in the summer of 2019, and meetings were held to progress this work in Q3 of 2019. The Board heard that, in early January 2020,

a blog would be published to inform registrants more widely of developments, a plan would be devised in the new year to develop the proposals discussed, with the view of completing improvements to the process in 12-18 months.

Moving Upstream 2020

In September 2019, the Board were presented with the draft report of the Moving Upstream 2020 document. The Board provided feedback and noted their support for this piece of work going forward. If approved by the Council in January 2020, the document will be published in the same month.

6. Horizon Scanning

- 6.1 In February 2019, the Board received a Horizon Scanning report which included a brief about the round table on 'Standards and Safety of Cosmetic Procedures' meeting which took place in December 2018. Further Horizon Scanning reports were received in April and June 2019 which the Board noted. The reports provided updates to the Board which included stakeholder engagement activities across the four nations.

7. Governance and next steps

Terms of Reference

- 7.1 The attached Terms of Reference (**Appendix 1**) will be reviewed by the Board in 2020, following work by the Council on the assurance framework and Scheme of Delegations.

Work Programme 2019

- 7.2 The Board noted the work programme at each meeting. The attached PRB Work Programme for 2020 (**Appendix 2**) will be reviewed in 2020.

8. Appendices

- a. **Appendix 1** – PRB Terms of Reference
- b. **Appendix 2** – PRB Work Programme for 2020

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