

Communications and Engagement Plan

Scope of Practice Review: research findings

Project:	Scope of Practice Review
Communications team lead:	Lisa Bainbridge
Priority status:	High
Project folder:	Communications/Projects/Scope of Practice
Dated:	17 January 2020

1. Background

The GDC commissioned research in early 2019 to help understand:

- Awareness and understanding of the roles within the dental team.
- Use and perceptions of the Scope of Practice guidance document.
- Impacts of the Scope of Practice guidance, both intended and unintended.
- The future of the Scope of Practice guidance.

The research was commissioned from IFF Research and is now ready for publication.

The research forms part of the evidence base for the review of the Scope of Practice guidance. This review is included in the Costed Corporate Plan 2020 as a contributor to strategic aim 4: to maintain and develop the regulatory framework. It will begin in the first quarter of 2020 and is due to finish by the end of 2021.

2. Project objectives

The project objective is to:

- Ensure relevant audiences know and understand the key findings from the Scope of Practice research and how we intend to use this evidence.

3. Timetable

Date	Purpose	Outcome
April	Announce finding and signal next steps	Dental professionals and other key stakeholders understand the key findings of the research and the next steps for the Scope of practice review.

4. Audiences

Audience(s):	Dental professionals and their representative organisations, in particular dental care professionals, defence organisations and education and training providers.
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Think:	That the GDC has completed comprehensive research and analysis to ensure that the review of Scope of Practice guidance is evidence informed, of which this research forms a part.
Feel:	That there is a sound evidence base for the Scope of Practice guidance review, and there will be future opportunities to engage.
Do:	Become familiar with the key findings of the research and access the content that has been created online. Later, engage with the review.

5. Internal stakeholders

Strategy and policy plans:

Accountable:	Stefan Czerniawski, Executive Director, Strategy
Responsible:	David Teeman, Head of Regulatory Intelligence
Consult:	Policy and research leads, Jessica Rothnie and Guy Rubin
Inform:	Strategy, CAIT, Fitness to Practise (FTP) and Hearings
Sign off:	Stefan Czerniawski, Executive Director, Strategy

Communications and engagement plans:

Accountable:	Colin MacKenzie, Head of Communications and Engagement (interim)
Responsible:	Lisa Bainbridge, Stakeholder Engagement Manager
Consult:	Communications and engagement channel managers
Inform:	As above, plus internal communications
Sign off:	Colin MacKenzie, Head of Communications and Engagement (interim)

6. Key messages and communications schedule

Key messages (KMs)
<p>Messaging to provide context (where required) (notes for editor in the press release):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Scope of Practice guidance sets out the skills and abilities that every dental care professional should have, by title. The guidance was introduced in 2009 to support those dental care professionals who had joined the statutory Register a year earlier, following a two year transition period.

- The dental care professional titles added to the UK Register in 2009 were dental nurse, dental technician, clinical dental technician and orthodontic therapist.
- We reviewed the Scope of Practice guidance in 2013 and reissued the updated version on the introduction of direct access, for some dental care professional titles, doing selected tasks. Again, it was felt that this would help with the transition to new direct access arrangements for some titles.
- The Scope of Practice guidance asks dental professionals to ensure that they are trained, competent and indemnified before carrying out any clinical or other support to patients.
- Dentistry is the only area of healthcare where a clinical scope of practice is provided by the professional regulator.

Key messaging relating to research findings:

- The Scope of Practice guidance is not being used in the way that it was originally intended. The primary users of the guidance are education and training providers, employers and professional representative bodies, not dental care professionals.
- Dental professionals reported high levels of awareness and a good understanding of their own scope of practice, which has been gained through education, work and training and development, not through our guidance.
- Members of the public and patients are not aware of the Scope of Practice guidance and do not feel it is relevant or necessary for them to have access to this type of information.
- The research found some concerns among dental professional and stakeholders on the suggestion that there may be substantial changes or if the guidance no longer existed. The reason for this was a fear or concern that others may act out of scope.

Messaging relating to next steps:

- This research forms part of the evidence base being developed to support a review of our Scope of Practice guidance and we would like to thank all those involved for their active participation in the research. We will now be reviewing all of the evidence gathered in support of the review of Scope of Practice, which includes internal information and data sources.
- Our overall aim for the Scope of Practice review is to provide as much flexibility to dental professionals as possible, so they are using their own professional judgement about the provision of care and their own education, development and competencies. We believe that we need to put more trust in dental professionals and be less prescriptive, and that this will contribute to higher standards of care and professional conduct.

- We will be looking to clarify the purpose of the Scope of Practice guidance, particularly in light of the fact that it is no longer being used in the way it was intended, to clarify the support needs of dental professionals and what form this support should take. We will be asking dental professionals to engage with us on these issues as our proposals take shape.
- The research findings will also be shared with other competent authorities that are considering new career development pathways and the utilisation of the whole dental team e.g. Health Education England's Advancing Dental Care programme.
- The review is due to start early this year and complete by the end of 2021.

Messaging relating to a call to action:

- Please visit our website for further details on the findings of the research.
- If you would like further information about the research, or how the findings will be used for the review of Scope of Practice guidance, please get in touch.

7. Communications schedule

Channel	Audience	Comms owner	Timing of delivery (content)
Press release	Stakeholders	TC	On approval
Stakeholder email	Stakeholders	LB	On approval
GDC Newsletter	Section 4	LB	Estimated, May
Leadership network	Stakeholders	DK	On approval
Research page	Section 4	MN	On approval
Social media	Section 4	CC	1 x post for a week on approval
Face to face	DGP events	LB	Content approval from CE&R for NEBDN event in March. GR attending.

8. Stakeholders

Organisation	Contact
Internal	
Strategy Directorate	All
FTP and Hearings teams	Shugafra Akram, Clare Callan, John Cullinane
Internal Communications	Helen Alexander

CAIT	Karen Bridgewater
External	
Chief Dental Officers	All nations, stakeholder list
PSA	Stakeholder list
Defence organisations	Stakeholder list
Dental Professionals	CRM download for newsletter
Professionals bodies	CRM/newsletter and stakeholder list
Education and training providers	List from Quality Assurance
Leadership network	LN membership list
Health Education England (HEE)	Stakeholder list
Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW)	Stakeholder list
NHS Education for Scotland (NES)	Stakeholder list

9. Budget

- Design work covered by the researchers, needs GDC logo added.
- Potential benefit in creating infographics, but the findings are largely qualitative. If needed, this can be done in-house.
- No budget required.

10. Products and/or outputs

- Slide deck for external presentations.
- Research report to be published on the website.

11. Success measures

- Stakeholders feel informed of progress with the Scope of Practice guidance review.