

Information for dental professionals who are subject to conditions or have agreed undertakings

1. Introduction

The GDC will investigate serious concerns about the ability, health, or behaviour of UK dental professionals, which may suggest that a professional could:

- Cause significant harm to patients.
- Cause significant harm to colleagues or the public.
- Undermine public confidence in the dental profession.

Our fitness to practise investigations will sometimes result in a sanction, such as a warning, reprimand, or having conditions on dental practice imposed. There are several points in the fitness to practise process where conditions can be imposed, or undertakings agreed, to restrict a dental professional's practice. These are:

- An Interim Orders Committee may consider it necessary to make an order affecting GDC registration for the purpose of:
 - the protection of the public, or otherwise in the public interest
 - in the interest of the individual concerned pending the GDC's investigation, and if necessary
 - the outcome of any inquiry by a practice committee.
- A practice committee imposing conditions, when they find after a full or review hearing that a dental professional is currently impaired, and their practice needs to be restricted to protect the public or in the public interest.
- Case examiners offer undertakings, and these are agreed by the dental professional.

If you have agreed to undertakings, or had conditions imposed by statutory committee, you will now need to find a suitable dental professional to support you, as well as monitor and report on your progress, as you remediate the issues which have been identified. These services must be funded by the individual.

We do provide some flexibility in who provides this support and guidance, but we will need to approve the person you nominate. You will find guidance on how to find a suitably trained and skilled dental professional to fulfil this role for you, below.

2. Support and supervision

There are varying types of support and supervision needs for those with conditions or undertakings. These are explained below.

2.1. Workplace supervisor

A workplace supervisor is responsible for overseeing your day-to-day clinical work. They are responsible for reviewing your clinical practice throughout the period of supervision and providing you with helpful and constructive feedback.

Nominated workplace supervisors must be approved by the GDC, before you can return to work. (NB: Postgraduate dental deans, or their nominated deputies, do not appoint, identify, or manage workplace supervisors.) To secure approval from the GDC, you or your representative, will need to provide:

- the nominee's full name and contact details
- copy of their current CV, and
- a signed copy of the Workplace Supervisor Agreement Form.

Your workplace supervisor must agree to provide reports to the GDC at the intervals specified in your conditions or undertakings. These reports will need to include, but not be limited to, information on:

- Your clinical performance.
- Details of one-to-one meetings and case-based discussions.
- Your progress towards remediation.
- any concerns regarding your practice, or progress towards remediation.

2.2. Mentor

Mentors are usually more senior and experienced colleague, who can offer guidance to a dental professional. Mentors have wide-ranging roles that can cover clinical work, professional relationships, and career plans. Mentors can be useful if you feel you have become professionally isolated, particularly because the relationship you have with them remains confidential.

The GDC does not request or expect reports from mentors. However, you can request that your mentor does so.

2.3. Development adviser (England)

Development advisers are dental professionals who are appropriately trained to support you if you are subject to conditions on your practice, or you have agreed undertakings with a case examiner. They are available to those who practice in England only.

Development advisers will support you to develop and keep up to date your Personal Professional Development Plan (PPDP). The PPDP will guide and record your progress in meeting the areas of concern or issues identified by the decision maker. Development advisers are also responsible for monitoring and reporting your progress against the agreed deadlines, and reviewing your completed written evidence, as specified in the PPDP.

The development adviser will provide us, or other relevant bodies, with reports on the process at times specified under the conditions, undertakings, or upon request. They are not responsible for supervising your clinical practice. Further details can be found the document, 'Development advisers: person specification'.

This service must be funded by the individual.

2.4. Educational supervisor (Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland)

Educational supervisors are appointed by a postgraduate dental dean. They may, depending on the wording of the condition or undertakings, be nominated by you. Educational supervisors are appropriately trained, and responsible for the overall supervision of your learning and educational progress during a specified period.

The educational supervisor will assist the registrant in drawing up their Personal Professional Development Plan (PPDP) to address the issues identified by the decision maker. They will offer you support, guidance, and monitor your progress against agreed PPDP deadlines, as well as reviewing the completed written evidence, as specified in your PPDP.

The educational supervisor will provide the us, or other relevant bodies, with reports on this process at times specified under the conditions, undertakings, or upon request. They are not responsible for supervising the clinical practice of dental professionals.

This service must be funded by the individual.

3. Levels of support required

The conditions or undertakings might also set out the level of support required. These are supervised, closely supervised or direct observation, and are detailed below.

3.1. Supervised

This means your day-to-day work must be supervised by a registered dental professional, as prescribed in the relevant condition, or undertaking. Your supervisor need not work at the same practice as you, but they must make themselves available to provide advice or assistance, should you need it.

You work must be reviewed at least once a fortnight by your supervisor through a one-to-one meeting or case-based discussion. These fortnightly meetings must focus on all areas of concern identified by the conditions or undertakings. These meetings should usually take place face to face, but we understand this is not always possible. Therefore, as a minimum, at one out of every two fortnightly meetings must be held face-to-face.

3.2. Closely supervised

Your day-to-day work must be supervised by a registered dental professional, and as prescribed in the relevant condition or undertaking. Your workplace supervisor must be on site and available at all times while you are working.

As a minimum, your work must be reviewed at least twice a week by the supervisor at one-to-one meetings or case-based discussion. These bi-weekly meetings must focus on all areas of concern identified by the conditions or undertakings. These meetings must take place face-to-face, or via video conferencing.

3.3. Directly supervised¹

The registrant's work must be directly supervised at all times by a person who is registered with the GDC in their category of the register or above and who must be on site and available at all times.

4. Reviewing progress

Conditions and undertakings are reviewed regularly by a committee or case examiners, as appropriate. We will provide an evidence bundle to the committee or case examiners to inform these reviews; it will include reports from advisers or supervisors.

5. Finding your adviser or supervisor

We will not identify individual development advisers, mentors, or supervisor on your behalf. You can now work with others to find the supervisory support you need, subject to our approval. If you practice in Scotland, Wales, or Northern Ireland should contact the appropriate postgraduate dental dean to seek support.

We have worked with several organisations to help you with identifying appropriate supervision or support. These are listed below. Please remember that you are responsible for any costs associated with the provision of advice, mentoring, or supervision.

The organisations below may be able to signpost you to individuals or other organisations that may support you:

- a) Practitioner Advice and Support Scheme
Find your Local Dental Committee: 020 7935 0875
Email: advice.enquiries@bda.org
- b) Practitioner Performance Advice service
For service in England, Northern Ireland, and Wales
Phone: 020 7811 2600
Email: advice@resolution.nhs.uk
- c) Dental Mentors UK
Phone: 07500 017845 or 07814 830080
Email: info@dentalmentorsuk.com
- d) Society of British Dental Nurses
Dental Nurse Mentorship and Advisory Service
Phone: 07437 481182
Email: info@bdns.org.uk
Website: sbdn.org.uk

NB: Additional support or organisations for signposting will be included, as they are identified and/or become available.

¹ The GDC is preparing to consult on this level of supervision in 2022, subject to change.