



Latest updates from the GDC - August 2020

Annual renewal and changes to the DCP register

While there are a number of processes and further actions that need to be completed following the end of the annual renewal period, early indications are that the number of dental care professionals who have renewed their registration for 2020/21 is broadly in line with what we have seen in previous years.

We understand that the pandemic and the efforts to suppress it have put a lot of people in a tough position this year and that considerable uncertainty about the future remains. We will continue to encourage anyone who has not felt able to renew their registration to get in touch to discuss their options.

CPD statements due by 28 August

We would like to thank all of you for completing your renewal, despite the current disruption, and for your continued commitment to your profession. For some of you, there is one further action you need to take, which is to make your annual or end-of-cycle CPD statement.

We have previously advised that if you have a shortfall in CPD hours, due to COVID-19, that we will be flexible in our response to the exceptional circumstances you've faced. This has not changed. However, it is now very important that you make your CPD statement by the 28 August deadline.

If you have a shortfall, either in relation to the 10 hours over two years rule or the number of hours you need to complete in a full cycle, please just record your hours in the normal way. After the 28 August deadline, we will be in touch to explain what will happen next and any further action you need to take.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at cpd@gdc-uk.org.



Scope of Practice Guidance research findings

Our research to understand how you and our stakeholders are using Scope of Practice Guidance was published in July. You can now view a [new short, 15 minute, video presentation](#) providing a summary and further insights into the findings.

Revisiting our corporate strategy

We published our [Corporate Strategy setting out our direction over 2020-2022](#), at the end of last year, following public consultation. Within the first few months of the planning period, the nation and our healthcare system faced the unanticipated challenge of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The virus and our response are having profound impacts on people and society that are likely to be felt over the course of our strategic planning period.

We believe the earlier work we did to engage with patients and the public, dental professionals and stakeholders means that much of our strategy will be relevant for the years to come. But the widespread impacts, which are clear to see, mean that it is prudent for us to revisit our strategy in this new context, not least because the priorities of patients and dentistry may have changed.

We have already started to consider the potential impacts on patients, dental professionals, dentistry and regulation. We have commissioned research to help us develop our understanding of what COVID-19 means for the people our work affects, and wherever possible, we are learning from the insight that others are generating.

In September, we will be engaging with professional membership associations and societies, sector leaders and representatives of patients through a series of online discussions to find out more about their experiences, and to ask them about the role they see the dental regulator playing over the course of recovery.

Over the remainder of 2020, we will analyse what we have heard and use that information to revisit our Corporate Strategy, ensuring it reflects the new context and is the right one for the coming years.



New studies being launched to assess the impact of COVID-19

We are partnering with Leicester University who are leading an urgent public health study into [ethnicity and COVID-19 outcomes in healthcare workers, the UK-REACH project](#). The study will follow a group of healthcare workers from BAME backgrounds over 12-months to see what changes occur in their physical and mental health. The cohort will include non-clinical staff, and researchers will interview a smaller group of healthcare workers to understand the risks of their jobs, and how they may have changed their professional and social behaviours in response to COVID-19.

Sagar Shah, Dentist and Clinical Fellow at NHSBSA Dental Services, said:

“There is clear evidence that COVID-19 doesn’t affect all population groups equally and the BAME community are well represented in the dental workforce. Research into the impact of COVID-19 on BAME healthcare workers is extremely important and must consider social and economic factors.”

We are also in the final stages of commissioning a study into the impacts of COVID-19 to look more broadly at the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 on dental professionals and dental practices.

Both studies will be in their initial fieldwork phases in September and we will be getting in contact to invite you to participate in these important pieces of work to understand the impact of COVID-19 on dental professionals and dentistry.

Latest COVID-19 guidance

We continue to signpost to the latest guidance on COVID-19 and the reopening of practices and the return to work from Chief Dental Officers, Public Health England and other relevant authorities. Please note that the latest guidance from the Chief Dental Officer, Scotland, includes [confirmation of the ability to conduct 'urgent AGP work' from 17 August 2020](#).



What do we mean by professionalism?

Everyone will have their own view of what is meant by professionalism. We wanted to understand the broad range of views, and to share them with you, as we work towards a shared understanding of what we mean by professionalism in dentistry today.

Our first step has been to undertake research with dental professionals and the public. The findings have provided us with some interesting results, which we hope will open a conversation on the principles of professionalism. Our research found:

- That professionalism is multifaceted and context-dependent, and therefore, not easily defined for every circumstance or individual.
- That there are disparities in how professionalism is viewed by professionals and the public, some of the notable differences include behaviours in personal time and how paying for care can affect perceptions of professionalism in dentistry.
- And that communication was key, as it could lessen patient anxiety and enhance their view of the quality of care. Involving patients in decision-making was considered key, and an essential foundation of trust.

You will find [Professionalism: a mixed-method research study](#), commissioned from the Association of Dental Education Europe, on our website, [along with further information on the findings and what we plan to do next](#).



Could you be a clinical adviser or clinical expert witness?

We are looking to engage a minimum of 40 of you to become clinical advisers or clinical expert witnesses. These unique and flexible roles provide an opportunity for you to use your experience, knowledge and skills, as a dental professional, to protect patients and maintain standards in dentistry.

Our clinical advisers and expert witnesses help us by providing clinical advice at the early stages of our Fitness to Practise process or expert opinions and evidence at hearings.

We would like to particularly encourage applications from dental technicians to these roles. Additional guidance and answers to frequently asked questions [are available from our website](#). To apply, please [complete an application form](#) by 11:59pm on Sunday 9 August 2020.

Engaging new Fitness to Practise panellists

Earlier in the year we invited applications from dental professionals and the public to join our Fitness to Practise panel. We were looking for at least 40 new people to join us in these associate roles.

The online interviewing for these associate roles was completed in July, and we are pleased to report that we have been able to fill all places. Further, we have been able to offer a small number of people the opportunity to be in a 'reserve pool', allowing for any unpredictable challenges we may face in the months and years ahead.

Thank you to all of you who took the time to complete an application. We hope to make provisional offers by the end of August, before appointments are confirmed by the Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee (SPC) in September.

Would you like to join the SPC?

We are looking for a dental professional to join the SPC. The SPC is an independent non-executive statutory committee of the GDC whose role is to oversee the appointment of panellists to Fitness to Practise Committees. We are encouraging applications from a diverse range of suitably qualified individuals. We would particularly benefit from further representation of dental care professionals and people from BAME backgrounds.

Saxton Bampfylde is acting as employment agency advisor to the GDC for this appointment. For further information about the role, including the criteria for candidates and details of how to apply, please [visit the Saxton Bampfylde website](#) using reference **AZNH**. The deadline for applications is midday on Monday 24 August 2020.