

A view from the Chair

Our Chair, Lord Toby Harris, welcomes new Council and committee members, and says goodbye to Council member, Terry Babbs, in his [September blogpost](#).

The Chair also highlights updated guidance, new dates for sittings of the Overseas Registration Examination (ORE), and sets out opportunities to provide feedback on assessed applications to specialists lists and revisions to guidance for practice committees

Number of registered dental care professionals increases

The number of dental care professionals on the register has increased again. Following the recent annual renewal period, there were 75,905 dental care professionals on the register, an increase of 5.7% on the equivalent figure for 2023.

Working pattern data was volunteered by 58% of dental care professionals, and will be made available over the coming months. Thank you to everyone who provided their details.

See the [figures following annual renewal](#).

Updated guidance on voluntary removal applications

You can ask to be removed from the register at any time and it is normally an administrative process, except where there is a public interest in concluding an investigation. We have recently updated our [guidance for use in situations where voluntary removal has been requested by a registrant who is subject to fitness to practise proceedings](#).

Find out more about [leaving the register](#).

New specialty curricula start this academic year

The specialty curricula approved by the GDC last year, will be in use from the start of this academic year for all new specialty trainees. We wish all trainees taking up courses this year the best of luck in their studies and future career.

We also want to thank our partners and the stakeholders who supported the work, particularly the Specialty Advisory Committees who developed the revised curricula.

You will find all [13 specialty curricula](#) on our website.

Give your view on routes to specialist lists by 12 September

Our [consultation on amending routes for assessed applications to specialist lists](#) closes at midnight on 12 September. We are seeking your views on the ways registered dentists can gain entry to our specialist lists and associated changes to legislation.

The proposed amendments will help to ensure that those with the necessary knowledge, skills and experience can get onto specialist lists.

Provide your response using the [online survey](#) or by [email](#).

Insights from early career dental professionals: Listen to the new podcast

Earlier this year we published findings from our [research on how early career dental professionals experience and view the GDC](#). There's now a new podcast where the SQW researchers delve into the findings alongside the GDC, including:

- reasons for commissioning the research
- key findings and what influences perceptions
- varied views on preparedness for practice and wellbeing
- understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion strategies.

[Listen to the podcast](#) on the SQW website.

Consultation on revisions to guidance for practice committees

Yesterday we launched a 12-week [consultation on updated guidance for practice committees](#). We're making improvements to our fitness to practise processes, and are proposing revisions to the guidance and conditions bank for practice committees to support proportionate decision making, transparency and consistency in our approach.

Practice committees make decisions about whether a dental professional's fitness to practise is currently impaired, and include the Professional Conduct Committee, Professional Practice Committee and Health Committee.

The changes will directly affect those who participate in practice committee proceedings in future, and their representatives, those who raise public protection issues or concerns and independent panellists who hear cases put to practice committees.

We encourage all those with an interest to [review and respond](#).

The consultation will close on 26 November 2024.

Updated covert surveillance guidance published

We have published revised guidance on the use of covert surveillance, highlighting our commitment to transparency and the protection of individual privacy during both fitness to practise and illegal practice investigations. It sets out the stringent legal and ethical framework governing the use of covert surveillance in investigations, ensuring any such activity is compatible with human rights and other relevant legislation and guidance.

On publication, Stefan Czerniawski, Executive Director, Strategy, said:

“Covert surveillance will be used sparingly and only as a last resort, ensuring that any investigative practices are necessary, proportionate and respectful of privacy. This guidance supports our commitment to enhancing public trust and patient safety.”

You will find [Covert surveillance in practice](#) on our website.

New dates for sittings of the ORE in 2025

We have worked with our current providers to increase the capacity of the Overseas Registration Examination (ORE) and ensure continuity of service for candidates while new contracts are negotiated, with plans to further increase capacity in 2025.

There will be an April 2025 sitting of the ORE Part 1, with 600 places available, and three sittings of the ORE Part 2 from January to April 2025, with 144 places on each. This is in addition to the September and November sittings of Part 2, which are now fully booked.

ORE fees changes will apply to sittings held after 1 January 2025.

Theresa Thorp, Executive Director, Regulation, said:

“Dentists must be registered with the GDC to practise legally in the UK, and one of the most important things we do is to ensure that dentists added to the register meet the required standards for them to provide safe and effective dental care.

“Addressing the unprecedented demand for ORE places requires a complex combination of legislative, contractual and operational changes, so we cannot get there in a single step. We very much want to increase the capacity of the ORE and these additional sittings for 2025 will help, with further plans in place to increase capacity next year.”

Find out [more about the ORE](#).