

Recertification of oral health practitioners policy

Date last reviewed	August 2011
Scheduled review	
Approved by	Council

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect the safety of the public by ensuring registered practitioners maintain their competence and fitness to practice, do not become isolated from their peers and meet required standards.

Scope

This policy applies to all registered oral health practitioners. The requirements are the same for part-time and full-time practitioners.

Policy

1. The Dental Council must be satisfied that practitioners have maintained their competence and fitness before they are recertified to practise. Recertification is not automatic.
2. All applications for annual practising certificates will be considered under sections 26-33 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 ("the Act").
3. In order to have an APC issued by the Dental Council, oral health practitioners must:
 - a) Declare they comply with Council codes of practice;
 - b) Declare their competence to practise; and
 - c) Declare any health conditions, fitness, competence or discipline issues which may affect their competence or fitness to practise.
4. A practitioner who makes a declaration that he/she is competent to practise is required to maintain, develop and demonstrate their competence to practise e.g. through participation in Continuing Professional Development.

Council may request evidence of compliance with recertification requirements at any time e.g. during a competence review or in investigation of a complaint.

5. Practitioners must also hold an emergency care training first aid certificate. This training must be revalidated every two years.

Refer to the Council's practice standard on medical emergencies for the emergency care training requirements www.dcnz.org.nz/standards-framework.

6. The Dental Council may authorise a scope of practice for an applicant who applies to be registered as an oral health practitioner.

When authorising a scope of practice, the Council may include conditions of a kind that it considers are required to ensure the competent practice of the applicant, and which may include, without limitation, the conditions set out the Act.

7. Council has the authority to require a practitioner to undergo a competence or recertification programme before an APC will be issued (see details below).

Protocol when APC applications are referred to Council

1. After considering the application, Council has the option to:
 - a) Issue an APC;
 - b) Include new conditions or vary existing conditions on the applicant's scope of practice before issuing an APC;
 - c) Withhold issue of the APC until the applicant has fulfilled one or more conditions;
 - d) Issue an interim APC to the applicant, pending fulfilment of the conditions imposed; or
 - e) Decline to issue an APC.
2. If Council proposes to decline an application for an APC, or to include or vary conditions in the practitioner's scope of practise, it must give the applicant –
 - a) A notice containing enough particulars to inform the applicant clearly of the substance of the grounds on which the Council proposes to decline the application, or to include or vary any conditions; and
 - b) A copy of any information on which the Council relies in proposing to decline the application, or to include or vary any conditions; and
 - c) A reasonable opportunity to make written submissions and be heard, either personally or by his or her representative, in respect of the application.

Protocol when the requirements of a recertification programme are not satisfied

3. In situations where a practitioner has not satisfied the requirements of a competence or recertification programme that he or she has been required to undertake, Council has the legal authority to make either of the following orders:
 - a) That the practitioner's scope of practice be altered –
 - i. by changing any health services that the practitioner is permitted to perform; or
 - ii. by including any condition or conditions that the Council considers appropriate; or
 - b) That the practitioner's registration be suspended.

If Council intends to make such an order, the Act requires that notice is given to the practitioner concerned explaining the reason for the order, providing a copy of the information on which Council is basing its intentions, and allowing the practitioner the opportunity to make a submission on the matter.

Practitioner submissions can be written or verbal and presented by the practitioner or their representative.

Monitoring of compliance with Codes of Practice and Continuing Professional Development

Every year 5 - 10% of practitioners will be asked to complete a questionnaire as a first step in checking compliance with the Codes of Practice. From this pool of practitioners, a number will be followed up by a practice visit to confirm compliance.

Every 4 years practitioners will be asked to declare that they have met the requirements of the 4 yearly CPD cycle. A number of those practitioners who declare they have met the CPD requirements and are not a member of a Dental Council approved recertification provider will be requested to submit their professional portfolios to the Council to confirm compliance with the CPD requirements.

References

1. Policy on Continuing Professional Development Activities.
2. Policy on Recency of Practice.