

Consultation Document

Proposed changes to the Dental Technician and Clinical Dental Technician Scopes of Practice¹

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Background

Pursuant to the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCAA)², the Dental Council of New Zealand (Council) must, by notice published in the *Gazette*, describe the contents of its professions in one or more scopes of practice.

The Dental Council has received a request from the New Zealand Institute of Dental Technicians (NZIDT) to amend the Scopes of Practice of dental technology and clinical dental technology to include tasks that the Institute believes better reflects the scopes of practice of registered practitioners and activities that were being carried out prior to the HPCA Act 2003. Council has considered the amendments and agreed that these proposed amendments should be sent for consultation.

The Council has therefore produced a draft detailed scope of practice based on the amendments proposed by NZIDT. The aim of this consultation is to gather views from the sector in order for Council to make a final decision on the proposals. The draft scope is appended to this consultation document.

The Council is consulting on the proposal for the draft detailed scope of practice with persons and organisations identified with reference to section 14 of the HPCAA.

¹ The Draft Scope of Practice is attached as Appendix 1 to this document. Please read it fully before responding to this consultation document.

² Section 11 of the HPCAA

Discussion/Consultation points

1. Detailed Scope for Dental Technology Practice

It is proposed the Detailed Scope for Dental Technology Practice include:

- *undertake shade taking and shade checking, which may include the removal of a pre-loosened temporary crown and try-in of the permanent crown as prescribed by dentists or dental specialists*

It is proposed that this addition will better serve patients by enabling an accurate shade selection.

In order to ensure public safety it is proposed that the following statement is included in the Dental Council Code of Practice – The Practice of Dental Technology and Clinical Dental Technology and the working relationship within the Practice of Dentistry be made:

“The removal of a pre-loosened temporary crown and try-in of a permanent crown may only be undertaken under the prescription of and prior to the final fitting by, a dentist or dental specialist. The referring dentist or dental specialist must include clear written procedures, which the technician must follow. The dental technician must comply with the Council Codes on cross-infection control, patient consent and patient records when undertaking this task.”

The Council invites your comments on the following:

- a) Do you agree/disagree with the addition of shade taking and shade checking to the dental technology detailed scope of practice?**
- b) Do you agree/disagree that the restrictions on the removal of a pre-loosened temporary crown and try-in of a permanent crown and the required relationship between a dental technician and dentist/dental specialist adequately protect the public?**

2. Detailed Scope for Clinical Dental Technology Practice

The following addition to the scope is proposed.

- *taking impressions, relining and undertaking other non-invasive clinical procedures involved in the construction of removable complete and partial root/tooth overdentures subject to the patient having obtained an Oral Health Certificate from a dentist or dental specialist, and prior to the final fitting by a dentist or dental specialist*

The underlined addition to the existing activity is to clearly identify this requirement in order to ensure public health and safety.

The Council invites your comments on:

c) Do you agree/disagree with the additional requirement for an Oral Health Certificate to the existing activity “taking impressions, relining and undertaking other non-invasive clinical procedures involved in the construction of removable complete and partial root/tooth overdentures”?

Additionally, it is proposed to include the following activities:

- *taking impressions and undertaking other non invasive clinical procedures involved in the construction of removable complete and partial implant overdentures on the prescription of, and prior to the final fitting by, a dentist or dental specialist. This does not include removal or placement of abutments, such as healing, temporary or permanent, or impression copings. The clinical procedures associated with this activity may only be undertaken if the clinical dental technician has established a formal professional relationship with a dental team that must include a dentist or dental specialist.*
- *repairing removable, complete and partial implant overdentures prescribed and fitted by a dentist or dental specialist and appropriate referral when indicated. The clinical procedures associated with this activity may only be undertaken if the clinical dental technician has established a formal professional relationship with a dental team that must include a dentist or dental specialist.*
- *relining removable complete and partial implant overdentures on the prescription of, and prior to the final fitting by, and dentist or dental specialist. The clinical procedures associated with this activity may only be undertaken if the clinical dental technician has established a formal professional relationship with a dental team that must include a dentist or dental specialist.*

These implant treatment tasks reflect similar techniques involved in the teeth/root overdenture tasks and as such fall into the skill set of registered clinical dental technicians. The tasks only relate to where there are existing implant abutments and do not involve techniques such as fixture head impressions. The restrictions and required professional relationships are intended to protect patient health and safety.

The Council invites your comments on the following:

- d) Do you agree/disagree with the removable complete and partial implant overdentures addition to the scope of practice?**
- e) Do you agree/disagree that the restrictions on the non invasive clinical procedures involved in the construction, repair, relining or of removable complete and partial implant overdentures and the required relationship between a dental technician and dentist/dental specialist adequately protect the public?**

Thank you for considering this consultation document. Please note that submissions must be received at the Dental Council Secretariat no later than Monday, 21 June 2010.

Summary of Consultation questions

The Council invites your comments on (please provide reasons for your response where possible):

- a) Do you agree/disagree with the addition of shade taking and shade checking to the dental technology detailed scope of practice?
- b) Do you agree/disagree that the restrictions on the removal of a pre-loosened temporary crown and try-in of a permanent crown and the required relationship between a dental technician and dentist/dental specialist adequately protect the public?
- c) Do you agree/disagree with the additional requirement for an Oral Health Certificate to the existing activity “taking impressions, relining and undertaking other non-invasive clinical procedures involved in the construction of removable complete and partial root/tooth overdentures”?
- d) Do you agree/disagree with the removable complete and partial implant overdentures addition to the scope of practice?
- e) Do you agree/disagree that the restrictions on the non invasive clinical procedures involved in the construction, repair, relining or of removable complete and partial implant overdentures and the required relationship between a dental technician and dentist/dental specialist adequately protect the public?

Dental Council of New Zealand
Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003

**Notice of Scopes of Practice and Prescribed
Qualifications**

**Issued by the Dental Council pursuant to sections 11 and 12 of the Health
Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003**

Dental Technicians

Scope for Dental Technology Practice

The scope of practice for dental technicians is set out in the documented “Detailed Scope for Dental Technology Practice” produced and published from time to time by the Dental Council of New Zealand.

Dental Technology practice is a subset of the practice of dentistry, and is commensurate with a Dental Technician's approved education, training and competence.

It involves processes and procedures associated with the design, manufacture and repair of fixed and removable oral and extraoral appliances and prostheses prescribed by a practising dental specialist, dentist, clinical dental technician, medical practitioner or other practising health practitioner.

The working relationship between dental technicians and prescribing practising health practitioners is set out in the Dental Council Code of Practice – The Practice of Dental Technology and Clinical Dental Technology and the working relationship within the Practice of Dentistry.

Detailed Scope for Dental Technology Practice

The Dental Council of New Zealand defines the practice of Dental Technology as processes and procedures associated with the design, manufacture and repair of fixed and removable oral and extraoral appliances and prostheses prescribed by a practising dental specialist, dentist, clinical dental technician, medical practitioner or other practising health practitioner.

This involves:

- selection of appropriate dental materials for the design, manufacture and repair of fixed and removable oral and extraoral appliances and prostheses prescribed by a practising dental specialist, dentist, clinical dental technician, medical practitioner or other practising health practitioner

- processes and procedures associated with the design, manufacture and repair of complete removable dentures and overdentures
- processes and procedures associated with the design, manufacture and repair of removable partial dentures including precision attachments
- processes and procedures associated with the design, manufacture and repair of fixed and removable orthodontic appliances
- processes and procedures associated with the design, manufacture and repair of crowns and bridges including precision attachments on natural teeth and implants
- processes and procedures associated with the design, manufacture and repair of implant overdentures and implant supported dentures
- processes and procedures associated with the design, manufacture and repair of tissue and implant supported maxillofacial, ocular and auricular appliances and prostheses, and other appliances and prostheses involved in the overall prosthetic rehabilitation of patients
- processes and procedures associated with the design, manufacture and repair of specialist treatment appliances such as, but not limited to: diagnostic stents and radiographic stents, appliances for the treatment of temporomandibular disorders, appliances for the treatment of speech disorders, appliances for the treatment of sleep disorders and appliances for the treatment of audio disorders
- undertake shade taking and shade checking, which may include the removal of a pre-loosened temporary crown and try-in of the permanent crown as prescribed by dentists or dental specialists under specific conditions as set out below and as described below and elaborated in the Dental Council Code of Practice – The Practice of Dental Technology and Clinical Dental Technology and the working relationship within the Practice of Dentistry.

As well as the activities delineated in the detailed scope for dental technology involves:

- the removal of a pre-loosened temporary crown and try-in or a permanent crown under the prescription of, and prior to the final fitting by, a dentist or dental specialist including clear, written procedures provided by the referring dentist or dental specialist which the technician must follow.

Practice in this context goes wider than dental technology to include teaching, research, and management, given that such roles influence clinical and technical practice and public safety. Areas of dental technology practice that were not included in a practitioner's training should not be undertaken unless the practitioner has completed appropriate training and practices to the standard required by the relevant Code of Practice.

Prescribed Qualifications

- Diploma in Dental Technology (issued by a New Zealand educational institution) and commenced prior to 18 September 2004; or
- Bachelor of Dental Technology (University of Otago); or
- an approved overseas dental technology qualification, plus a pass in the New Zealand Dental Technicians Registration Examination.

Scope for Clinical Dental Technology Practice

The scope of practice for clinical dental technicians is set out in the documented “Detailed Scope for Clinical Dental Technology Practice” produced and published from time to time by the Dental Council of New Zealand.

Clinical Dental Technology practice is a subset of the practice of dentistry, and is commensurate with a Clinical Dental Technician's approved education, training and competence.

It involves the scope of practice for Dental Technicians, plus the fitting of complete removable dentures and the fitting of some other types of removable dentures and oral and extraoral appliances under specific conditions – as set out in the detailed scope of practice.

The working relationship between clinical dental technicians and prescribing practising health practitioners is set out in the Dental Council Code of Practice – The Practice of Dental Technology and Clinical Dental Technology and the working relationship within the Practice of Dentistry.

Detailed Scope for Clinical Dental Technology Practice

The Dental Council defines the practice of clinical dental technology as:

- processes and procedures associated with the design, manufacture and repair of fixed and removable oral and extraoral appliances and prostheses prescribed by a practising dentist, dental specialist, medical practitioner or other authorised health practitioner as set out in the detailed scope for dental technology practice
- the fitting of removable complete dentures and the fitting of some other types of removable dentures and oral and extraoral appliances under specific conditions as set out below and as described below and elaborated in the Dental Council Code of Practice – The Practice of Dental Technology and Clinical Dental Technology and the working relationship within the Practice of Dentistry
- [the trail fitting and repair of removable complete and partial implant overdentures prescribed and fitted by, a dentist or dental specialist.](#)

As well as the activities delineated in the detailed scope for dental technology practice, clinical dental technology practice involves:

- fitting and relining of removable complete overdentures when there are no natural teeth remaining and there is no diseased or unhealed hard or soft tissue
- fitting and relining removable partial dentures subject to the patient having obtained an oral health certificate from a dentist or dental specialist
- taking impressions and undertaking other non-invasive clinical procedures involved in the construction of complete and partial immediate dentures on the prescription of, and prior to the final fitting by, a dentist or dental specialist
- taking impressions, relining and undertaking other non-invasive clinical procedures involved in the construction of removable complete and partial root/tooth overdentures [subject to the patient having obtained an Oral Health Certificate from](#)

- a dentist or dental specialist, and prior to the final fitting by a dentist or dental specialist
- fitting and repair of extraoral maxillofacial prostheses under the prescription of a dentist, dental specialist or medical practitioner
 - taking impressions and undertaking other non invasive clinical procedures involved in the construction of removable complete and partial implant overdentures on the prescription of, and prior to the final fitting by, a dentist or dental specialist. This does not include removal or placement of abutments such as healing, temporary or permanent, or impression copings.
 - repairing removable, complete and partial implant overdentures prescribed and fitted by a dentist or dental specialist and appropriate referral when indicated
 - relining removable complete and partial implant overdentures on the prescription of, and prior to the final fitting by, and dentist or dental specialist
 - carrying out the clinical procedures associated with implant overdentures only if they have established a formal professional relationship with a dental team which may include a dentist or dental specialist
 - in relation to the above activities:
 - Obtaining medical and dental histories and consulting with other health practitioners as appropriate.
 - Examination of the oral tissues to ensure that the patient's mouth is fit for purpose and free of disease, disorder or abnormality.
 - Referral of patients to a dentist, dental specialist or medical practitioner when any disease, disorder or abnormality is detected.
 - Referral of patients to a dentist, dental specialist or medical practitioner for a prescription for an oral health certificate and treatment plan where required.
 - Preparation of a treatment plan (in association with a prescription if required) and communicating this to the patient.
 - Oral health education and promotion.

Practice in this context goes wider than clinical dental technology to include teaching, research, and management, given that such roles influence clinical and technical practice and public safety.

Areas of clinical dental technology practice which were not included in a practitioner's training should not be undertaken unless the practitioner has completed appropriate training and practises to the standard required by the Dental Council Policy on Advanced Areas of Practice and the Code of Practice on The Practice of Dental Technology and Clinical Dental Technology and the working relationship within the Practice of Dentistry.

Prescribed Qualifications

- Registration in the dental technology scope of practice and a postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Dental Technology (University of Otago).

Additional Scopes of Practice for CLINICAL DENTAL TECHNOLOGY Practice

Scope for Implant Overdentures

The scope for Implant Overdentures in clinical dental technology practice is set out in the documented “Detailed Scope for Implant Overdentures” produced and published from time to time by the Dental Council of New Zealand.

The scope involves clinical procedures associated with the design, manufacture, trial fitting and repair of removable complete and partial implant overdentures prescribed and fitted by a practising dentist or dental specialist.

Detailed Scope for Implant Overdentures

As well as the activities delineated in the detailed scopes for dental technology and clinical dental technology practice, the additional scope for implant overdenture practice includes:

- taking impressions and undertaking other non invasive clinical procedures involved in the construction of removable complete and partial implant overdentures on the prescription of, and prior to the final fitting by, a dentist or dental specialist
- repairing removable complete and partial implant overdentures prescribed and fitted by a dentist or dental specialist and appropriate referral when indicated
- relining removable complete and partial implant overdentures on the prescription of, and prior to the final fitting by, a dentist or dental specialist.³

Prescribed Qualification

- Registration as a Clinical Dental Technician plus evidence of appropriate training, completion or commencement of at least 8 documented cases and a competency attestation from an appropriately qualified dentist or dental specialist.⁴

³ Final fitting means ensuring the patient is referred back to the prescribing dentist for the ongoing monitoring and management of that patient’s oral health.

⁴ The prescribed qualification above will be available until 1 July 2007. Thereafter the prescribed qualification for registration in the additional scope of Implant Overdentures will be the successful completion of a DCNZ approved implant overdenture course or a pass in the DCNZ implant overdenture registration examination.