

Your new Dental Council website and refreshed branding

Council has redesigned its website to make it more accessible, informative and intuitive, and updated its look with a brand refresh.

With an entirely new structure and design, users are guided to the information they seek and important notices will not be missed. In addition, all content has undergone a revamp towards plain English ensuring usability for all user groups.

On arrival at the homepage, registered practitioners, individuals who want to practise in New Zealand, as well as the public, patients and employers each have their own dedicated pathway where information has been tailored to suit their specific needs.

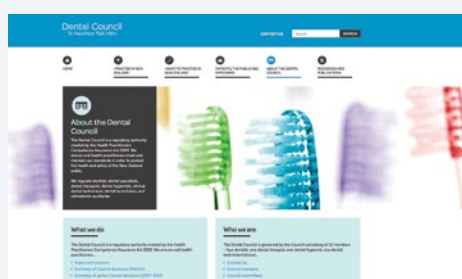
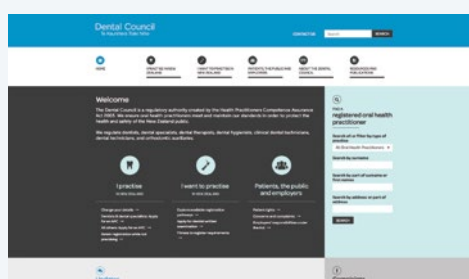
Practitioners will be pleased to learn that the dedicated practitioner pathway features

specific information relevant to professions. This profession-specific area enables practitioners to easily connect with updates and practice information relevant to them, to ensure that they are fully cognisant of the professional expectations to maintain safe practice.

With improvements in the accessibility of pertinent information, it is anticipated that the website will become the first point of call for busy people who need prompt answers to their questions. This is important in assisting the Council to fulfil its role as a responsible authority promoting and protecting the public interest, by ensuring that oral health practitioners are safe and competent to practise in New Zealand.

The new Dental Council website is due to go live by the end of June 2014 – watch this space!

www.dcnz.org.nz



The end of an era – posted newsletters

Part of effective communication is the use of tools which are convenient and accessible. Because of this, a decision has been made to move to electronic newsletters **only**, which will also be available on the Dental Council website.

This means that the Council needs your current email address as soon as possible. If you are not currently receiving emails from us, please get in touch and we will add your email address to our Register.

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Dental Council Strategic Plan 2014–2019

The Standards Framework for Oral Health Practitioners

Council membership

Council Activities

New graduates

Working together to keep children and young people safe

Discipline update

Dental Council Strategic Plan 2014–2019

The Council's work programme across the next five years to 2019 is extensive and will result in significant change.

Primarily, the Council has determined to strengthen the frameworks that underpin its core regulatory business of setting standards for practitioners. These standards relate to thresholds for entry to the Register and the standards that registered oral health practitioners must comply with, to ensure safe and competent practice.

The Dental Council Strategic Plan 2014-2019 sets out the following goals and strategic intent:

Mission

To provide public assurance that oral health practitioners are competent and fit to practise.

Vision

Standards are set and maintained for oral health practitioners to deliver safe and competent care to the public of New Zealand.

Goals and Strategic Intent

Goal 1

Administer the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCA) consistently, fairly and effectively.

Strategic Intent

- Actively contribute to the review of the HPCA Act
- Protect the health and safety of the public by ensuring that oral health professionals are fit to practise
- Regulate the oral health professionals in New Zealand.

Goal 2

Promote appropriate standards of oral health care.

Strategic Intent

- To set standards of clinical competence, cultural competence and ethical conduct to be observed by health practitioners of the profession
- Review and continually strive to improve the standards framework
- Benchmark the framework to other jurisdictions internationally as well as other health professions within New Zealand.

Goal 3

Maintain an organisation that is efficient, responsive and sustainable.

Strategic Intent

- Become a stronger regulator through business improvement
- Build and lead long-term international relationships
- Benchmark against international regulators and domestic regulators of other environments and professions
- Build capability to respond to legislative changes.

Goal 4

Promote and communicate Council's functions to stakeholders and the public of New Zealand.

Strategic Intent

- Develop and improve the relationships with professional groups within New Zealand
- Develop and improve the transparency to stakeholders and the public of New Zealand
- Promote good professional practice by building a relationship with an indemnity organisation
- Develop accessible and informative Dental Council publications
- Articulate the strategic direction of Council to stakeholders.

Working together to keep children and young people safe

A health professional is sometimes the first to notice when things are not going right for families.

Council would like to remind practitioners to be aware of the provisions and protection afforded to children and young people under the Children Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989 (the Act). As a professional, you play a valuable role in helping keep children and young people safe from harm.

If you believe that any child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill-treated, abused, neglected, or deprived, you may report the matter to a social worker or a constable (section 15 of the Act).

Child, Youth and Family (CYF) have developed an inter-agency guide to help you recognise the signs when families are vulnerable and where there may be harm or abuse to a child or young person. The guide also shows you how you can help, who to talk to, how to report your concerns, and what happens when a report of concern is received by CYF. A copy of the guide can be found here:

www.cyf.govt.nz/documents/about-us/publications/27713-working-together-3-0-45ppi.pdf

Discipline update

Practising for 19 months without a practising certificate

Mr Adam Vitali, a registered dental technician and clinical dental technician was found guilty by the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal of practising without a current practising certificate for 19 months. The Tribunal was “willing to accept that Mr Vitali did not intentionally ignore his obligation to renew his APC but that he was seriously remiss in failing to attend to the renewal for 19 months.”

The Tribunal was clear that “the offence of practising without a current practising certificate is an absolute offence”.

An absolute offence means there is no requirement for knowledge or intention on the part of the practitioner. In relation to penalty, the Tribunal took into account Mr Vitali’s cooperation, his personal and financial circumstances, and that practising without a practising certificate for 19 months put the case at the moderately serious end of comparable cases. The Tribunal ordered that Mr Vitali be censured, pay a fine of \$2,200 and a \$6,500 contribution towards the costs of prosecution. The full Tribunal decision is available here:

www.hpdt.org.nz/Default.aspx?Tabid=392

Suspended suspension orders get a ‘No’ from the High Court

The High Court has agreed with a professional conduct committee (PCC) of the Dental Council that the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal has no power to impose a penalty of ‘suspended suspension’.

The High Court decision arose from an appeal made by the PCC against a decision of the Tribunal, dated 22 May 2013, concerning Choonsik Moon, a dentist. Dr Moon had practised while suspended by the Dental Council. The Tribunal found his conduct amounted to professional misconduct, and brought discredit to the dental profession. The Tribunal ordered the suspension of Dr Moon’s registration for 12 months, but the suspension would not take effect unless Dr Moon failed to satisfy conditions imposed on his practice for a two-year period; effectively a ‘suspended suspension’. On appeal to it, the High Court made an order to quash that aspect of the penalty, as well as the suspension order itself. Other aspects of the penalty, such as the censure, fine, costs award and conditions on practice, prevailed.

A Professional Conduct Committee of the Dental Council v Choonsik Moon [2014] NZHC 189

DENTAL COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera Tiaki Niho