



Individual Recertification Programmes

Section 41 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act allows the registering authority to establish recertification programmes when there are concerns regarding the competence of registered health practitioners.

To date the Dental Council of New Zealand has established Recertification Programmes for 10 individual oral health practitioners. The intent in each case has been to provide support and assistance to ensure that they practice competently and safely.

Four Individual Recertification Programmes followed notification to DCNZ of concerns related to cross infection control. The concerns came from colleagues, patients, and in one case the local Medical Officer of Health. In two of the situations the programmes involved visits to the practices and an audit of compliance with the joint DCNZ / NZDA Code of Practice on Cross Infection Control. The process was seen by both practitioners as educative and supportive. In one case a follow up visit was required. The other two practitioners took the opportunity to retire from dental practice completely.

Three practitioners required Individual Recertification Programmes as an alternative to a competence review. In these cases DCNZ was notified of concerns by practitioner colleagues or the Health and Disability Commissioner's Office. In each case the threshold for a competence review had not been met.

Three practitioners required an Individual Recertification Programme as a consequence of a Competence Review. In each case the Competence Review Committee made recommendations that were supportive and educational and at the same time ensured public safety.

Elements of Individual Recertification Programmes have included:

1. Audit of Codes of Practice
 - Cross infection control
 - Record keeping
 - Informed consent
2. Review and monitoring of treatment. This has usually been electronically where digital images of notes, radiographs (before and after any treatment), appropriate clinical photographs (intra-oral or of study models as required) have been transmitted by email
3. Practice visits and face to face meetings to review records and discuss treatment and practice systems
4. Specific education on various aspects of dental practice
5. Mentoring with an emphasis on reflective practice and advice on Continuing Professional Development

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APC applications are due NOW!

The Dental Council wishes to remind all oral health practitioners that the renewal of annual practising certificates is under way. All currently registered practitioners should have received an APC application form, guide, recertification booklet and return envelope by now. If not, please email the Dental Council (inquiries@dcnz.org.nz) to request an application pack. You will need

to provide your registration number, your postal address and a contact phone number. Practitioners are reminded that to practice legally from 1 April 2009, your completed application form and payment must reach the Dental Council by 31 March 2009. Failure to do this means that you are in breach of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003.

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Individual Recertification Programmes continued

In some cases specific CPD has been required and an appropriate plan established for the future. Peer contact has been seen as an important component in a number of Individual Recertification Programmes.

In the future perhaps we may see a web based programme where appropriate information (including records, radiographs, photographs and comments) are posted on a secure website with access to individuals to provide advice and support.

DCNZ is very appreciative of those practitioners who have willingly taken on the role of supervisor or mentor. Guidelines are being developed to help both supervisors and supervisees where the emphasis is on collegiality and support rather than being punitive.

Areas covered in the guidelines will include:

- Building and maintaining professional relationships
- Planning for supervision
- Facilitation of meetings and experiential learning
- Assessing performance, reflection and feedback
- Evaluation and reporting

To date Individual Recertification Programmes have been effective in ensuring that the health practitioners involved are competent to practise within the scopes of practice in respect of which they are registered. The programmes are particularly effective where practitioners show insight into areas of weakness within their practices.

Dexter Bambery

DCNZ, Professional Advisor

Section 41 of the HPCA Act states:

Recertification programmes

- (1) *For the purpose of ensuring that health practitioners are competent to practise within the scopes of practice in respect of which they are registered, each authority may from time to time set or recognise recertification programmes for practitioners who are registered with the authority.*
- (2) *A recertification programme may be made to apply generally in respect of all health practitioners, or in respect of a specified health practitioner, or in respect of a specified class or classes of health practitioner.*
- (3) *A recertification programme may require a practitioner to do any 1 or more of the following at intervals (if any) prescribed in the programme:*
 - (a) *pass any examinations or assessments, or both:*
 - (b) *complete a period of practical training:*
 - (c) *undertake a course of instruction:*
 - (d) *permit a health practitioner specified by the authority to examine—*
 - (i) *any or all of his or her clinical and other practices:*
 - (ii) *any or all of his or her relations with other health practitioners:*
 - (iii) *any or all of the clinical records of the practitioner in relation to his or her patients or clients:*
 - (e) *undergo an inspection:*
 - (f) *adopt and undertake a systematic process for ensuring that the services provided by the practitioner meet the required standard of competence.*
- (4) *Every recertification programme must allow a reasonable time for a practitioner to whom it relates to comply with its requirements.*
- (5) *The authority may exempt any health practitioner or class of health practitioner from all or any of the requirements of a recertification programme.*
- (6) *Within 20 working days after a recertification programme is set or recognised by the authority, the Registrar must notify every health practitioner who is required to undertake the programme of that fact and of the details of the programme.*

Compare: 1995 No 95 s 63

Appointment of Chair and Deputy Chair

At its meeting on 23 February 2009 the Dental Council appointed Professor Robert Love as the Chair for the 2009 year. Dr Erin Collins was appointed as the Deputy Chair.



Robert Love is Professor at the Faculty of Dentistry, University of Otago, where he heads the Department of Oral Diagnostic and Surgical Sciences, and has held the positions of Associate Dean (Facilities) and Deputy Dean. After graduating with a BDS from Otago, Robert spent two years as a

dental house surgeon and seven years in general private practice before gaining an MDS in Endodontics, a PhD in Molecular Oral Microbiology and a FRACDS. Robert practises clinical endodontics and has held positions such as President NZ Society of Endodontics, President NZ Section ANZ Division IADR, NZ Committee member RACDS, and Otago Board Representative NZ Dental Association. He has served as Chair of the DCNZ Dentist Board since 2004 and has held the position of Deputy Chair on the Council since February 2007. Robert is Scientific Editor of the NZ Dental Journal and is on the editorial boards of the International Endodontic Journal, Journal of Endodontics, and Dental Traumatology. He has lectured widely both nationally and internationally and has an extensive publications and research record.



Erin Collins graduated with a BDS from Otago in 1982 and commenced private general dental practice in Auckland. He began working at the Newmarket Dental Group in 1983 and joined the partnership in 1987. Erin joined the executive of the Auckland Dental Association in 1994, was President in 1999 and

was recently made an honorary life member. He has been a representative to the NZDA Executive and has served as Deputy Chair on the DCNZ Dentist Board since May 2007. In March 2009 Erin was appointed to Chair of the Dentist Board. Currently Erin is a director of the Dental Insurance Society and a trustee of the NZDA Research Foundation Trust.

Consultation on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Policy

In December 2008 the Dental Council invited all oral health practitioners, associations and CPD providers and verifiers to comment on the draft policy on continuing professional development (CPD) activities. A total of 32 submissions were received.

It was clear from the responses that there were a number of CPD related matters that would need further consideration. However, some changes were widely supported and have already been implemented as part of the 2009/10 recertification process. These changes include:

- the removal of the recording of non-verifiable CPD activities for all practitioner groups, with effect from 1 January 2009
- the alignment of the recertification cycle with calendar years instead of financial years with effect from 1 January 2009
- Dentists and dental specialists' – 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2012
- Dental therapists, dental hygienists and orthodontic auxiliaries – 1 April 2008 to 31 December 2009
- Dental technicians 1 April 2006 to 31 December 2009
- the pro-rating of recertification requirements for current cycles to allow for the earlier finish of 31 December 2009
- the renaming of "peer group" to "study group"
- the adoption of the revised CPD record template.

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Consultation on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Policy continued

Matters that were not resolved and will be considered further by the Dental Council include:

- the recommended number of CPD hours required for each practitioner group
- the number of peer contact activities required each year
- the length of the CPD cycle (currently two or four years)
- the need for a practice appraisal for dental therapists.

Council will continue to consult with stakeholders on the above matters, with a view for resolution prior to the commencement of the 1 January 2010 recertification cycle for dental therapists, dental hygienists, orthodontic auxiliaries, dental technicians and clinical dental technicians.

Until these matters are resolved, the status quo remains in place for these aspects of recertification and this is reflected in the 2009 recertification booklet.

Dental Therapist and Dental Hygienist Board Nomination Process

Following on from its February 2008 decision to merge the existing Dental Therapist Board and Dental Hygienist Board the Council is calling for nominations for practitioner membership of the new Dental Therapist and Dental Hygienist Board.

The call for nominations commenced on 5 March. Nominations close on 17 April 2009. Council will consider the nominations at its meeting in May and the Board will be established for its first meeting on 20 July 2009.

Information about the nomination process and nomination forms are available on the DCNZ website at www.dcnz.org.nz/dthbnominations.

The composition of the dental therapist and dental hygienist board will be:

- four practitioners (two dental therapists and two dental hygienists) with one practitioner having dual clinical and educational skills

- an orthodontist auxiliary
- one lay person.

Registered dental therapists, dental hygienists or orthodontic auxiliaries working in New Zealand are invited to nominate themselves, or another registered dental therapist, dental hygienist or orthodontic auxiliary for membership on the Board. The nomination will be deemed to be seconded by receipt of more than one nomination for a practitioner. It is assumed that the nominee will have read the candidate information and agreed to this nomination. The nominee will also need to complete and submit a CV form. The candidate information and CV form can be downloaded from the DCNZ website.

Hygiene/Therapy Scope Outcome

The Dental Council consulted stakeholders on a proposal to gazette a new scope of Oral Health Therapy practice in September 2008. The Council received a number of responses from individual practitioners, students, and professional associations.

The Council considered the consultation feedback and met with representatives of each of the Associations at a meeting in November 2008. The Council considered and agreed to the following recommendations:

- not to proceed at this stage with the proposed combined scope
- to reconsider the combined scope again in five years and in the interim to monitor progress of dual trained graduates over this time
- that there will be a single APC for those dually trained

graduates who wish to register in two scopes, and this will be based on the higher fee, that is, the fee for Dental Therapists.

Council also agreed that the number of hours required for CPD would remain the same; ie a total of 30 hours will be required for a dually trained graduate.

The first graduates from conjoint therapy and hygiene programmes from the Auckland University of Technology are in the process of being registered. A total of 23 will be dual registered.

Changes at the Secretariat



Chief Executive Officer

The Dental Council is pleased to announce the appointment of Marie Warner as the Chief Executive Officer. Marie has been acting as the CEO since the end of May 2008. Marie is a Chartered Accountant who has significant experience in business management, IT and change management. Since joining the Dental Council Marie has managed the change process at the Secretariat. Council has appreciated the commitment and energy Marie has shown and look forward to working with her.



Registrar

It is with some sadness that the Dental Council farewells David Dunbar. David was appointed as the Registrar for the Dental Council in September 2007. His knowledge of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act and legal expertise has guided us through some challenging processes. The Council wishes David well as he takes up the position of Registrar with the Medical Council.



Registrar

The Dental Council warmly welcomes Mark Rodgers to the position of Registrar. Mark has a masters degree in law and over the last twenty five years has worked in private practice; corporate law; general management; project management and consultancy. For the last ten years Mark has been consulting to both Government departments and private enterprise on a range of projects and issues, with an emphasis upon regulatory and compliance regimes at both framework and operational levels.

DCNZ Annual Plan and Draft Budget for the 2009/2010 year

The Dental Council presented its draft annual plan and budget for the year beginning 1 April 2009 in the December 2008 edition of DCNZ News. Stakeholders were invited to comment on the draft plan and budget. The Council met in February 2009 and considered the feedback received. The annual plan and budget for the 2009/10 year and resulting APC fees as published in the December 2008 edition of DCNZ news have been unchanged and adopted.

OA Scope of Practice

The Dental Council approved a revised detailed scope of practice for orthodontic auxiliary practice at its meeting in December 2008. This was the result of constructive discussions between the Dental Hygienist Board, members of the New Zealand Association of Orthodontists executive and representatives from the Dental Council. The changes made to the scope provide a more accurate reflection of what the practice of orthodontic auxiliaries entails.



Dental Technician Board Prize for 2008

The Dental Technician Board is pleased to announce that Jung Euan (Joanne) Choi was awarded the Dental Technician Board prize for 2008.

Joanne chose dental technology as her major because she wanted to combine her interest in science with her artistic skills. She has enjoyed her course at Otago University commenting on the quality of the teaching and the academic challenges she has faced. Joanne hopes to complete the Honours programme at Otago University this year and to embark on a career in dental research and development in the future.

The Dental Technician Board and Dental Council congratulate Joanne on her achievements and wish her well in her future endeavours.



Dentist Board Prize for Clinical Excellence

Each year the Dentist Board presents a clinical excellence prize to a student undertaking the Bachelor

of Dental Surgery programme at the University of Otago. The prize is awarded in recognition of excellent performance during the fourth year of study. The 2008 recipient is Elvira Beliak.

During her training Elvira has developed a particular interest in the subject of Periodontology and intends to embark on a career in this field. The Dentist Board and Dental Council congratulate Elvira on her achievements to date and wish her well in her dentistry career.

Practitioners' corner

From time to time the Dental Council receives queries from practitioners seeking clarification on a code of practice or other regulatory or recertification requirement. Where several queries on a similar theme have been raised, the query is published in the newsletter, along with the Council's response.

Can I be registered in more than one profession?

It is possible for oral health practitioners to be registered in more than one profession. Examples include dental therapy and dental hygiene, or dental technology and clinical dental technology.

I have just graduated with a degree that allows me to register as a dental therapist and a dental hygienist.

I want to register in both professions. What APC fee do I pay?

Any practitioner that chooses to register in more than one profession is expected to pay the higher annual practising certificate fee. If you are registering as a

dental therapist and a dental hygienist you will need to pay the dental therapist fee.

I have to obtain a police certificate in order to register. How do I get this?

You can obtain a copy of your criminal record (police certificate) by submitting an application to the Privacy Unit of the Ministry of Justice. Application forms and further information about this process can be found on the Ministry of Justice website <http://www.justice.govt.nz/privacy/>.