

# Newsletter: April 2015

Dental Council - April 2015

## NZDREX process change

The Dental Council has been reviewing its examination process for applicants without prescribed qualifications wanting to register as dentists. After evaluating a number of alternatives, Council has selected the National Dental Examining Board of Canada (NDEB) as the new provider for the New Zealand Dental Registration Examination (NZDREX). The NDEB process offers a better system. It is more secure, more robust and will help protect and enhance the health and safety of patients.

The 'new' NZDREX process offers significantly improved written and face-to-face components. It comprises three phases - Assessment of Fundamental Knowledge (AFK), a multi-choice exam supervised by an invigilator; followed by Assessment of Clinical Judgement (ACJ) and Assessment of Clinical Skills (ACS) which will remain a face-to-face assessment, based at the University of Otago. The first AFK for New Zealand candidates will be offered in August 2015.

Council is assured that the competency standards set through the NDEB are equivalent to a graduating dental student from the University of Otago. The NDEB equivalence process is benchmarked to graduating students from Canadian-accredited programmes, qualifications which we have recognised since 2004 with reciprocity established in 2012.

Advantages of the new assessment process include:

- Robust screening process with the AFK component providing a better early indicator of whether a candidate has the necessary fundamental knowledge to be able to pass the ACJ or ACS.
- The examination question banks are vast and there is close attention to moderation of the marking of both written and practical components.
- Due to the NDEB running both the written and face-to-face components, administrative efficiencies are expected - leading to reduced time and cost involved for candidates to complete all components. Further details relating to the new NZDREX can be accessed here (<http://www.dcnz.org.nz/i-want-to-practise-in-new-zealand/dentists-and-dental-specialists/new-zealand-dentist-registration-examination-2/>).

Local dental practitioners will have the opportunity to act as examiners, as the examinations will be offered in New Zealand and a New Zealand dental academic will sit on the NDEB examination committee.

The Council's key stakeholders and current examination candidates have been advised of the change.



# Radiation Safety Bill

The Radiation Safety Bill, which will repeal and replace the Radiation Protection Act 1965, was referred to Parliament's Health Committee on 11 March 2015.

The Bill will provide an enhanced legislative framework for radiation safety that responds effectively to the range of technological, scientific, and organisational changes that have occurred over the last five decades while the current Act has been in force. The policy objectives of the Bill are:-

- Protect the health and safety of individuals and the environment from the harmful effects of radiation.
- Ensure the safe and secure management of radiation sources and their beneficial use.
- Bring New Zealand into line with international best practice and international obligations with respect to the safety and security of radiation sources and their use.

The Health Select Committee has called for public submissions on the Bill. The closing date for submissions is Wednesday 22 April 2015. Information about making a submission is available on the Parliament website ([http://www.parliament.nz/en-nz/pb/sc/make-submission/51SCHE\\_SCF\\_00DBHOH\\_BILL61941\\_1/radiation-safety-bill](http://www.parliament.nz/en-nz/pb/sc/make-submission/51SCHE_SCF_00DBHOH_BILL61941_1/radiation-safety-bill)).

The key aspects of the Bill relating to dentistry are:

- There will be an increased focus on owner's responsibilities. Owners will have to obtain a source licence authorising them to manage or control radiation sources, including dental x-ray equipment.
- The current Act requires users to either hold a licence or act under the supervision or instructions of a licensed user. This, for example, has allowed dental therapists to act under the written instructions of principal dentists. These rules are tightened under the Bill with the requirement that unlicensed users must act under the "direct supervision" of a licensed user.

The Ministry of Health is currently drafting regulations that will exempt some classes of users from the need to obtain a user licence. It is hoped that this exemption could apply to many of the health professionals registered with the Dental Council.

The Dental Council is in discussions with the Office of Radiation Safety of the Ministry of Health in this regard.

Further information on the background of the Bill can be found on the Ministry of Health's website (<http://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/legislation-and-regulation/regulatory-impact-statements/proposed-changes-radiation-protection-legislation>).

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# Follow-up consultation on the Standards Framework for Oral Health Practitioners

Council is currently consulting on a revised version of the Standards framework for oral health practitioners. ([resources-and-publications/updates/follow-up-consultation-on-the-standards-framework-for-oral-health-practitioners/](#))

Submissions received in response to the initial consultation document issued on 1 August 2014, were overwhelmingly supportive of the development and introduction of a standards framework. However, submitters made extensive comments and suggestions on various components of the proposed standards framework.

Following detailed analysis of these comments and further deliberation by the Council at its November and December 2014 meetings, a number of proposed changes were made. This was followed by a targeted discussion forum of key stakeholders held in February 2015 resulting in further refinement of the proposed standards framework.

Submissions are now invited from all stakeholders on the revised standards framework by 17 June 2015.

Four discussion forums and a webinar have been scheduled to occur during the consultation phase to discuss the proposed changes to the revised standards framework, and to inform stakeholders' submissions:

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| Wellington, James Cook Hotel<br>( <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16590056305">https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16590056305</a> )                          | Monday 11 May at 7pm<br>( <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16590056305">https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16590056305</a> )   |
| Auckland, Ellerslie Racecourse<br>( <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16591110458">https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16591110458</a> )                        | Wednesday 13 May at 7pm<br>( <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16591110458">https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16591110458</a> )  |
| Dunedin, Dental School Otago University<br>( <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16591536733">https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16591536733</a> )               | Monday 18 May at 7pm<br>( <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16591536733">https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16591536733</a> )   |
| Christchurch, Chateau on the Park<br>( <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16591366223">https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16591366223</a> )                     | Tuesday 19 May at 7pm<br>( <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16591366223">https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/standards-framework-discussion-forum-tickets-16591366223</a> )  |
| Webinar<br>( <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/dental-council-standards-framework-discussion-forum-webinar-tickets-16607274806">https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/dental-council-standards-framework-discussion-forum-webinar-tickets-16607274806</a> ) | Thursday 21 May at 7pm<br>( <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/dental-council-standards-framework-discussion-forum-webinar-tickets-16607274806">https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/dental-council-standards-framework-discussion-forum-webinar-tickets-16607274806</a> ) |

Interested stakeholders can register by clicking at the links provided above.

Council is looking forward to the opportunity to engage with its stakeholders on the revised standards framework.

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# Closed consultations - TMVI code of practice & Oral Health Therapy scope of practice

## **Transmissible Major Viral Infections Code of Practice**

The consultation on the updated Transmissible Major Viral Infections (TMVI) code of practice closed on 30 January 2015. Analysis of the submissions identified a number of areas where further consideration was required.

The subject-matter experts of the TMVI working group reviewed all the clinical-related comments and suggested some further changes to the draft code of practice.

The Council is in the process of refining the draft code of practice, and once finalised the consultation outcome and final updated TMVI code of practice will be issued to stakeholders.

## **Consultation on a proposed Oral Health Therapy Scope of Practice**

The consultation on a proposed oral health therapy scope of practice closed on 20 February 2015. There has been a very good response with many well-considered submissions.

Council noted the executive analysis at its April meeting. A qualitative analysis is now underway by a Council sub-committee. The sub-committee will consider all the submission comments in detail and make recommendations to the full Council for consideration.

The sub-committee comprises the following Council members: Lyndie Foster Page (Chair, Dental Specialist), Robin Whyman (Dental Specialist), Leslea Eilenberg (Dental Hygienist), Minnie McGibbon (Dental Therapist) and Kathryn Hazlett (Layperson).

Stakeholders will be updated on the progress and outcome of the consideration.

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# Upcoming consultation - Control of Cross Infection in Dental Practice Codes of Practice

The Cross Infection Working Group completed its investigation on the review of the Council's Control of Cross Infection in Dental Practice Codes of Practice.

The working group report and draft Infection Prevention and Control code of practice was considered by the Council at its April meeting. The draft code will be considered by the Standards Review Committee at its meeting scheduled for early May, following which the draft code will be issued for consultation with Council's stakeholders.

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# Annual Practising Certificates 2015/16 renewal for Dental Hygienists, Dental Therapists, Dental Technicians, Clinical Dental Technicians and Orthodontic Auxiliaries

The annual practising certificates for dental hygienists, dental therapists, dental technicians, clinical dental technicians and orthodontic auxiliaries expired on 31 March 2015.

As at 31 March 2015, the secretariat received 1981 of the 2170 annual practicing certificate (APC) renewal forms issued to practitioners, which equates to 91%. This is a marginal improvement in the timely receipt of APC forms for this oral health practitioner group - compared to a response rate of 90% for the same time last year.

Practitioners' non-compliance with the legal obligation to renew their APC by the expiry date, if they wish to continue practising their profession, is a concern. The secretariat has been monitoring the responsiveness of each profession to their obligation to submit an APC form and payment by 31 March, and has followed up those practitioners who did not return a timely renewal application.

**Practitioners who have not renewed their expired APCs must not practise.**

**It is unlawful to practise if you are not the holder of a current APC.**

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## Dental Council office relocation

The lease agreement for the Council office ends mid-year 2015, and all building tenants have been advised that the building will be refurbished as apartments. Consequently, the Council has to relocate premises. The move is scheduled to occur on 26 June and the new Dental Council office address will be:

Level 5

80 The Terrace

Wellington

All other contact details will remain unchanged.

The Council will share Level 5 with the Pharmacy Council. The Physiotherapy Board, Medical Sciences Council and Medical Technologists Board will occupy Level 3. The Medical Council already occupies offices in the same building.