

Summary of Decisions

From the Dental Council meeting in August 2020

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The Dental Council (Council) is the statutory body constituted under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act) to maintain the health and safety of members of the public by providing mechanisms to ensure that health practitioners are competent and fit to practise. Council endeavours to keep its key stakeholders up to date with key decisions.

This document is a summary of Council's decisions from the meeting held in August 2020.

Update on the Orthodontic working group report recommendations

In the Orthodontic working group report (November 2016), 12 recommendations were made in the report which were accepted by the Council in early 2017.

Council considered the activities undertaken to date in report to the working group's recommendation and agreed on the following actions:

- That the following recommendations would be closed:

2. The Council encourages better quality, New Zealand-driven courses available to dentists in the area of orthodontics.
3. The Council encourages exploring electronic mediums and technology to assist in the delivery of such education, in particular for ongoing supervision.
4. The Council, in consultation with key stakeholders in this area, develops and releases educative information guiding the public on orthodontic treatment. In particular what patients should look for when choosing a practitioner, important questions to ask when seeking orthodontic treatment, and patients' rights—including the right to complain about harm caused or unsatisfactory treatment. The information should be targeted to both young people and their parents/carers, and in plain English.
6. The Council considers the majority support for mandatory disclosure by a practitioner offering orthodontic treatment to confirm their registered practising status—whether they are a dentist doing orthodontics or an orthodontist.
7. The Council advocates for continuing professional development initiatives on informed consent specific to orthodontic treatment. In particular, on the continuing assent for ongoing treatment, the spectrum of consent and decision-making participation distribution during the extended period of orthodontic treatment, active decision participation by the child, and the shift of ongoing assent from the parent/carer to the child during the duration of the treatment, and young person targeted information.
8. The Council prioritises the review on its communication approach to advertising complaints—in particular to complainants.
9. The Council works with the New Zealand Association of Orthodontists on their concerns about the handling of their advertising complaints

10. The Council proceeds with its plan to revisit its policy on the publication of post nominal qualifications; with only registerable qualifications to be listed on the Dental Council public register.
11. The Council closely monitors the complaints related to orthodontic treatment, including informal inquiries or questions related to concerns or unsatisfactory outcomes.
12. The Council clearly communicates its expectations of practitioners performing orthodontic treatment, following its consideration of the working group report.

- Recommendations 1 and 5 would remain open:
 1. The Council considers developing orthodontic-specific competencies for dental graduates, using the learning outcomes and competencies provided by the University of Otago Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) programme.
 5. The Council collaborates with the New Zealand Dental & Oral Health Therapists Association and the Clinical Directors Forum on more consistent, comprehensive and transparent information on referral options for patients and parents/carers to access orthodontic treatment, when referred by dental therapists

Advertising practice standard review

A scheduled review of the 2013 advertising practice standard has now been completed. The updated Advertising practice standard will come into effect on 1 September 2020.

The review has resulted in some formatting changes and updated guidance content. However, as no principle changes to practitioner requirements were made, Council did not issue a consultation document for this practice standard review.

In summary, the following changes have been made:

- The updated Advertising practice standard is now consistent with the 'standards and guidance' format used in the Council's other practice standards published more recently.
- The only 'must' statements that are not reflected as standards in the updated advertising practice standard relate to ethical standards and the need for practitioners to be aware of relevant legislation. These aspects are already covered in the **Standards Framework for Oral Health Practitioners**.
- The introduction now places more emphasis on informed consent in the context of advertising. Similarly, no new informed consent requirements have been introduced, but some aspects are highlighted when practitioners advertise.
- New guidance has been included, primarily on testimonials and management of scientific evidence. The guidance is consistent with the Advertising Standards Authority's Advertising Standards Code and Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code.