

## Summary of Decisions

From the Dental Council meeting in May 2020

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 meetings held in May 2020.

### COVID-19

The Prime Minister announced that New Zealand will move to COVID-19 alert level 3 from 11.59pm on Monday 27 April. Together with the oral health team at the Ministry of Health and with input from providers across the sector and associations, the Council has published guidelines for oral health services at COVID-19 alert level 3.

The Council is similarly working on guidelines for when alert levels are possibly de-escalated further to levels 2 and 1. The public health and social measures which apply at these levels have yet to be defined in detail by the government and the level 2 and 1 guidelines will be released once these details have been finalised by the Ministry of Health.

### Recertification

In our 27 March 2020 update, Council advised that it had suspended the current recertification programmes for the time being.

At its meeting on 4 May 2020, the Council decided to waive recertification requirements for 12 months.

- This means that all practitioners will have until 31 December 2021 to meet their CPD hours and peer contact requirements, as notified on 28 August 2019.
- Practitioners will need to submit a self-declaration of their CPD activities and peer contacts after 31 December 2021.
- The start of the new recertification programme has also been deferred by 12 months, so will start from:
  - 1 October 2021 for dentists and dental specialists
  - 1 April 2022 for all other oral health practitioners.

The Council noted that practitioners are currently and will likely continue to face severe impacts on their businesses, livelihoods, and personal wellbeing due to the COVID-19 response.

Recertification programmes are one of the key tools that the Council has for ensuring ongoing competence. The Council needs to balance the current situation with our statutory duty to protect public health and safety, by ensuring practitioners are competent to practise.

Practitioners are encouraged to complete any professional development that is possible to ensure their professional knowledge and skills remain up to date while the recertification programme requirements are waived.

### University of Otago – DCLinDent programmes' cultural competence condition report

As part of the 2018 accreditation review one of the monitoring conditions placed on the University of Otago DCLinDent programmes related to the embedding of cultural competence into the postgraduate programmes. In February 2020, the Faculty of Dentistry submitted evidence which was reviewed by the site evaluation team (SET).

The ADC/DC(NZ) Accreditation Committee considered the condition report and the recommendations of the SET at its meeting on 22 March 2020.

The Council considered the ADC/DC(NZ) Accreditation Committee's recommendation and agreed that the University of Otago Doctor of Clinical Dentistry programmes have met condition 4 – relating to cultural competence.