

Summary of Decisions

From the Dental Council meeting in May 2022

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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 meetings held in May 2022.

Strategic plan 2022-2032

The new Strategic Plan was approved by the Council which sets out the Council's strategic direction for 2022-2032.

In summary, the Strategic Plan notes:

- Our vision – the public are safe, healthy and empowered to participate in their health care.
- Our regulatory role and purpose – to protect public health and safety by ensuring oral health professionals are safe, competent and fit to practise.
- Our strategic objective – safe oral health care, including culturally safe care for Aotearoa New Zealand.

To achieve this primary objective, the strategic plan includes three strategic initiatives to:

- improve health equity and cultural safety
- prevent and respond to harm
- strengthen regulatory intelligence.

Through these initiatives, the Council will work towards achieving the following long-term strategic outcomes:

- Māori, patients, practitioners, public and government have trust and confidence in the Council
- patients, whānau, hapū and iwi receive culturally safe oral health care
- oral health care enables the public and whānau to improve their wellbeing outcomes
- regulated parties encourage professional improvement
- the Council is a credible regulator.

Te Hā – Maori Advisory Committee

The following members were appointed to the newly established Māori advisory committee – Te Hā for a three-year term:

- Roxanne Waru
- Hilda Halkyard-Harawira
- Raaniera Te Whata
- Justin Wall

Te Hā will assist the Council to fulfil its obligations in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Updated TMVI practice standard

The Transmissible major viral infections (TMVI) practice standard has been reviewed and updated. There are no new obligations for practitioners resulting from this update.

The key change relates to the name of the practice standard – now changed to Blood borne viruses practice standard. Throughout the document, the term blood borne viruses “BBV” now replaces previous references to “TMVI”.

The new title and terminology more accurately describe the subject matter of the practice standard and align with the collective term commonly used for hepatitis B (HBV), hepatitis C (HCV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) by the Ministry of Health and other international bodies.

Other minor updates include:

- reformatting to “Standards” and “Guidance” structure to match the format of other Dental Council practice standards
- inserting additional guidance in relation to Standard 4 (note: this guidance expands current processes followed by the Council’s BBV panel but does not introduce new practitioner obligations).

The review was undertaken as part of the Council’s regular review of its practice standards to ensure they remain fit for purpose. In particular, this review considered whether any changes to the clinical management of TMVI infected patients needed to be reflected in the TMVI practice standard.

The Council reviewed international guidelines and sought expert clinical opinion from Professor Ed Gane, Internal Medicine Specialist and clinical member on the Council’s TMVI (now BBV) panel.