

GDC Press Statement

14 June 2006

Duncan Rudkin appointed Chief Executive and Registrar of the GDC

The General Dental Council (GDC) has this week appointed a new Chief Executive and Registrar.

Duncan Rudkin, an experienced member of the GDC's staff, with previous experience as a solicitor in the City of London, has been appointed to the post, which became vacant following the departure of Antony Townsend last month.

Duncan Rudkin, who takes up the post with immediate effect, will lead the GDC through a period of development and change. He will oversee the opening, on 31 July, of a new register for all members of the dental team, and the implementation of changes to the GDC's fitness to practise procedures.

After qualifying from the University of Oxford, with a degree in Modern Languages, Duncan studied at the College of Law before beginning work in the City of London as a solicitor dealing with commercial dispute resolution. He joined the GDC in 1998 as Director of Legal Services, tasked with setting up the GDC's first in-house legal department. He has since held senior management roles at the GDC, as Director of Professional Standards, Deputy Chief Executive and most recently Acting Chief Executive and Registrar.



Commenting on his appointment Duncan Rudkin said:

"I am very pleased to have this opportunity to serve the Council in my new role. I look forward to working with Hew Mathewson, the Council members and GDC staff as we move forward with delivery of the Council's programme of reform."

GDC President, Hew Mathewson, said:

"I am delighted that Duncan has been appointed as Chief Executive and Registrar from a field of exceptional quality candidates. The interview panel were unanimous in their view that Duncan would provide the strong leadership, knowledge and experience required for the role. I would like to add my personal congratulations to him."

Ends

For media enquiries, please contact Rachel Lea on 020 7887 3880.

Notes to Editors

1. The GDC regulates dental professionals in the UK. All dentists, dental hygienists and dental therapists must be registered with the GDC to practise in the United Kingdom - whether they work in the NHS, private practice or any other form of practice.

Our purpose is to protect patients by:

- registering qualified dental professionals,
 - setting high standards of dental practice and behaviour,
 - quality-assuring dental education,
 - making sure dental professionals keep up to date,
 - helping people who want to make a complaint about a dental professional, and
 - taking action if a dental professional is no longer safe to practise.
2. From 31 July 2006, the GDC will hold two registers, one for dentists and one for dental care professionals (DCPs). The DCP register will include dental hygienists and dental therapists (the two groups the GDC already registers), plus four additional groups for the first time:
 - Dental nurses,
 - Dental technicians,
 - Clinical dental technicians, and
 - Orthodontic therapists.
 3. The GDC's new fitness to practise procedures will come into place on 31 July 2006. Key features of the new system are:
 - A much stronger system for putting interim measures in place (both suspension and conditions on practice) pending full investigation,
 - New procedures designed to provide more effective public protection in cases where the problem is poor professional performance over a period, rather than [as now] either individual incidents of unprofessional behaviour or seriously negligent treatment episodes,
 - A minimum of five years before consideration could be given to restoration, following striking off in the most serious cases, and a flexible range of suspension and condition orders, allowing the GDC to oversee a managed and supervised return to practice, in cases where that is safe and appropriate, and
 - A move away from the criminal standard of proof to the civil standard of proof.
 4. Antony Townsend left the GDC on 25 May 2006 to take up the post of Chief Executive of the new Law Society Regulatory Body.