

GDC Press Release

5 September 2006

GDC chooses Edinburgh for first Council meeting outside London

The General Dental Council (GDC), the organisation which regulates dental professionals in the United Kingdom, will be holding its first Council meeting outside London on Tuesday 12 September 2006 in Edinburgh. At this meeting members of the public will be able to put questions to the President and members of the Council.

The Council's response to the recent Department of Health (England) report on healthcare regulation and a report on its new Dental Complaints Service for private dental patients are two of the subjects that the Council will be discussing in Edinburgh.

GDC President Hew Mathewson, who works as a general dental practitioner in Edinburgh, said:

"I am delighted that our first Council meeting outside of London will be taking place in Edinburgh. This meeting provides members of the public in Scotland with the opportunity to ask us about our work with the public and the profession to protect patients and promote confidence in dental professionals by regulating them throughout the UK."

The Council meeting will take place in public in The Signet Library in Parliament Square. The President and Council Members will answer questions from the public between 10:30 and 10:40, with the Council meeting starting at 10:45.

Ends

For media enquiries, please contact Rachel Lea on 020 7009 2782.

Notes to Editors

1. The General Dental Council is the organisation which regulates dental professionals in the UK. All dentists, dental hygienists, dental therapists, clinical dental technicians and orthodontic therapists must be registered with the GDC to work in the UK - whether they work in the NHS, private practice or any other form of practice. From 31 July 2008 all dental nurses and dental technicians must be registered with the GDC to work in the UK.

The GDC's 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.

More information about all areas of the GDC's work is available from www.gdc-uk.org

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2. The Council has 29 members:

- 15 dentists (elected by other dentists)
- 4 dental hygienists and therapists (elected by other hygienists and therapists)
- 10 members of the public (originally appointed by the Queen, but this role was delegated to the NHS Appointments Commission in 2005)

The four Chief Dental Officers for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are associate members, which means they do not have voting rights.

Of the 15 dentist members of Council:

- 11 are elected from the constituency of England, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands
- 2 are elected from the constituency of Scotland
- 1 is elected from the constituency of Wales
- 1 is elected from the constituency of Northern Ireland

3. Council meetings are open to the public. Each meeting begins with a public question and answer session. This aims to give members of the public an opportunity to find out more about the issues discussed at each meeting. It is an open forum, and there is no pre-selection or pre-ordering of questions.

4. The agenda and papers for this Council meeting are available from the GDC press office (see contact details above). Papers from previous meetings, are available on the GDC website at <http://www.gdc-uk.org/About+us/How+we+work/Council+meetings/>

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5. The Signet Library is located on Parliament Square, Edinburgh, EH1 1RF. Unfortunately there is no disabled access to the building.

6. In July 2006 the Department of Health in England produced two reports on the regulation of healthcare professionals. These reports are currently out for consultation on a UK-wide basis. The Council is considering the findings of the two reviews and will be responding to the consultation in due course.

7. The Dental Complaints Service (DCS) help with complaints about private dental care provided by dental practices in the UK. It is an independent service funded by the GDC. There is a separate service that deals with complaints from NHS dental patients. Members of the public can contact the dental complaints service on 08456 120 540, by fax on 020 8263 6100, by email at info@dentalcomplaints.org.uk or through the website at www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk.

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