

General Dental Council press release

6 October 2006

UK dental regulator seeks legal services

The General Dental Council (GDC), the body responsible for regulating the UK dental profession, is seeking legal services to help it carry out its work in investigating concerns about dental professionals' conduct, performance and health. Law firms are invited to bid for this work.

The GDC is the statutory body for regulating dental professionals in the UK. Until 31 July 2006 there were 35,000 dental professionals on the GDC's registers (dentists, dental hygienists and dental therapists). The addition of four new categories of registrant to the GDC's registers, including dental nurses and dental technicians, is expected to double that number in the medium to long term.

In light of this increase, the GDC is anticipating a rise in the number of reports about registrants' unfitness to practise and is therefore looking to increase its legal support.

The GDC is increasing the size of its existing in-house legal team and in parallel is seeking to appoint a small number of firms to its panel of external suppliers.

GDC Chief Executive Duncan Rudkin commented:

"In order to seek best value for money, the Council's legal services are periodically put out to tender and, in order to ensure these are procured in a way which is transparent, fair and effective, we are inviting firms to apply via an application form which is available on our website. The specification and protocol document is also available which highlights the services required and the firm specification.

"Any firm wanting our work will need to prove that they can provide the services we need to the right quality standard and provide value for the Council's money, the vast majority of which comes from fees paid by hard-working and committed dental professionals."

Applications can be emailed to lbrown@gdc-uk.org or posted to:
Mrs Laura Brown
General Dental Council
44 Baker Street
London
W1U 7BE

Applications must be returned by 5pm on 30 October 2006 using the form provided.

Ends

For media enquiries, please contact Alexander Wells on 020 7009 2746

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.
2. 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, including its fitness to practise work, is available from www.gdc-uk.org