

GENERAL DENTAL COUNCIL

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Guidance on Principles of Management Responsibility

February 2008

About this guidance

This guidance is for dental professionals who have a management responsibility. This may involve responsibility for managing people, resources or both. This includes directors of dental bodies corporate (DBC) and people who:

- own or are responsible for running dental practices or dental laboratories;
- have a management role in dental health-care organisations;
- have a management role in educational establishments (for example, universities); or
- have responsibility for carrying out clinical trials.

Our ethical standards guidance, 'Standards for dental professionals' sets out the six main principles you should apply to your work as a dental professional. It is your responsibility to apply these principles to your daily work, using your judgement to consider the principles.

'Put patients' interests first and act to protect them'

- Put patients' interests before your own or those of any colleague, organisation or business.

This guidance expands on how you should apply this principle to your work in your management role. You should read it with the other guidance in the 'Standards for dental professionals' series.

Because you are registered with us, you are personally responsible for justifying your actions to us. This applies to any work you are involved in as a dental professional, including your behaviour:

- as a director of a DBC;
- as an owner of a dental practice or dental laboratory; or
- in a management role in a dental healthcare organisation or practice.

This will still be the case if a non-dental professional could perform your managerial role.

This means that you have a professional responsibility to be prepared to justify your actions in your management role in dentistry, as well as in any clinical role. You must be willing and able to show that:

- you are aware of 'Standards for dental professionals' and the guidance documents that support 'Standards for dental professionals', including this one; and
- you have followed the principles explained in the guidance documents.

We expect you to follow this guidance, whether or not you are responsible for justifying your actions in your role to someone who is registered with us. If you cannot justify your behaviour or practice in line with the principles explained in the 'Standards for dental professionals' guidance, you may risk losing your registration with us.

If you need further guidance or more specific advice, you may find our bibliography of references and contacts useful. You can find this on our website at www.gdc-uk.org, or ask us for a hard copy by contacting our Customer Advice and Information Team on 020 7887 3800.

Your own behaviour

- 1.1 Put patients' interests before your own or those of any colleague, organisation or business. If your management interests conflict with your main responsibility to put patients' interests first, raise your concerns formally, either with management colleagues, another professional organisation, or your defence organisation. If you are still concerned, contact us.
- 1.2 Make sure you work within your knowledge and competence as a director or manager. Use and keep up to date with guidance on the knowledge, skills and attitudes you need to carry out your role as a director or manager.
- 1.3 Be aware of your legal responsibilities as a director, owner or manager and make sure that you meet them.
- 1.4 Understand and meet your legal and ethical responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity (valuing people's differences).
- 1.5 As a director, owner or manager, justify the trust that your patients, the public, the people you direct or manage and other colleagues have in you by always acting honestly and fairly.
- 1.6 Be open and honest in any financial and commercial dealings you are responsible for as a director, owner or manager.
- 1.7 Make sure that you do not put the interests of patients at risk by allowing financial or other targets to have a negative influence on the quality of care provided by the people you direct or manage.
- 1.8 If you delegate your management duties (that is, authorise someone else to carry them out), make sure that the person you delegate them to has the skills to do what you are asking them to do. You will still be responsible for both the overall management of the duties you have delegated.
- 1.9 Make sure that systems are in place in the organisation you work for to allow people to raise early concerns about the health, behaviour or professional performance of any staff you direct or manage, or about any part of the organisation's clinical or administrative environment. Make sure that you deal with these concerns quickly and effectively.

- 1.10 If you have any concerns that one of the organisation's decisions or any activity within the organisation would put patients at risk, make sure that you raise those concerns with your colleagues. This includes any decisions or actions which would put patients' safety, or the wider public interest, at risk (for example, dishonest behaviour or incompetence). If the matter is ignored or you still have concerns, you should contact us. Follow our guidance 'Principles of raising concerns'.

The behaviour of other people within your organisation

- 2.1 As a director, owner or manager within an organisation, you are in a position to influence the way in which the organisation works and the way in which the people within it work. You have a responsibility not only to follow the principles in 'Standards for dental professionals' yourself, but to promote them to other people within your organisation.
- 2.2 Make sure that people you direct or manage are familiar with 'Standards for dental professionals' and its supporting guidance.
- 2.3 All members of the dental team who have to register with us are individually responsible for their own actions and for the treatment or processes which they carry out. Make sure you do not take any action that may affect the ability of any people you have authority over to follow the principles in 'Standards for dental professionals'.
- 2.4 Follow the guidance on team leadership we have set out in 'Principles of dental team working'.
- 2.5 Encourage staff you manage to raise any concerns they have about the organisation's activities, including any risks to the safety of patients or the wider public interest that the health, behaviour or performance of colleagues may present. Follow our guidance 'Principles of raising concerns' and encourage other people to do so.

