



# DCNZ news

The Dental Council of New Zealand • Te Kaunihera Tiaki Niho o Aotearoa

## inside this issue

- Recertification Update
- New DCNZ CEO
- Describing Your Services Correctly
- Dental Auxiliaries: Update on Hygiene Registration Examination
- New Specialist Registration Examinations
- Your Enquiries
- Dental Hygienist Board Vacancy
- Introducing Neil Waddell
- Tribunal Case
- Strategic Annual Plan 2006/7

## NEW HEALTH MINISTER VISITS DENTAL COUNCIL

New Minister of Health, Hon. Peter Hodgson took time out of his busy settling-in schedule to meet the Dental Council at its meeting on 29 November. He said he was intrigued by the unique nature of the new combined Dental Council and was keen to find out more.

Council Chair, Brent Stanley, briefed the Minister on the Council and its work. The Minister, despite being new to the job, had a good grasp of the key sector issues.

In terms of the direction of government policy the Minister acknowledged that he was fortunate enough to have inherited a fully established structure and strategy from previous Health Minister, Annette King. He anticipated therefore that further changes would be more of style than of substance.

The Minister concluded by saying that he considered the new Dental Council set-up to be 'highly impressive'. He also indicated that he would be willing to meet with Council representatives on a regular basis.



Brent Stanley and Peter Hodgson

## ALIGNMENT OF APC YEAR

*The Council has agreed to align the APC year with the financial year. For dental therapists, dental hygienists and dental technicians the next APC year will begin on 1 April 2006 and run till 31 March 2007. For dentists the new APC year will apply from 1 April 2007.*

The need to realign the APC year arose from the implementation date of the HPCA Act. Given the Act came into force in September 2004, this meant that the APC year for the newly registered groups was well out of line with both the financial year beginning 1 April and the APC year for dentists beginning 1 June. The Council has therefore taken the opportunity to phase in a harmonised APC year running for a 12-month period from 1 April to 31 March. The practical implications for oral health practitioners are as follows:

### Dental hygienists and dental therapists

You were asked to apply and pay for a practising certificate for the seven-month period 1 September 2005 to 31 March 2006. In March 2006 you will be asked to apply and pay for a practising certificate for the period 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007.

You are not being asked to pay any more for the 18-month period 1 September 2005 to 31 March 2007 than you would have done if the practising year

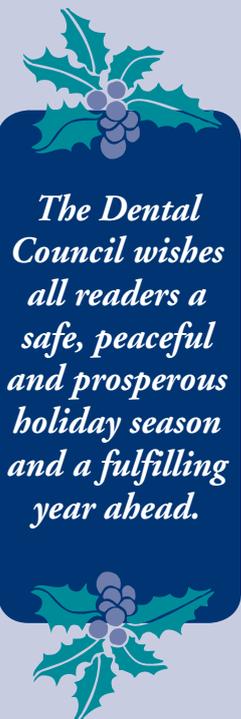
was kept at 1 September to 31 August. The Council is aware, however, that the timing of the second APC payment, within six months of the previous one, may be an issue for some practitioners. As such there will be provision for individual hardship cases. Details on this will be provided in the guidance notes, which will accompany the APC application mail-out in March next year.

### Dentists

In May 2006 you will be asked to apply and pay for a practising certificate from 1 June 2006 to 31 March 2007. The next APC year will therefore be for a shorter 10-month period. From 2007 onwards the APC year will run from 1 April to 31 March.

### Dental Technicians

There will be no change in the APC year for dental technicians and clinical dental technicians as the cycle already runs from 1 April to 31 March.



*The Dental Council wishes all readers a safe, peaceful and prosperous holiday season and a fulfilling year ahead.*

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# RECERTIFICATION UPDATE

*The recertification cycles for dentists is already underway, and the cycles for dental therapy, dental hygiene and dental technology will begin on 1 April 2006. Below we summarise the minimum recertification requirements and set out the key dates for compliance.*

Under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance (HPCA) Act 2003 the Dental Council is required to protect public safety by monitoring and ensuring the continuing professional competence and fitness to practise of registered oral health practitioners.

The mechanism for ensuring the competence of practitioners is linked to the issue of an annual practising certificate (APC) – a process known as ‘recertification’. Under this framework the Dental Council will ‘certify’ each year, through the issue of an annual practising certificate, that the practitioner is competent and fit to practise.

For dentists the new recertification process came into force on 1 June 2005 and for dental therapists, dental hygienists and auxiliaries it will take effect as of 1 April 2006. The formal cycle for dental technicians and clinical dental technicians will commence on 1 April 2006. Because, however, previous communications have suggested a 1 April 2005 start date, those practitioners who have already undertaken verifiable CPD activities may count these towards the total required.

If you are a dental therapist, dental hygienist, dental auxiliary or orthodontic auxiliary you should have received a booklet detailing the recertification requirements and with advice on getting started and maintaining a professional portfolio. If you have not received this booklet you can request a copy from the Dental Council office. Dentists can expect to receive a similar booklet early in the New Year, and an equivalent publication for dental technicians and clinical dental technicians is due to be published in March 2006.

The minimum requirements of the Council’s recertification programmes for the various oral health provider groups are summarised in the table below. If, however, you are a dentist or orthodontist you should note that the New Zealand Dental Association and the New Zealand Association of Orthodontists have developed their own Council-approved programmes. Participating in these programmes has some advantages for members. NZDA, for example, has a web-based facility for recording CPD and peer contact activity. If you use this facility NZDA will be able to confirm that you have met the recertification requirements, and you will not therefore be required to provide further proof of your CPD activities.

## MINIMUM RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

<b>Dentists</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 160 hours of CPD activities over 4-year cycle, of which 80 hours must be verifiable</li> <li>• Minimum of 12 interactive peer contact activities or 30 interactive peer contact hours over 4-year cycle (counts towards CPD hours)</li> <li>• Comply with standards set out in Codes of Practice</li> <li>• Declare fitness and competence to practise</li> </ul>
<b>Dental Therapists</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60 hours CPD over 2-year cycle of which 30 hours must be verifiable</li> <li>• Minimum of 4 interactive peer contact activities or 10 interactive peer contact hours over 2-year cycle (counts towards CPD hours)</li> <li>• One satisfactory practice appraisal</li> <li>• Comply with standards set out in Codes of Practice</li> <li>• Declare fitness and competence to practise</li> </ul>
<b>Dental Hygienists and Dental Auxiliaries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60 hours CPD over 2-year cycle of which 30 hours must be verifiable</li> <li>• Minimum of 4 interactive peer contact activities or 10 interactive peer contact hours over 2-year cycle (counts towards CPD hours)</li> <li>• Comply with standards set out in Codes of Practice</li> <li>• Declare fitness and competence to practise</li> </ul>
<b>Orthodontic Auxiliaries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 hours CPD over 2-year cycle of which 20 hours must be verifiable</li> <li>• Minimum of 3 interactive peer contact activities or 7 interactive peer contact hours over 2-year cycle (counts towards CPD hours)</li> <li>• Comply with standards set out in Codes of Practice</li> <li>• Declare fitness and competence to practise</li> </ul>
<b>Dental Technicians and Clinical Dental Technicians</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60 hours verifiable CPD over 4-year cycle (increasing to 80 hours thereafter)</li> <li>• Peer contact activity encouraged and counts towards CPD hours if verifiable. However, there are no minimum or maximum peer contact activity requirements</li> <li>• Comply with standards set out in Codes of Practice</li> <li>• Declare fitness and competence to practise</li> </ul>

## KEY DATES

### Dentists

June 2005 onwards	Recertification 4-yearly cycle commenced 1 June 2005. Participation in CPD (including peer contact activities) to be documented from this time
May 2006 onwards	Declare for issue of APC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• amount of CPD including peer contact</li><li>• compliance with Codes of Practice</li></ul>
March 2009	Recertification cycle ends 31 March 2009. Declare CPD requirements over last 4 years have been met for issue of APC
April 2010	New four-year recertification cycle begins 1 April 2009

### Dental Hygienists, Dental Auxiliaries, Orthodontic Auxiliaries

March 2006 onwards	Recertification 2-yearly cycle commences 1 April 2006. Participation in CPD (including peer contact activities) to be documented from this time
March 2007 onwards	Declare for issue of APC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• amount of CPD including peer contact</li><li>• compliance with Codes of Practice</li></ul>
March 2008	Recertification cycle ends 31 March 2008. Declare CPD requirements over last 2 years have been met for issue of APC
April 2008	New recertification cycle begins 1 April 2008

### Dental Technicians, Clinical Dental Technicians

March 2006 onwards	Recertification 4-yearly cycle commences 1 April 2006. Participation in CPD (including peer contact activities) to be documented from this time
March 2007 onwards	Declare for issue of APC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• amount of CPD including peer contact</li><li>• compliance with Codes of Practice</li></ul>
March 2010	Recertification cycle ends 31 March 2010. Declare CPD requirements over last 4 years have been met for issue of APC
April 2010	New recertification cycle begins 1 April 2010

## NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE FOR DENTAL COUNCIL

*Dr William Whittaker has been appointed as the Council's new Chief Executive.*

Dr Whittaker was previously CEO/Registrar of the Physiotherapy Board of New Zealand, a position he held since 2000.

Announcing the appointment, Chair of the Dental Council Dr Brent Stanley said "This is an exciting development in the evolution of the Council and I believe William will make a very positive contribution to our work. He was selected from a very strong field of applicants and his knowledge and understanding of the health regulatory sector will be invaluable to us".

Dr Whittaker is a former Executive Director of the New Zealand Psychological Society. Prior to this he worked for over a decade in the tourism sector which included writing, research consultancy and running his own adventure travel company. He has also held university positions in the UK and

New Zealand and has a Ph.D. in Human Geography from Cambridge University.

Dr Whittaker takes over as Chief Executive from Janet Eden who has held the joint CEO/Registrar role for the last ten years. The Dental Council is delighted to have retained Janet in the role of Registrar.

Commenting on his new appointment, Dr Whittaker said: "Coming from the Physiotherapy Board, I am already familiar with the health regulatory environment and the new legislation. However, the new combined Dental Council, covering all the main dental provider groups, is a visionary concept and poses a unique set of challenges, particularly in the area of stakeholder management. I'm under no illusions that, in spite of the huge effort that has already been expended, there is still much to do. This is



a great opportunity to achieve higher levels of synergy and cooperation that are implicit in the purpose of the HPCA Act".

## DESCRIBING YOUR SERVICES CORRECTLY

*Under Section 7 of the HPCA Act health practitioners may not describe themselves as or imply that they are a practitioner of a particular kind unless they are registered, and qualified to be registered, as a practitioner of that kind. Contravening this section is an offence punishable by a fine up to \$10,000.*

If you are registered as a dentist, for example, you may not describe yourself as a particular kind of dental specialist, unless you are registered in a scope of practice for the dental specialty concerned.

Even if you do not describe yourself as a 'specialist' or use a particular specialist title, eg 'orthodontist', you should avoid using wording in your signage, advertising etc that could imply this. For instance, you should not describe yourself as a 'paediatric dentist' or refer to yourself as 'specialising in orthodontics' unless you are registered in a corresponding scope of specialist practice. Even if you describe yourself as practising in an area of dentistry which is not a recognised dental specialty in New Zealand, for example cosmetic dentistry, you may still not use wording which describes or implies that you are a specialist in this area. Instead, Council recommends you use the wording: "Registered general dentist with

a special interest in . . . [paediatric dentistry, orthodontics, cosmetic dentistry etc]"

In the past some practitioners have been given misleading titles by journalists unaware of the legal provisions. When dealing with journalists therefore it is advisable to ensure that you:

- provide your correct title
- edit any articles before publication

Similarly, you should also ensure that your services are correctly advertised in the Yellow Pages. For example, if you are a dental hygienist or a dental technician it is important to ensure that your advertisement does not appear under the 'Dentists' section. It is a good idea therefore to check with the Yellow Pages in your region under which section your advertisement will be listed before you authorise publication.

If you are unsure about how to refer to or describe yourself, please contact the Dental Council office.

## DENTAL AUXILIARIES: UPDATE ON HYGIENE REGISTRATION EXAMINATION

The last issue of the newsletter carried a reminder to dental auxiliaries that their registration would expire on 18 September 2009.

Dental auxiliaries wishing to practise beyond this date were advised that they would either need to sit and pass the Dental Hygiene Registration Examination or complete a formal hygiene qualification.

In the meantime the Council's Hygienist Board had scheduled the first sitting of the written component of this examination for 21 October 2005. The examination did not go ahead, however as there were only two enrolments from overseas-trained dentists. No dental auxiliaries enrolled in the examination. The next Written examination is scheduled for 7 July 2006.

Given the numbers required to make the examination viable, the Hygienist Board is considering participating in a joint initiative with Australia in the future.

## NEW SPECIALIST REGISTRATION EXAMINATIONS

The first Dental Council specialist registration examinations for overseas candidates were successfully staged at the end of November.

Two candidates who had previously been unable to demonstrate that they met the requirements for registration in the orthodontic scope of practice had been required to sit and pass registration examinations. Both candidates passed the examination and are now eligible for registration. University of

Otago staff ran the examinations on the Dental Council's behalf.

The specialist registration examinations constitute a new pathway towards specialist registration for those candidates who have been unable to meet the Dentist Board's registration requirements. Candidates can apply for direct entry to the specialist registration examination process and thereby avoid the costly qualification

assessment process. However, to gain entry to the examination candidates must be registered or hold a prescribed qualification for registration as a dentist in New Zealand, and have undertaken two years or more of full-time equivalent postgraduate training in the specialty at a recognised tertiary academic institution or equivalent. They will also be required to have engaged in research. Visit our website [www.dcnz.org.nz](http://www.dcnz.org.nz) or contact the Dental Council office for more details.

## YOUR ENQUIRIES

If you have any enquiries, our staff at the Secretariat are there to help you. Our contact details are as listed on the front page of the newsletter. Alternatively, you can visit our website [www.dcnz.org.nz](http://www.dcnz.org.nz) and click on Contact Us.

In many cases, the website will have the information you need. Take a look, for example, under the links 'Professional Standards', 'Information for Practitioners' or 'What's New'.

For all enquiries you are advised to contact the Secretariat in the first instance rather than directly approaching Council or Workforce Board members. The role of Council and Board members is one of governance. Operational matters, including day-to-day enquiries, are the responsibility of the Secretariat.

## DENTAL HYGIENIST BOARD VACANCY

The Dental Council wishes to appoint an additional member to its Hygienist Board. Applications are sought from practising dental hygienists, preferably New Zealand trained.

Established as a workforce board of the Dental Council, the Hygienist Board is charged with regulating the dental hygiene profession in matters of registration and competence.

Contact our office for a description of the role or visit our website [www.dcnz.org.nz](http://www.dcnz.org.nz) and click on 'What's New'.

## INTRODUCING

# NEIL WADDELL

Neil Waddell was appointed as the Dental Council's dental technician member in March this year. He is one of two dental technology members on the Council - the other being Keith Pine who fills the clinical dental technician slot. Until September 2004 dental technology had been regulated



by a separate Dental Technicians Board (DTB). However, under the HPCA Act the DTB has been constituted as a committee of the Dental Council.

Neil currently works as a Senior Teaching Fellow in the Department of Oral Rehabilitation, Faculty of Dentistry, University of Otago where the main focus of his teaching is in the final year of the Bachelor of Dental Technology programme. He also contributes to the teaching of the BDS and MDS programmes. Neil has been involved in the teaching of dental technology since 1984 both in South Africa and New Zealand. He has a Higher Diploma in Education, University of Natal (1986), a Masters Diploma in Dental Technology, Technikon Natal (1993) and a Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Dental Technology, Otago (2004). Neil has lectured widely both in New Zealand and overseas.

"The past year has been a watershed for dental technology regulation" says Neil. "We have gone from being a small independent board to part of a combined Council regulating all the oral health professions. This will bring huge benefits in terms of synergy and coordination, but also new challenges. There is no doubt we are going to have to raise our game to comply with the new Act. However, being part of a combined set-up means we will at least have the extra resources needed to do this."

In his spare time, Neil enjoys sailing with his two School of Dentistry colleagues, Dave Purton and Dave Healey on Dave Purton's "Farrier 680" trimaran in the Otago Yacht Club racing series.

## TRIBUNAL CASE

*A dentist had his registration cancelled following two cases heard by the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal.*

The dentist faced a total of six charges heard in two separate cases. The charges in the first case, heard in June and August 2005, centred around failure to perform adequate root canal therapy. In the second case, heard in June 2005, the charges concerned the initial failure to construct a post to support a crown, and subsequent treatment mismanagement when the dentist did proceed to insert a post.

The Tribunal found all six charges in the two cases proven. Five of these charges necessitated disciplinary sanction and resulted in a finding of professional misconduct.

In the case involving failure to perform adequate root canal therapy, the first charge was that the dentist did not place a filling in a timely manner and/or failed to refer to an endodontist in a timely manner. The second charge was that the dentist failed to fill one mesial root canal and inadequately filled the other mesial root canal and/or failed to refer to an endodontist. On both charges the Tribunal found that the dentist's errors were very serious. His failure to refer to an endodontist under the first charge, and his errors in treating the tooth concerned under the second charge, constituted negligence.

In the other case, the Tribunal found that the dentist's errors were serious and inexcusable. On the first charge, his failure to fit a post meant that the crown was not adequately supported – an action which fell below the standards expected of a New Zealand dentist. On the second charge, the Tribunal found that when the dentist did eventually fit a post to support the crown, the post was too short, too broad, seriously off-centre at the root canal, and fabricated with a core that was too short. These errors constituted negligence and amounted to a failure to adhere to the most basic standards of dentistry.

In both cases the dentist also faced a charge of failing to adequately document care of the patient concerned. In each case the Tribunal found that the practitioner's notes fell well below the standard expected of a New Zealand dentist. In the first case, the Tribunal did not believe that a disciplinary sanction was required. However, in the second case the Tribunal found that the notes were so seriously deficient that a disciplinary finding was required to enforce professional standards.

The Tribunal stresses the importance for all dentists to maintain records that are complete and capable of being understood. Notes should be written in such a way that would ensure another dentist could easily understand what treatment had been provided.

In both cases the Tribunal ordered that the dentist's registration be cancelled with effect from 1 September 2005. The Tribunal also directed that before the dentist reapplies for registration, he must satisfy the Dental Council that he has been appropriately retrained as a dentist, preferably at the University of Otago.

# STRATEGIC AND ANNUAL PLAN 2006/07

## Introduction

The Dental Council of New Zealand is the self-regulatory body for the oral health professions. We protect and promote good dental practice by carrying out our statutory responsibilities for registration, competence, conduct, health and education.

We are pleased to present for stakeholder comments our draft annual plan for the year beginning 1 April 2006. It is part of the Council's determination to be transparent in its dealings with all stakeholders. Your views are sought on the proposed plan and your submission by letter or e-mail will be carefully considered before the annual plan and budget are fully adopted in late February 2006. This is an opportunity to influence the work of the Dental Council before it happens!

The plan takes into account the Council's statutory functions together with measures to advance our strategic plan outcomes of:

- A transparent regulatory environment which is fair, understood and trusted
- A dental workforce which provides safe, high quality care
- Effective working relationships with and between the New Zealand public, educators, oral health practitioners and others.
- High standards of corporate governance and management in the conduct of our business

Your views are very welcome. Please send any submissions to us by 15 February 2006.

## Annual Plan 2006/07

The implementation of the Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act 2003 (HPCAA) will continue to account for significant Council activity in 2006/07. Major activity and expenditure associated with HPCAA implementation will include:

- Implementation of the finalised recertification frameworks for oral health practitioners, the development and implementation of a comprehensive communication strategy and development work on compliance monitoring provisions
- Developing the professional standards, which all registered oral health practitioners must observe. This will include adapting the current dentist codes of practice for the other oral health provider groups and the development of Council standards around cultural competence, ethical conduct and transmissible major viral infections
- Continued development of the business processes and systems to support the new HPCAA provisions

There will be significant activity in the education area in 2006/07 with two accreditation site visits required to the AUT and Otago universities to assess the conjoint dental therapy and dental hygiene programmes; the finalisation of accreditation guidelines to assess programmes of orthodontic auxiliary training; ongoing work associated with the approval of courses to equip practitioners for registration in additional scopes of practice; and approval of recertification and continuing professional development providers.

In the registration examinations area, 2006/07 will see the implementation of dental hygiene and dental therapy examination processes and joint work with the Australian Dental Council with a view to developing an Australasian assessment process in this area. Joint Australasian examination processes for applicants for clinical dental technician registration will be implemented in 2006 as well

as a joint DCNZ/ADC preliminary examination for applicants for dentist registration.

Refining competence assessment policies and procedures is also on the agenda for 2006/07 and will include further training for assessors and the development of supervision policies, procedures and training.

The opportunity will also be taken during the year to review the effectiveness of the current Council and Workforce Board structure and composition.

The transfer of servicing of the Dental Technicians Board from its current Auckland office to the DCNZ secretariat in Wellington will occur in 2006. This will be the last major step in the consolidation of the new Dental Council.

The Dental Technicians Board progress in implementing the HPCAA provisions is not as advanced as the other workforce boards and considerable development of policy, procedures and systems is needed to reduce the gap, particularly in areas such as competence and recertification.

## Financial Situation

The Council is proposing a \$ 2.27 million budget in 2006/07 with the following revenue sources:

	\$
<b>Income</b>	
Income from registration	1,878,984
NZ Dental Registration Examination	302,297
Other income	97,579
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>2,278,860</u>
<b>Less Expenditure</b>	<u>2,264,165</u>
<b>NET SURPLUS FOR YEAR</b>	<u>14,694</u>
Balance at beginning of year	804,115
Surplus for year	14,694
<b>BALANCE AT END OF YEAR</b>	<u>818,809</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Administrative expenses	231,698
Personnel related costs	704,501
<b>Total Administration Expenses</b>	<u>936,199</u>
<b>Project Expenses</b>	
Finance and Management	28,007
Data collection	14,579
Health	15,679
Education	30,750
Examination	250,000
Competence	145,441
Recertification	70,660
Registration	46,500
Discipline	278,591
Strategic planning	46,500
Communications	49,851
Liaison	37,999
Board meetings	216,850
Council meetings	96,560
<b>Total Project Expenses</b>	<u>1,327,966</u>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<u>2,264,165</u>

The budget has been prepared on the basis of the following APC fees in 2006/07

	\$
Dentists	700,00
Dental Therapists	535,00
Dental Hygienists/Auxiliaries	610,00
Orthodontic Auxiliaries	375,00
Dental Technicians	450,00
Clinical Dental Technicians	750,00