



17<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dental Council NZ  
PO Box 10-448  
Wellington 6140

**Submission on the Consultation on proposed updates to professional competencies and changes relating to scopes of practice.**

Founded in 1907, the Faculty of Dentistry – Te Kaupeka Pūniho is New Zealand's National Centre for Dentistry and has an international reputation for clinical and research excellence. We offer undergraduate programmes in all branches of Dentistry as well as excellent postgraduate education including programmes for all the dental specialties in New Zealand. The Faculty has a commitment to te Tiriti and to improving oral health for all New Zealanders.

We thank the Dental Council for allowing us the opportunity to provide submissions on this consultation. It is pleasing to see Council consult widely and adopt a co-design methodology in conjunction with Te Ao Mārama, Māori members on the Council accreditation committee and Council's Kaitohutohu Māori (Māori advisor) for these proposed professional competencies and changes to the scopes of practice for dentists, oral health therapists, dental therapists, dental hygienists, orthodontic auxiliaries, clinical dental technicians and dental technicians.

The Faculty is supportive of Council's recognition of its role to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi within the health sector to improve Māori health outcomes, as demonstrated and outlined in the Ministry of Health's Whakamaua: Māori Health Action Plan 2020-2025. Changing the professional competencies to shift from being 'culturally competent' to being 'culturally safe' (as determined by the patient, their whānau (family), hapū (subtribe) and iwi (tribe)) will be a step in the right direction to building and maintaining a more culturally inclusive and culturally safe oral health workforce in Aotearoa New Zealand. Ensuring the new domains of Kaiakatanga ahurea (cultural competence) being effective until 31 December 2022, and the new Haumarutanga ahurea (cultural safety) domain beginning 1 January 2023 specifically focused on Māori demonstrates Council's willingness to begin to fulfil their obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and protect tangata whenua. For these reasons, the Faculty of Dentistry is very supportive of the proposed competencies and further, believes this to be a way to help achieve health and oral health equity for Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand.

With regard to the consultation questions, the Faculty of Dentistry:



1. Agree with the proposed draft of competencies for dentists, oral health therapists, dental therapists, dental hygienists, orthodontic auxiliaries, dental technicians and clinical dental technicians.
2. Agree with the removal of the detailed scope of practice activities from the gazetted scopes of practice, and to replace these with gazetted professional competencies.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MMJ' followed by a horizontal line.

Professor Mike Morgan  
Dean, Faculty of Dentistry