

Summary of Decisions

From the Dental Council meeting in October 2021

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The Dental Council (Council) is the statutory body constituted under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act) to maintain the health and safety of members of the public by providing mechanisms to ensure that health practitioners are competent and fit to practise. Council endeavours to keep its key stakeholders up to date with key decisions.

This document is a summary of Council's decisions from the meetings held in October 2021.

Establishment of a Māori subcommittee – Te Hā

Earlier this year, the Council agreed to establish a Māori subcommittee (named Te Hā) to support the Council's strategic priority for cultural safety.

The Council considered and approved the draft terms of reference for Te Hā. It was also in favour of exploring a co-governance approach with Te Hā. However, given the Council was in its early stage of its cultural safety journey, and understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles, Te Hā would initially be established as an advisory group under the Act. The co-governance option will be explored once the committee has been established.

Professional competencies

The Council recently consulted on proposed updates to the professional competencies and changes to the related scopes of practice (excluding those for dental specialists) on 26 July 2021. The consultation closed on 17 September 2021, with a total of 15 submissions received.

Having considered the submissions received, the Council has approved, with effect from 8 December 2021, the proposed scope of practice changes and the following professional competencies:

- Dentist competencies
- Oral health therapist competencies
- Dental therapist competencies
- Dental hygienist competencies
- Orthodontic auxiliary competencies
- Dental technician competencies
- Clinical dental technician competencies.

The updated competencies and scopes of practice will be gazetted this month. Further details are outlined in the [outcome letter](#) (dated 8 November 2021).

Updated policy – Acting on information received about oral health practitioners

Council approved the new Acting on information received from any person about oral health practitioners' policy. This policy addresses managing anonymous complaints and aligns with the Privacy Act 2020.

As a result, the previous policy *Dealing with complaints and concerns about oral health practitioners (OHPs): Protocols and procedures* was rescinded.