

The Dental Council of Hong Kong

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



established since 1959



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Message from the Chairman

Dr LEE Kin-man
Chairman, The Dental Council of Hong Kong



During my first full year as Chairman, the Council accomplished a great deal and I am very pleased with the progress on several fronts including the implementation of new initiatives that drive our plan to uphold the service quality of the dental profession.

Under the legal framework set by the Dentists Registration Ordinance, the Council shoulders the statutory duty to protect public interests and to maintain public confidence in the dental profession by devising policies and carrying out disciplinary proceedings. Professional autonomy can only be granted by society based on the trust from the public and through a robust, open and fair system of self-regulation with appropriate participation of the community.

In order to serve these purposes, I always bear in mind the Council should consciously adhere to the working principles that are proportionate, accountable, transparent, consistent, targeted and responsive to changing community and patient needs and demands, risks and priorities in a timely manner. It is hoped that through the hard work of various standing committees and ad hoc groupings, we can have the best possible deliverables to meet the desired ends.

Major Work Done

We are excited about this year's work – introducing new initiatives that enhance the discharge of our statutory responsibilities on registration and regulation of the dental profession.

With the support of the profession and resources from the Government, the Council has taken an unprecedented attempt in increasing the setting of the Licensing Examination from once a year to twice. This allows potential candidates to attempt the examination on a more frequent basis and increase the inflow of dentists in the long run. Among all things done, the Council has set up an Ad Hoc Expert Panel in particular to review the examination policy and validate examination questions so as to ensure quality of potential dentists and effectuate the running of the Licensing Examination. The refined examination policy has already been taken on board starting this year's Licensing Examination and I am delighted to report that the Ad Hoc Expert Panel will continue to work intently on the subject and accomplish far-reaching tasks such as questions validation and building up of Question Bank.

On the statistics about the Licensing Examination, the number of candidates sitting Parts I, II and III of the 2015 Licensing Examination were 40, 17 and 18 respectively. The majority of candidates were holders of basic dental qualifications conferred in the Mainland China followed by holders of degrees conferred in the Philippines and the United States. The Examination Committee and the Board of Examiners formed under the Council will continue to work closely to monitor the conduct of the examination.



Another important area that demands our concerted effort is to uphold high ethical and professional standard. In 2015, the Council received 126 complaints against registered dentists, of which the majority was related to unprofessional conduct. Although most of the complaints were not sufficiently grounded for proceeding onto the Preliminary Investigation Committee or Inquiry stages, the rising public expectations on dental professionalism cannot be denied. To meet the demand of the community, the Council will continue to stay adamant and work for improving and enhancing the sense of professional ethics and service standards from across the profession.

Continuing dental education is no less important in keeping practicing dentists abreast of the most updated professional knowledge and service innovations. To achieve this, the Council has kept reviewing the existing voluntary Continuing Professional Development (“CPD”) programme for dentists with a view to formulating a long term strategic plan for mandatory CPD programme. 1 January 2015 marked the beginning of another 1-year CPD cycle which provides opportunity for dentists to engage in lifetime learning.

In fact, in response to the rapid changes in technology, practices and environment of the dental profession, the Council has taken a pivotal step in 2015 and set up a Taskforce on Review of Code of Professional Discipline, an Ad Hoc Group on Professional Standards and an Ad Hoc Group on Dental Inspection to consolidate effort in reviewing the subjects. On the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Group on Professional Standards, the Council has taken up a first step and set up a new Committee on Professional Standards in Infection Control to ensure that appropriate standards are set up for maintaining professional norms for compliance by registered dentists.

Works Ahead

Our belief in protecting the interest of public against unprofessional dental service laid down the groundwork for important milestones of the Council. As always, the Council works hard to devise strategic plans which aim at upholding professional standards, ensuring professional autonomy and maintaining self-regulatory status. 2015 is a busy year and the Council has been dedicating effort in tackling a number of tasks including review and revision on legislation, standards and professional codes, disciplinary proceedings, continuous professional development and corporate governance in the Council. Looking ahead, 2016 will be another high-challenging year. With immense confidence, dedication and drive, however, the Council is prepared to respond to the challenges ahead.

I truly believe the key to successful regulation is to communicate effectively with all stakeholders including the government, academia, leaders and members of the professional organizations and societies and, last but not least, individual dentist colleagues. We shall maintain all communication channels potent and accessible.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the continued support fellow dentist colleagues have rendered to the Council throughout the years. I would also like to express appreciation to our dedicated incumbent and outgoing members of the Council and its committees, and staff of the Secretariat who have been working tirelessly to carry out the Council’s duties.



Introduction

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- 1.1 This annual report, covering the period 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015, is published by the Dental Council of Hong Kong. Through this report, the Council aims to keep members of the dental profession as well as the general public better informed of the functions and activities of the Council and its various committees and working groups during the year under report.
- 1.2 As this report is intended for general information to the readers, certain functions of the Council have accordingly been simplified and/or presented in the form of an information document. Readers who are interested in the more specific details of the statutory functions of the Council and its committees and working groups are invited to refer to the relevant provisions under the Dentists Registration Ordinance, Chapter 156 of the Laws of Hong Kong and the Dentists (Registration and Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations.

Enquiries relating to the functions and work of the Dental Council can be addressed to –

The Dental Council Secretariat

4/F, Hong Kong Academy of Medicine Jockey Club Building
99 Wong Chuk Hang Road, Aberdeen, Hong Kong
Tel. No. : (852) 2873 5862 Fax No. : (852) 2554 0577
E-mail : dchk@dh.gov.hk

Enquiries relating to registration matters can be addressed to –

Central Registration Office

17/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wanchai, Hong Kong
Tel. No. : (852) 2961 8655 Fax No. : (852) 2891 7946
E-mail : cro1@dh.gov.hk

Dental Council's website : <http://www.dchk.org.hk>



Functions of the Dental Council

- 2.1 The Dental Council is established under section 4 of the Dentists Registration Ordinance to carry out the following statutory functions in accordance with the Ordinance and the Dentists (Registration and Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations –
- (a) registration of dental practitioners in Hong Kong, including processing applications for registration, applications for specialist registration and applications for registration of additional qualifications, as well as issuing various types of certificates relating to the practice of dentistry to registered dental practitioners;
 - (b) conduct of licensing examinations; and
 - (c) disciplinary regulation of dental practitioners in Hong Kong.
- 2.2 The Council and its various committees and working groups meet regularly to consider and decide on policies to facilitate the proper conduct of their statutory functions. The Council Secretariat provides executive and secretariat support to the Council at these meetings. During the year, aside from holding routine policy and committee meetings, the Council has processed, with the support of the Secretariat –
- (a) 75 applications to sit for the licensing examination;
 - (b) 58 applications for new registration;
 - (c) 12 applications for inclusion in the Specialist Register;
 - (d) 2,171 invitations by issuing letters to the registered dentists in Hong Kong for renewing their practicing certificates for 2016;
 - (e) 126 complaints or information received against registered dentists; and
 - (f) over 10,000 general enquiries from members of the profession and the public on registration and regulation-related matters.



Membership of the Dental Council

- 3.1 Under section 4 of the Dentists Registration Ordinance, there should be 12 members in the Dental Council and the composition of the Council is as follows –
- (a) the Registrar (the consultant dental surgeon in charge of the Dental Service of the Department of Health (DH));
 - (b) a consultant dental surgeon of the Dental Service of DH;
 - (c) a registered dentist, who is a full-time member of the teaching staff of the Faculty of Dentistry of the University of Hong Kong (HKU);
 - (d) 2 medical practitioners;
 - (e) 6 registered dentists to be appointed –
 - (i) from a panel of not less than 12 such registered dentists nominated by the Hong Kong Dental Association (HKDA); or
 - (ii) in the event of HKDA failing to nominate at least 12 such registered dentists, at the discretion of the Chief Executive; and
 - (f) 1 lay member.

Members in (b) to (f) above are all appointed by the Chief Executive.

- 3.2 The membership of the Council in 2015 is as follows –
- Dr Lee Kin-man (Chairman)
 - Dr Chan Cho-yee, Joseph, JP (Registrar)
 - Dr Yau Chuen-kam, JP (*up to 7.2.2015*)
 - Dr Lam Tak-chiu, Wiley, JP (*since 8.2.2015*)
 - Professor Cheung Shun-pan, Gary
 - Dr Mak Sin-ping, BBS
 - Dr Young Wan-yin, Betty
 - Dr Au Yeung Kim-hung, Nelson
 - Dr Yiu Bun-ka
 - Dr Leung Sai-man, Sigmund, JP
 - Dr Ng Pong-yin, Robert
 - Dr Chan Boon-san, Nancy (*up to 30.9.2015*)
 - Dr Lau Kin-kwan, Kenny (*since 1.10.2015*)
 - Miss Chan Chiu-ling, Ophelia, BBS (*up to 31.8.2015*)
 - Ms Wong Yu-pok, Marina, JP (*since 1.9.2015*)

The Council's Legal Adviser is Mr Chan Chor-chak, Charles (*up to 28.1.2015*) and Mr Ng Cheuk-kwan, Stanley (*since 29.1.2015*), and its Secretary is Mr Siu Wing-ho, Joseph.



Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) and Disciplinary Proceedings

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- 4.1 The Dental Council's jurisdiction over dentists' professional conduct is laid down in the Dentists Registration Ordinance and the Dentists (Registration and Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations.
- 4.2 Disciplinary proceedings may be instituted against a registered dentist who –
- (a) has been convicted in Hong Kong or elsewhere of an offence punishable with imprisonment; or
 - (b) has been guilty of unprofessional conduct; or
 - (c) has obtained registration by fraud or misrepresentation; or
 - (d) has procured his name to be included in the Specialist Register by fraud or misrepresentation; or
 - (e) was not at the time of his registration entitled to be registered; or
 - (f) is practising dentistry in premises or under conditions which are unsuitable for such practice.
- 4.3 If any applicant for registration –
- (a) has been convicted in Hong Kong or elsewhere of an offence punishable with imprisonment; or
 - (b) has been guilty of unprofessional conduct; or
 - (c) is the subject of an existing order made under section 17(1)(i) or (ii) of the repealed Dentists Registration Ordinance 1940,
- an inquiry may be instituted to determine whether or not the name of the applicant should be admitted by the Council for entry to the General Register.
- 4.4 The Council has published a Code of Professional Discipline for information to each registered dentist to provide general guidance to him on the proper behaviour to be observed in the profession and what may commonly constitute unprofessional conduct. The Code is not a complete guidebook on professional ethics, nor can it specify all offences which may lead to disciplinary action. Ultimately it is for the Council to decide on the merits of each individual case as to whether the conduct of an individual dental practitioner under complaint or information received constitutes unprofessional conduct.



- 4.5 Complaints or information received against registered dentists touching on matters of unprofessional conduct are normally either lodged with the Council by individuals or referred to the Council by the press, the police or such other organizations as the Consumer Council. In accordance with the statutory procedure, individual complaints may normally be handled under the following procedures –
- (a) initial consideration by the Chairman of the Council's Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) who must, unless it appears to him that the complaint is frivolous or groundless and should not proceed further, direct that the case be referred to the PIC for consideration;
 - (b) examination by the PIC of the complaint or information received as well as the explanation of the defendant dentist to determine whether or not there is a prima facie case for a formal inquiry; and
 - (c) inquiry by the Council, which sits in a panel of at least 4 Council Members, to hear the evidence of the complaint and representations from the defendant dentist.
- 4.6 The PIC is made up of 3 members. Its composition is as follows –
- (a) 1 member of the Dental Council elected by the Council, who shall be the Chairman of the Committee;
 - (b) 2 registered dentists who are not members of the Council and who shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Council –
 - (i) from a panel of not less than 12 such registered dentists nominated by HKDA; or
 - (ii) in the event of HKDA failing to nominate at least 12 such registered dentists, at the discretion of the Chairman.
- 4.7 The membership of the PIC in 2015 is as follows –
Dr Yiu Bun-ka (Chairman)
Dr Sun Yee-wah, David
Dr Foo Tai-chuen (*up to 31.5.2015*)
Dr Ip Hing-leung (*since 1.6.2015*)
- 4.8 In 2015, the Council had processed a total of 126 complaint cases, representing a decrease of 27% when compared with the figure of 2014. **Table 1** shows the different nature of the complaints received. Comparative figures for the years 2013 and 2014 are also shown in the table. 79% of the complaints received were related to the disregard of professional responsibilities to patients.
- 4.9 The number of complaints processed in 2015 under the 3-stage process mentioned in paragraph 4.5 above is given in **Table 2**. 124 were dismissed by the Chairman of the PIC. The PIC held 6 meetings in 2015 and considered 17 cases, out of which 9 cases (i.e. 53%) were referred to the Council for inquiry.



- 4.10 **Table 3** gives a closer look into the PIC's work in 2015. 17 cases were discussed. Of the 9 cases referred for formal inquiry, 1 case had been heard in 2015 and 8 cases were scheduled for 2016.
- 4.11 The majority of complaints did not reach the inquiry stage but were dismissed either by the PIC Chairman or at the decision of the PIC. They were dismissed either due to their frivolous nature or because they were related to such allegations which could not be taken as unprofessional conduct. It was worth pointing out that some of the complaints touched on civil claims or compensation of professional negligence, rather than unprofessional conduct of the registered dentist which should more appropriately be dealt with through civil proceedings.
- 4.12 At an inquiry, the defendant dentist is normally represented by his defence counsel. The Secretary of the Council, who is normally represented by a Government Counsel of the Department of Justice, is responsible for presenting evidence to substantiate the disciplinary charges, including the calling of witness and independent expert opinion. Hence, it is normally not necessary for the complainant to engage his own legal representative to present the case at the disciplinary hearing.
- 4.13 The Legal Adviser to the Council sits throughout the hearing to assist the Council to deal with any legal issues raised at the disciplinary hearing. It should be stressed that, in deciding on whether the defendant dentist is guilty of the charges laid against him, the Council has to be satisfied with the evidence put before it, and the standard of proof applied in each case has to be commensurate with the gravity of the offence charged.
- 4.14 In the event that the Council is satisfied after an inquiry that a dentist has committed an offence which amounts to unprofessional conduct, any one of the following disciplinary sanctions may be considered –
- (a) removal of the dentist's name from the General Register and/or Specialist Register as appropriate; or
 - (b) removal of the dentist's name from the General Register and/or Specialist Register as appropriate for such period as the Council may think fit; or
 - (c) reprimand; or
 - (d) any other order as the Council thinks fit, but no such order is to be of greater severity than those in (a) to (c) above.

The Council has the power to suspend the operation of an order made under (a), (b) or (c) for a period or periods not exceeding 2 years, in which case the order will not take effect unless during the suspension period the dentist is found guilty of another disciplinary offence or is in breach of a condition of the suspension order.



- 4.15 **Table 4** shows the number of inquiries conducted by the Council in 2015. 4 inquiry cases were heard and concluded in 2015. In those 4 inquiries, all of the 4 dentists were found guilty. 2 dentists were served with warning letters; 1 dentist had his name removed from the General Register for 3 months; and 1 dentist was reprimanded and had his name removed from the General Register for 2 months.
- 4.16 Any dentist who is aggrieved by the order of the Council may appeal to the Court of Appeal of the High Court and the Court of Final Appeal. The Courts may affirm, reverse or vary the order appealed against. **Table 5** shows the number of appeals lodged against the Council's orders in the years 2013 through 2015. 2 appeal cases carried forward from 2013 and 2014 respectively were settled in 2015. 1 appeal case carried forward from 2013 was still in progress in the year.



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Licensing Examination of the Dental Council

- 5.1 The Dental Council has appointed the Examination Committee and the Board of Examiners to assist in administering the licensing examination of the Council. The Examination Committee is the policy arm of the Council in recommending the policy, format and rules governing the examination whereas the Board of Examiners is responsible for conducting the licensing examination.
- 5.2 The Examination Committee consists of –
- (a) 2 members of the Dental Council (one of them shall be the Chairman);
 - (b) 2 registered dentists/full-time teaching staff of the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU nominated by HKU;
 - (c) 2 registered dentists nominated by the College of Dental Surgeons of Hong Kong (CDSHK) of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (HKAM);
 - (d) 2 registered dentists nominated by HKDA; and
 - (e) 2 registered dentists being public officers and nominated by DH; and
 - (f) the incumbent Chairman of the Board of Examiners.
- 5.3 The membership of the Committee in 2015 is as follows –
- Dr Yiu Bun-ka (Dental Council) (Chairman) (*up to 15.2.2015*)
 - Dr Lee Kin-man (Dental Council) (Chairman) (*since 16.2.2015*)
 - Dr Au Yeung Kim-hung, Nelson (Dental Council)
 - Professor Lo Chin-man, Edward (HKU)
 - Professor Esmonde Francis Corbet (HKU)
 - Dr Cho Shiu-yin, Rony (CDSHK)
 - Dr Leung Chiu-man, Katherine (CDSHK)
 - Dr Foo Tai-chuen (HKDA)
 - Dr Lau Kin-kwan, Kenny (HKDA) (*since 9.4.2015*)
 - Dr Chan Cho-yee, Joseph, JP (DH)
 - Dr Yau Chuen-kam, JP (DH) (*up to 15.2.2015*)
 - Dr Lam Tak-chiu, Wiley, JP (*since 16.2.2015*)
 - Professor Cheung Shun-pan, Gary (Chairman, Board of Examiners)
- 5.4 The composition of the Board of Examiners is as follows –
- (a) 5 registered dentists/full-time teaching staff of the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU nominated by HKU;
 - (b) 1 registered dentist nominated by CDSHK;
 - (c) 1 registered dentist nominated by HKDA;
 - (d) 1 registered dentist being a public officer and nominated by DH; and
 - (e) a panel of Additional Examiners for up to 15 persons who are registered dentists with extensive general practice experience as nominated by the Chairman of the Examination Committee of the Dental Council.



5.5 The membership of the Board of Examiners in 2015 is as follows –

Professor Cheung Shun-pan, Gary (HKU) (Chairman)

Dr Choi Wing-shan, Winnie (HKU)

Professor Leung Wai-keung (HKU)

Dr Pow Ho-nang, Edmond (HKU)

Professor Yiu Kar-yung, Cynthia (HKU)

Dr Liu Wai-ming, Haston (CDSHK)

Dr Wai Tak-shun, Dustin (HKDA)

Dr Tong Chi-kit, Antonio (DH)

Panel of Additional Examiners

Dr Chan Wai-kit, Raymond

Dr Chan Wo-chi, Francis

Dr Foo Tai-chuen

Dr Fang Tak-sang, Daniel

Dr Kum Chun-sing

Dr Lam Tak-chiu, Wiley, JP

Dr Law Chi-ming

Dr Lee Pak-cheung, Patrick

Dr Ng Chi-hong

Dr Pang Wai-yuk, Arthur

Dr Siu Hin-ho

Dr Sun Yee-wah, David

Dr Tang Kam-kee

Dr Wong Johnny

Dr Yiu Bun-ka

5.6 Licensing examination is conducted by the Board of Examiners. The examination is intended for those non-Hong Kong trained dentists who wish to register as dentists in Hong Kong. On passing the examination, the candidate is qualified to apply for registration with the Dental Council. For the purpose of monitoring and maintaining the standard of the examination at an international level, an overseas examiner is appointed to give comments on the multiple choice question papers and to examine some of the candidates in the practical and clinical parts of the examination. The overseas examiner would also provide comments on the content and conduct of the examination for consideration of the Board of Examiners.

5.7 The examination consists of the following 3 parts –

(a) Part I – Multiple-choice question papers, to be taken in either Chinese or English, on professional subjects including Applied Basic Sciences; Medicine and Surgery in relation to Dentistry; Dental Pharmacology and Therapeutics, and Medical Emergencies in relation to Dentistry; Oral Surgery, Oral Medicine and Oral Pathology; Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics; Conservative Dentistry; Periodontology, Preventive Dentistry and Dental Public Health; and Prosthodontics.



- (b) Part II – Practical Test which is designed to test the candidates' manual dexterity and professional competence in Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics; Prosthodontics; Conservative Dentistry; Periodontology and Dental Public Health; and Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery.
- (c) Part III – Clinical Test which is designed to test the candidates' ability to apply their professional knowledge to clinical situations particularly in diagnosis, treatment planning and treatment in the restoration of teeth; diagnosis and treatment of periodontal conditions; prosthodontic treatment provision; surgical management of patients; and the diagnosis, treatment planning, and management of infants, children and adolescents.

5.8 Details of the results of the examinations since 1997 are shown at **Table 6**.

5.9 The Dental Council has set up a Licensing Examination Appeal Mechanism for applicants seeking permission to take the Licensing Examination and for candidates who are aggrieved by the decisions of the Examination Committee and/or the Board of Examiners regarding the examination. A Review Committee with membership independent of the Council was established in 2010 to deal with applications made under the appeal mechanism.

5.10 The composition of the Review Committee is as follows –

- (a) 1 registered dentist nominated by DH;
- (b) 1 registered dentists nominated by the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU;
- (c) 1 registered dentist nominated by CDSHK;
- (d) 1 registered dentist nominated by HKDA; and
- (e) 1 lay person.

5.11 The membership of the Review Committee in 2015 is as follows –

Dr Chu Chun-hung (HKU) (Chairman)
Dr Cheng Chi-fung (DH)
Dr Ho Kam-yuen (CDSHK)
Dr Leung Fun-shing, Vincent (HKDA)
Ms Constance Choy (Lay person)

5.12 From 2015/2016 onwards, the number of sittings of the Licensing Examination has been increased from 1 to 2 per annum.

5.13 To enhance the Licensing Examination, the Dental Council set up an Ad Hoc Expert Panel re Question Bank and Examination Policy in 2015 to review the examination policy and to validate examination questions. The revised examination policy, with revisions on the areas of result retention and admission, has been endorsed and adopted for use from the 2015 Licensing Examination onwards. The Ad Hoc Expert Panel will continue to work to improve the question bank in 2016.



Registration and Restoration of Names of Dentists on the Register

- 6.1 As at 31 December 2015, names of 2,382 dentists were entered in the General Register, either as being residents in Hong Kong or residents outside Hong Kong. **Table 7(A)** shows that there has been a steady increase in the number of registered dentists from 2,310 in 2013, 2,343 in 2014 to 2,382 in 2015.
- 6.2 One of the major tasks for the Dental Council Secretariat is to keep the entries in the General Register accurate and up-to-date while enabling public access to those names currently registered on the list. Hundreds of transactions are carried out on the updating of the General Register on a monthly basis, which include change and/or addition of practising addresses, registration of additional qualifications, deletion from or restoration of the dentists' names to the General Register, transfer to and from the resident and non-resident lists respectively, as well as issuance of Certificate of Good Standing, Duplicate Copy of Certificate of Registration, Certified Copy of Certificate of Registration (which is required when a dentist opens a new clinic for the practice of dentistry) and certificates verifying registration, etc. In addition, with the aim of providing a public service, the Council Secretariat processes an annual average of over 5,000 general enquiries from members of the profession and the public on registration-related matters.
- 6.3 **Table 7(B)** lists in detail the registration figures as well as cases of restoration to the General Register in 2013, 2014 and 2015 respectively.
- 6.4 In addition to the registered dentists with full registration, there were 19 "deemed-to-be registered" dentists in 2015. The "deemed-to-be registered" clause was introduced under section 30(3) of the Dentists Registration Ordinance to enable all persons on full-time teaching employment of the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU to discharge their teaching duties or perform hospital work in the Faculty of Dentistry of the University.
- 6.5 A dentist who has the qualifications, experience and other attributes approved by the Dental Council may apply to the Council for inclusion of his name in the Specialist Register under a specialty. The objective of maintaining a Specialist Register is for the recognition of expertise so that patients may be referred to them for opinion and/or consultation if the need arises.
- 6.6 As at 31 December 2015, a total of 246 registered dentists had their names included in the Specialist Register under the following eight specialties – Orthodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Periodontology, Endodontics, Paediatric Dentistry, Prosthodontics, Family Dentistry and Community Dentistry.



- 6.7 Another key task for the Council Secretariat is the annual exercise of renewal of practising certificates for all registered dentists whose names are on the General Register. In 2015, a total of 2,171 letters were issued to invite those registered dentists to renew their annual practising certificates for 2016.
- 6.8 Every registered dentist whose name is on the General Register for dentists resident in Hong Kong is reminded at the end of the year that his practising certificate is due for renewal. A dentist who fails to apply for a new practising certificate on time may be liable for his name to be removed from the General Register and the Specialist Register.



Education and Accreditation Committee (EAC)

- 7.1 The Education and Accreditation Committee (EAC) was set up under Section 5C of the Dentists Registration Ordinance. The EAC has the following functions –
- (a) to recommend to the Dental Council the specialties under which the names of registered dentists may be included in the Specialist Register;
 - (b) to recommend to the Council the qualifications, experience and other attributes that qualify a registered dentist to have his name included in the Specialist Register under a specialty recommended by the Committee under (a) above;
 - (c) to recommend to the Council the procedures and documentations for an application to include the name of a registered dentist in the Specialist Register;
 - (d) to make recommendations to the Council so that it may decide whether the name of a registered dentist should be included in, or removed from, the Specialist Register;
 - (e) to review and recommend to the Council the standard and structure of undergraduate dental education and training in dentistry required for a person to become a registered dentist; and
 - (f) such other functions as are imposed on it under the Dentists Registration Ordinance.
- 7.2 The EAC considers and recommends to the Council in respect of applications for registration of additional qualifications. A new set of “Guidelines for Inclusion of Qualifications in the List of Registrable/Quotable Additional Qualifications” has been put in place since November 2010. A “List of Registrable/Quotable Additional Qualifications” was also established. Once a qualification has been included in the List, a dentist possessing that qualification may quote such in the dissemination of his service information to the public. If the dentist so chooses, he may also apply for including the said qualification in his entry in the General Register.
- 7.3 As for the accreditation exercise on undergraduate dental education and training in dentistry, the EAC has maintained a close working relationship with the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU to ensure proper implementation of the recommendations.
- 7.4 The composition of the EAC consists of the following members appointed by the Dental Council –
- (a) 3 members of the Council (one of them shall be the Chairman);
 - (b) a registered dentist nominated by HKU;
 - (c) a registered dentist nominated by HKAM;
 - (d) a registered dentist nominated by DH; and
 - (e) a registered dentist nominated by HKDA.



- 7.5 The membership of the EAC in 2015 is as follows –
Dr Ng Pong-yin, Robert (Dental Council) (Chairman)
Dr Leung Sai-man, Sigmund, JP (Dental Council)
Dr Yiu Bun-ka (Dental Council) (*up to 15.2.2015*)
Dr Mak Sin-ping, BBS (Dental Council) (*since 16.2.2015*)
Professor Leung Wai-keung (HKU)
Dr Pow, Ho-nang, Edmond (HKAM)
Dr Tsang Chee-ching, Alfred (DH) (*up to 9.12.2015*)
Dr Yeung Kar-hing (DH) (*since 10.12.2015*)
Dr Foo Tai-chuen (HKDA)

- 7.6 As at 31 December 2015, a total of 246 dentists have been included in the Specialist Register under the following specialties –

| <u>Specialist title</u> | <u>No. of specialist dentists</u> |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Specialist in Orthodontics | 63 |
| Specialist in Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery | 52 |
| Specialist in Periodontology | 37 |
| Specialist in Endodontics | 18 |
| Specialist in Paediatric Dentistry | 33 |
| Specialist in Prosthodontics | 24 |
| Specialist in Family Dentistry | 12 |
| Specialist in Community Dentistry | 7 |



Continuing Professional Development Committee (CPDC)

- 8.1 A Continuing Professional Development Committee (CPDC) has been set up to monitor and review the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Programme. The terms of reference of CPDC are as follows –
- (a) to monitor the process of accreditation of CPD activities;
 - (b) to recommend CPD Programme Providers, CPD Programme Accreditors and CPD Programme Administrators for approval by the Dental Council;
 - (c) to recommend award of the CPD certificate for approval by the Council; and
 - (d) to conduct review of the CPD Programme for practising dentists.
- 8.2 The CPDC comprises the following representatives –
- (a) 3 representatives from the Dental Council (one of them shall be the Chairman);
 - (b) a representative from CDSHK;
 - (c) a representative from HKDA; and
 - (d) a representative from the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU.
- 8.3 The membership of the CPDC in 2015 is as follows –
- Dr Leung Sai-man, Sigmund, JP (Dental Council) (Chairman) (*up to 7.10.2015*)
 - Dr Au Yeung Kim-hung, Nelson (Dental Council) (Chairman) (*since 8.10.2015*)
 - Dr Chan Boon-san, Nancy (Dental Council) (*up to 30.9.2015*)
 - Dr Lau Kin-kwan, Kenny (Dental Council) (*since 8.10.2015*)
 - Professor Cheung Shun-pan, Gary (Dental Council)
 - Dr Chan Sai-kwing (CDSHK)
 - Dr Leung Fun-shing, Vincent (HKDA)
 - Dr Leung Chiu-man, Katherine (HKU)
- 8.4 The CPD Programme has been running since 2002. In view of the fact that dentists in many countries are required to undergo “mandatory continuous learning” in order to maintain their professional status, the Dental Council considers that it is necessary to explore the feasibility of mandatory CPD Programme for registered dentists in Hong Kong. In this regard, the Dental Council has been reviewing the CPD Programme in order to formulate a strategic plan for long-term development. 1-year cycle of CPD Programme for practising dentists on voluntary basis has been adopted since 1 January 2014 as an interim measure. Same in the past cycles, the CPD Programme continued to adopt a ‘credit point system’ with credit points awarded for participation in CPD activities recognized by the Council. A minimum of 15 credit points had to be accumulated over the 1-year cycle ending 31 December 2015. While the review is still in progress, the following CPD cycle commencing from 1 January 2016 will remain voluntary and the duration will continue to be one year.



8.5 As in the past, all registered dentists, including those deemed-to-be registered but excluding those on the overseas list, can enroll in the CPD Programme.

8.6 Upon the recommendation of the CPDC, the following CPD Programme Accreditors, CPD Programme Administrators and CPD Programme Providers have been appointed by the Dental Council -

CPD Programme Accreditors

CDSHK

HKDA

CPD Programme Administrators

HKDA

DH (for Dental Officers of the Department of Health only)

CPD Programme Providers

CDSHK

HKDA

DH

Faculty of Dentistry of HKU

Hong Kong Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons

Hong Kong Society of Orthodontists

Hong Kong Endodontic Society

Hong Kong Society of Periodontology

Hong Kong Society of Paediatric Dentistry

Hong Kong Prosthetic Dentistry Society

Hong Kong Society of Family Dentistry

8.7 The Dental Council, on the recommendation of the CPDC, awarded CPD Certificates to 575 practising dentists who have satisfactorily completed the CPD cycle ending 31 December 2015. These dentists are allowed to use the title "CPD Certified (2015)" in their visiting cards and letterheads.



Communication with the Profession and the Public

9

- 9.1 In order to enhance communication between the Dental Council and members of the profession, the Council, apart from publishing an annual report, will issue circular letters to all dental practitioners in Hong Kong from time to time.
- 9.2 The Council welcomes any views from members of the profession on issues which the Council can undertake to further explore and review so as to keep the profession abreast of the latest development in knowledge and skills in dental services for the benefits of members of the public.
- 9.3 The Council hosts a website <http://www.dchk.org.hk> to provide the following information –
- (a) Membership of the Council and its subsidiary committees and boards;
 - (b) Information on the date of an upcoming inquiry of the Council;
 - (c) Text of the Code of Professional Discipline for the Guidance of Dental Practitioners in Hong Kong;
 - (d) Information pamphlet and form in relation to complaints against registered dentists;
 - (e) List of registered dentists;
 - (f) Guidelines and form in relation to application to be a specialist dentist;
 - (g) Text of the Annual Report of the Dental Council;
 - (h) Information on the Continuing Professional Development Programme (CPD) for Practising Dentists;
 - (i) List of dentists who have met the CPD requirements set by the Dental Council;
 - (j) Guidelines for Inclusion of Qualifications in the List of Registrable/Quotable Additional Qualifications;
 - (k) List of Registrable/Quotable Additional Qualifications;
 - (l) Application for sitting the Licensing Examination of the Dental Council;
 - (m) Scope of dental work that may be undertaken by enrolled dental hygienists;
 - (n) Competences for the Hong Kong Dentist; and
 - (o) Judgments of the Dental Council.
- 9.4 To facilitate members of the public to have access to the practice information of dental practitioners, the Council has approved dentists to provide such information through an electronic directory of dentists developed by approved organizations. Since 2003, the Council has approved HKDA to maintain an electronic directory of dentists.



Future Developments

- 10.1 The Dental Council is committed to continue leading the dental profession in its role for greater professionalism. In meeting the community's changing needs and rising public expectations on the profession, the Council must stay up-to-date of the community's aspiration as well as the latest developments in technology and demands in dental service.
- 10.2 The Council believes that with the rapid clinical and scientific development, dental practitioners have the obligation to keep themselves updated on the latest development in knowledge and skills in the various fields of professional practice in order to maintain quality professional service. The Council will continue to review and closely monitor the CPD programme, and to encourage active participation of the registered dentists in the CPD Programme so as to maintain and raise further their professional competence. Besides, the Dental Council also endorsed in 2015 to set up a new Professional Standards Committee in Infection Control to ensure appropriate standards in the profession for this area with the ever-evolving environment.
- 10.3 The Council will continue to regularly look into the scope for improving procedures and processes in the handling of disciplinary cases of registered dentists to further enhance efficiency and transparency. Save for exceptional circumstances, the Council's disciplinary inquiries are normally held in public. This will remain the practice of the Council. Information on the date and venue of an upcoming disciplinary inquiry has also been posted on the Council's website for information to members of the public and interested parties.
- 10.4 The Council's Secretariat will continue to enhance its efficiency in the provision of services to members of the profession as well as the public. In particular, arrangement has been made to update regularly the information posted on the Council's website such that the most up-to-date information on various issues pertaining to the activities of the Council as well as the practice of dentistry in Hong Kong can be made available to the public.
- 10.5 The Council is answerable to the public and has the continuing statutory duty to ensure that all persons are of the required professional standard before they are given the registration to practise in Hong Kong. To this end, the Council will conduct accreditation exercise on the degree of Bachelor of Dental Surgery of the University of Hong Kong at 5-year cycle intervals. The first accreditation exercise was completed in 2013 and the Council has granted accredited status to the University of Hong Kong. The Council will continue to keep close contact with the Faculty of Dentistry of the University of Hong Kong for conducting the second accreditation exercise in 2017.



Statistics on Complaints Received by the Dental Council

| Nature | No. of Cases | | |
|--|--------------|------------|------------|
| | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| 1. Conviction punishable with imprisonment | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| 2. Disregard of professional responsibilities to patients | 133 | 130 | 100 |
| 3. Abuse of alcohol or drugs | - | - | - |
| 4. Abuse of dangerous or scheduled drugs | - | - | - |
| 4A. Mandatory labeling of all dispensed medicines | - | - | - |
| 5. Abuse of professional position in order to further an improper association or commit adultery | - | - | - |
| 6. Abuse of professional confidence | - | - | - |
| 7. Depreciation of other dental practitioners | - | - | - |
| 8. Canvassing | 17 | 23 | 9 |
| 9. Misleading and unapproved descriptions and announcements | 2 | 4 | - |
| 10. Improper financial transactions | - | - | - |
| 11. Untrue or misleading certificates and other professional documents | - | - | - |
| 12. Covering | 1 | - | - |
| 13. Improper delegation of dental duties | - | - | 2 |
| 14. Responsibility of partners and directors | - | - | - |
| 15. Miscellaneous | 13 | 15 | 13 |
| Total : | 168 | 173 | 126 |

Work of the Council's Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) in 2015

Table 2

| Nature | Total no. of Cases |
|---|--------------------|
| Cases received | 126 |
| Cases dismissed by PIC Chairman (including cases carried forward from previous years) | 124 |
| Cases considered by the PIC (including cases carried forward from previous years) | 17 |
| Cases referred by the PIC to Dental Council for disciplinary inquiry | 9 |



Work Statistics of the Council's Preliminary Investigation Committee in 2015

Table 3

| | Quarter | | | | Total |
|--|-------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | Jan-Mar | Apr-Jun | Jul-Sept | Oct-Dec | |
| No. of PIC Meeting | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| No. of new cases considered | 1 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 17 |
| No. of cases carried forward from previous meeting | - | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| No. of cases dismissed (%) | - | 4 (50%) | 1 (50%) | 3 (37.5%) | 8 (47%) |
| No. of cases referred to inquiry (%) | - | 3 (37.5%) | 1 (50%) | 5 (62.5%) | 9 (53%) |
| Investigation in progress (%) | 1 (100%) | 1 (12.5%) | - | - | - |



Inquiries Conducted by the Dental Council in 2015

Table 4

| No. of Inquiries | Nature | Findings by Dental Council |
|------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Disregard of professional responsibilities to patients | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 dentist was served with a warning letter (order gazetted) |
| 1 | Conviction punishable with imprisonment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 dentist was served with a warning letter |
| 1 | Disregard of professional responsibilities to patients | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 dentist whose name was removed from the General Register for 3 months (order gazetted) |
| 1 | Disregard of professional responsibilities to patients | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 dentist was reprimanded and whose name was removed from the General Register for 2 months (orders gazetted) |

Total : 4



Figures on Appeal Cases

Table 5

| | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|---|------|------|------|
| No. of appeals lodged | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| No. of appeal cases carried forward from previous years | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Total no. of appeal cases in progress in the year | 3 | 3 | 1 |

Result of appeal cases concluded in the year:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (a) Dismissed by Consent | - | - | - |
| (b) Dismissed by Court of Appeal | - | - | 1 |
| (c) Allowed | 1 | - | - |
| (d) Allowed with Substitute Order | - | - | 1 |
| Total no. of appeal cases concluded in the year | 1 | 0 | 2 |



Results of the Dental Council's Licensing Examination since 1997

Table 6

| Year | PART I | | | PART II | | | PART III | | |
|------|---------|------------|--------|---------|------------|--------|----------|------------|--------|
| | No. Sat | No. Passed | Pass % | No. Sat | No. Passed | Pass % | No. Sat | No. Passed | Pass % |
| 1997 | 35 | 15 | 43% | 37 | 17 | 46% | 19 | 12 | 63% |
| 1998 | 30 | 18 | 60% | 28 | 14 | 50% | 23 | 14 | 61% |
| 1999 | 27 | 13 | 48% | 26 | 10 | 38% | 20 | 8 | 40% |
| 2000 | 38 | 21 | 55% | 30 | 11 | 37% | 21 | 12 | 57% |
| 2001 | 28 | 10 | 36% | 21 | 11 | 52% | 19 | 13 | 68% |
| 2002 | 24 | 8 | 33% | 13 | 5 | 38% | 9 | 7 | 78% |
| 2003 | 26 | 7 | 27% | 12 | 5 | 42% | 7 | 7 | 100% |
| 2004 | 23 | 10 | 43% | 16 | 6 | 38% | 6 | 5 | 83% |
| 2005 | 30 | 10 | 33% | 20 | 5 | 25% | 6 | 4 | 67% |
| 2006 | 29 | 18 | 62% | 30 | 14 | 47% | 12 | 6 | 50% |
| 2007 | 27 | 10 | 37% | 25 | 10 | 40% | 16 | 9 | 56% |
| 2008 | 41 | 18 | 44% | 33 | 12 | 36% | 16 | 12 | 75% |
| 2009 | 49 | 20 | 41% | 33 | 10 | 30% | 16 | 10 | 63% |
| 2010 | 48 | 21 | 44% | 36 | 8 | 22% | 14 | 6 | 42% |
| 2011 | 46 | 8 | 17% | 29 | 2 | 7% | 10 | 7 | 70% |
| 2012 | 46 | 4 | 9% | 28 | 9 | 32% | 10 | 7 | 70% |
| 2013 | 45 | 4 | 9% | 16 | 3 | 19% | 8 | 6 | 75% |
| 2014 | 53 | 17 | 32% | 27 | 7 | 26% | 8 | 3 | 38% |
| 2015 | 40 | 3 | 8% | 17 | 7 | 41% | 18 | 12 | 67% |



Number of Registered Dentists

Table

(A) Total Number of dentists on the Register of Dentists of Hong Kong (as at 31 December 2015)

| | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Dentists resident in Hong Kong | 2,101 | 2,133 | 2,171 |
| Dentists resident outside Hong Kong | 209 | 210 | 211 |
| Total | 2,310 | 2,343 | 2,382 |

(B) Breakdown of new registration and restoration of names to the Register

| | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|
| New Registration | 59 | 53 | 58 |
| Restoration to the Register | 3 | 3 | 7 |
| Total | 62 | 56 | 65 |

