

Ian Brack
Chief Executive and Registrar
General Dental Council

By email

23 March 2020

Dear Ian

CPD requirements

We are writing to you today to ask the GDC to consider leniency regarding registrants' ability to comply with CPD requirements this year.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to unprecedented situations of social distancing; dentists and their teams are struggling to follow changing government guidance where that is available at all, and fear for the viability of their businesses. At the time of writing, the country is not yet in a formal lockdown, but many of the provisions enacted by government so far have led to a standstill in many walks of life. The BDA, like many other organisations, has cancelled local and central meetings, workshops, seminars and conferences which registrants might have relied upon for their personal development plans and CPD compliance.

While online CPD provision can continue, not all registrants are necessarily set up fully to undertake all their CPD online during the current time. They might also be redeployed to work in different settings, using their time to provide patient care under different circumstances and within possibly changed working hours and settings which might make it difficult to plan properly for CPD compliance.

We are therefore writing to ask the GDC not to enforce the CPD rules for dentists and DCPs this year. At the present time, the declaration time for dental care professionals is not far away, and they will either have to make a declaration proving that they have undertaken at least 10 hours in the last two years, or make an end-of-cycle declaration. Similarly for dentists, the knock-on effects of the current crisis for the end of the year declarations might make it impossible for some to comply while they try to rebuild their professional lives, and worries over CPD compliance in this situation would aggravate the stress they and their teams are facing. In addition, there will be a number of dentists who are just about to be removed from the register at the end of March for these reasons but who have engaged with the GDC about the issue, which is extremely counterproductive in terms of timing.

Registrants being administratively removed from the register for non-compliance under such circumstances would also have a colossal negative impact on the slowly improving confidence of the profession in the regulator.

The General Medical Council has deferred by a year the requirements for revalidation for those due to revalidate by September 2020. We hope the GDC can make a similar gesture by not enforcing the CPD rules in 2020. Some might still be able to comply, and the BDA will continue supporting professionals to do their CPD through its online facilities. However, to take the pressure off the dental profession at this difficult time, we ask that you consider not enforcing the requirements for all GDC registrant groups this year.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Martin Woodrow
Chief Executive Officer