T he General Dental Council (GDC) has appointed new members to its independent Appointments Committee - which monitors its Fitness to Practise Panel.

The role of the Appointments Committee is to oversee the training and performance of the General Dental Council (GDC)'s independent Fitness to Practise Panel, made up of 76 members, and recruit new members as required. In the future it will also be responsible for recommending members for the Council's Investigating Committee, which considers allegations of impaired fitness to practise and decides whether a case should be referred to one of the Practice Committees.

Sally Irvine, the new chair of the Appointments Committee is currently a member of the GDC and will be resigning before she takes up her appointment. She said: ‘All those joining the new Committee bring a wealth of invaluable experience from a variety of sectors, and I look forward to working with them to ensure that the GDC’s high standards continue to be met.’

The other new members are Nicola Billot, currently working as a dental nurse manager for Greenwich Healthcare NHS Trust; Jeanne Goulding, a lay member of the General Medical Council’s Fitness to Practise Panels and a management consultant; John Hunt, chief executive of the British Dental Association from 1992 to 2000; Ray McAndrew, clinical director for Community Dental Services in Glasgow; Marcia Roberts, chief executive of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation; James Walker, independent assessor for the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

The Clinical Governance Performance Management (CGPM) system has already been selected by the Dental Governance Committee (representing three primary care trusts (PCTs)) and the KSS Dental Postgraduate Deanery.

A spokeswoman for Smile-on said: ‘Because the responsibility for ensuring that practices implement satisfactory Clinical Governance lies with the PCTs, Smile-on has provided CGPM, which allows practices to upload progress details to www.cgpmuk.com for easy monitoring by PCTs.’

Key features of CGPM include a free-of-charge messaging system and resources from the KSS Deanery and PCTs that are constantly updated.

The programme enables practices to meet clinical governance core requirements.

Clinical governance is part of the NHS drive to improve the quality of health care and to make providers accountable for delivering a consistent standard on which patients can rely.

Barry Cockcroft, chief dental officer, who was present at the launch of the programme, said he believes clinical governance is vital because ‘it’s a key part of delivering a quality service to patients’ and because ‘an initiative like this makes the dentists feel really involved’.

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