The General Dental Council (GDC) has opened its new 12 week consultation into revalidation. The aim of the revalidation is to provide a way of checking that dentists continue to meet GDC.

The issue that the GDC’s Fitness to Practise proceedings has had in the past is that it is assumed dental professionals are continuing to meet its standards, unless the regulator receives information which suggests otherwise. The GDC have admitted that this is not good enough.

The GDC plans to introduce revalidation for dentists in 2014: they have stated that the revalidation will simply build on the current requirements for continuing professional development and will provide an opportunity for those in difficulty to identify and tackle any problems before they become serious.

A standards and evidence framework will set out the standards dentists must meet under the four domains of clinical, management and leadership, communication and professionalism. The framework will also set out the evidence which will be acceptable to demonstrate compliance with each standard.

The consultation can be found on the GDC’s website www.gdc-uk.org. The proposals aim to avoid over-regulation by making as much use of existing and developing quality systems.

The consultation takes into account the findings of an earlier consultation, research and pilots carried out in 2009.

Chair of the GDC’s Revalidation Working Group and Council Member, Denis Toppin said: “We are keen to get feedback from a range of stakeholders including registrants, patients, organisations representing the interests of patients and providers of quality initiatives. We want to make sure we get it right for the dentists we regulate. As a practising GDP I want the GDC to keep the extra regulatory burden to a minimum whilst maximising patient protection. We need you to get involved and have your say on our proposals so that you can help us to get them right and have the confidence of the public and professionals alike.”

The consultation will end on 31 October 2010.
Editorial comment

Fresh after another successful BDTA Showcase I hope readers are not counting the cost of gadgets and gizmos on their credit cards (although, one dentist said to me ‘I don’t need the cards they all know me’). There was a lot to see and hear at the event, so look out in the next issue for a comprehensive review of the exhibition.

Of course, the majority of the talk in the coffee shops was CQC registration. One of the main bugbears was the lack of information about fees; even those who have been on the advisory boards had to admit exasperatedly that they didn’t have a clue what the potential fees might be! Conspiracy theorists amongst you are convinced that the CQC were waiting for the GDC’s fee announcement (for your thoughts on that go to page six...) to see what they could get away with. Not something I’d necessarily agree with, but it is easy to understand the frustrations of knowing you have to sort this CQC-thing out but not being able to properly budget for all of the fees being piled up on practices. We all need clear guidance from CQC about fees, regulation, expectation... a lot of things really, and with the start of registration date looming, this guidance should be here.

Colgate DCP Research Awards

The Colgate DCP Research Awards are in partnership with the Oral Dental Research Trust (ODRT) and support research of clinical relevance, which has been carried out by Dental Care Professionals. There is a special emphasis on preventive care and up to four awards, each to a value of £2,500, are presented annually.

The 2010 awardees were presented with their certificates by Professor Angus Walls, Chair of the Oral Dental Research Trust, at a reception and luncheon held at the British Dental Conference in Liverpool earlier this year.

Professor Walls commented that: “The Colgate DCP Research Awards is recognised as an important forward looking initiative encouraging DCPs to embark on novel research of immediate clinical relevance and help build and strengthen the academic base of the entire dental team.”

The Colgate DCP Research Awards is an important introduction to research methodology for those who have never been involved in research previously and it offers all DCPs the opportunity to carry out research. A research team can be made up of all members of a general dental practice, including dental nurses, hygienists, technicians and therapists, and may also include a dentist as a mentor or supervisor.

Look out for the call for 2011 applications which will be announced in the dental press before the end of this year.
Dunmurry Dental Practice gets a makeover

After an extension and refurbishment Dunmurry Dental Practice has been officially reopened and is now one of Northern Ireland’s largest dental practices.

The practice was opened by Donna O’Carolan, Chief Dental Officer for Northern Ireland. Since the development the practice has won numerous industry awards including Best Practice, Best Second Best Young Dentist in Northern Ireland (at the UK Dentistry Awards) for 2008 and 2009.

Over £400,000 was funded by Ulster Bank to finance the extension and development. Enabling the local business to provide increased dental services to the local community, where it is already providing both NHS and private dental care to over 6,000 patients.

The 100 year old property, in which the Practice is situated, has been sympathetically restored, and now offers a warm and spacious reception area, with bright and welcoming surgeries, all of which are fully equipped with state-of-the-art equipment.

Speaking at the official opening Chief Dental Officer Donna O’Carolan said: “Around 90 per cent of health service dentistry is delivered through high street dental practices such as this one. I acknowledge the significant personal and financial investment that Philip has made into Dunmurry Dental Practice. This investment enables patients in and around the Dunmurry area to access health service dentistry, practised to a high standard and in well-equipped modern facilities. You provide an essential and valued service and your commitment is greatly appreciated”.

Colgate Partners with European Dental School Deans

At the recent Association for Dental Education in Europe (ADEE) Congress held in Amsterdam, Colgate once again partnered with the Forum of European Heads and Deans of Dental Schools (FEHDD). Established in 2007, FEHDD facilitates the sharing of expertise across the continent and together with the ADEE aims to form a powerful combined ‘lobby’ for dental education.

The daylong event included a dynamic and interactive session, moderated by Jacques, whose motto is “what will be the benefit for the audience, and what are they going to change in their organisation?” bringing a wealth of experience in increasing awareness about this topic.

Professor Nairn Wilson, Secretary of FEHDD and Dean and Head of School, Kings College London, Dental Institute said “This symposium was very well received and provided very useful information to support European Deans and Heads of Dental Schools”.

Dr Anousheh Alavi, Scientific Affairs, Colgate UK and Ireland, said “Colgate are delighted to once again partner with the FEHDD. This year’s theme highlighted the importance of the key role of the deans in the current climate as agents of change”.

Light therapy research at UCL

The UCL multidisciplinary research team of the UCL Eastman Dental Institute has been awarded a grant to support their work into the use of light-activated antimicrobial agents.

The grant, which was awarded by the Medical Research Council, falls under the auspices of the Developmental Pathway Funding Scheme (DPFS), which was set up to support the development of novel health therapies, interventions, include a contribution from commercial collaborator, Onsite Biopharma Inc. and totals £1.1m. The UCL research team includes Professor Michael Wilson and Dr Jonathan Pratten, have successfully applied the technology, known as photodynamic therapy, to develop a new system named the PeriowaveTM system. The system is used in the painless treatment of periodontitis, and is planned to be extended into potential applications in the medical field, particularly in the development of catheters.

The research is entitled “The use of photodynamic therapy to prevent catheter-associated infections” and builds on the group’s knowledge and experience of work undertaken by a multidisciplinary project team that includes Professor Ivan Parkin (UCL Chemistry), Dr Chris Kay (UCL Chemistry), Dr Sandy Mosse (UCL Medical Physics and Bioengineering) and Dr Sandy MacRobert (UCL, National Medical Laser Centre).