The General Dental Council (GDC) has begun a review of its ‘Standards Guidance’ and ‘Scope of Practice’. It has been five years since the GDC published its ‘Standards Guidance’ and replaced its previous guidance document, ‘Maintaining Standards’. The move to ethical principles was a significant change in direction at the time, however, in the last five years the landscape of the regulatory world, and the GDC itself, has changed.

The GDC now registers the entire dental team – dentists, dental nurses, orthodontic therapists, dental hygienists, dental therapists, dental technicians and clinical dental technicians – and has more than 92,000 dental professionals on its registers.

The aim of the Standards of the Review will be to go back to square one. The GDC will be asking registrants, patients and other stakeholders what level of detail they would find helpful, what they think of the current standards, what works, what doesn’t and what’s missing. The review will take place throughout 2011 and will include consultations, focus groups, a working group and GDC staff attending events across the UK to hear directly from those affected.

Anyone who wishes to make any comments directly to the GDC on the current guidance can do so here (standards@gdc-uk.org).

The GDC is hoping to produce the new guidance in early 2012.

Running alongside Standards, the ‘Scope of Practice’ review will evaluate the effectiveness of the current document, which outlines the role of each member of the dental team; it also summarises what additional skills they might go on to learn.

A call for feedback on ‘Scope of Practice’ will be launched at the end of January 2011 and will be available on the GDC website www.gdc-uk.org. The forum will ask registrants to give their views on the document, stating whether they feel the dental team work together more effectively; they can also lead feedback on what skills may need to be added or amended for each of the seven registrant groups.

Dr David Smith, Chair of the Standards Committee, said: “The reviews of both of these documents could result in a radical redesign of the GDC’s guidance for registrants and it’s therefore extremely important that we hear from everyone who’ll be affected and make the right changes. The standards are the main ethical guide that we expect dental professionals to apply to their everyday work. This is a significant piece of work for the GDC and one that we anticipate will have a positive impact on dental professionals and therefore on patients.”

Oral health study wins SGH funding

A grant of more than £270,000 has been awarded to a study to will investigate the effect of social deprivation on oral health in outer north-east London. The project, which beat off competition from eleven other proposals to secure funding from the Shirley Glassstone Hughes Trust Fund, will investigate whether people living in deprived communities define oral health differently from their peers living in less deprived areas. It will also assess whether individuals’ concepts of oral health affect the way that they care for themselves and what barriers exist to individuals accessing care and adopting healthy behaviours.

The study will consider the populations of Barking, Dagenham, and West Ham; Forest Gate and Barking and Dagenham, and use patient concepts of oral health to ask whether deprivation can explain why some individuals engage in behaviours such as smoking, excessive alcohol consumption and irregular visits to a dentist, which increase their risk of oral diseases.

It will assess the strengths and shortcomings of the way oral health services are provided, providing evidence on how to adapt existing structures and develop new services and interventions that overcome barriers to care. It will also provide evidence to underpin models of commissioning care.

Professor Liz Kay, Chair of the Trustees of the Fund, said: “Despite an overall improvement in the oral health of the UK over the past four decades, a persistent and unacceptable chasm between those with the best and worst oral health persists. Understanding why we have this gap is crucial to addressing this situation. The trustees hope that this piece of work can make a significant contribution to expanding that understanding and helping to develop practical tools to address it.”

The project will be led by Dr Russ Ladwa (pictured), Dean of the Faculty of General Dental Practice at the Royal College of Surgeons of England in London. It will be hosted by the Institute of Dentistry at Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry.

Thanking the trustees, Dr Ladwa said: “The award of this grant represents a great boost to research in primary care. The FGD(P(UK)) will work in collaboration with the host institution, Barts and The London SMD, Queen Mary University of London, which has a tradition of research in health inequalities. Both the Institutions are delighted to be given the opportunity to carry out research that will provide evidence to develop cost effective models of delivering prevention and treatment in primary dental care.”

The winners of two coveted research prizes, awarded annually by the European Association for Osseointegration (EAO), have been announced.

The EAO Clinical Research Prize for 2010 has been awarded to Maurizio Tonetti from Italy and the EAO Basic Research Prize to two winners, Pascale Habre-Hallage from Lebanon and Ulricke Kuchler from Austria.

All three winners were awarded their prizes at the 19th EAO Congress.

The EAO Basic Research Prize to two winners, Pascale Habre-Hallage from Lebanon and Ulricke Kuchler from Austria.

The study will consider the populations of Redbridge, Waltham Forest and Barking and Dagenham, and use patient concepts of oral health to ask whether deprivation can explain why some individuals engage in behaviours such as smoking, excessive alcohol consumption and irregular visits to a dentist, which increase their risk of oral diseases.

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EAO announces the winners of its 2010 Research Competitions

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All three winners were awarded their prizes at the 19th Annual Scientific Congress of the EAO which took place in Glasgow from 6-9 October 2010.

Each winner received a Diploma from the EAO and a prize of 2,000. The 18 finalists had earlier been selected from nearly 500 abstracts submitted to the EAO Congress.

Maurizio Tonetti and his team won the EAO Clinical Research Prize for their study: “Immediacy vs delayed implant placement in anterior: TIMING randomised controlled clinical trial.” The multi-centre study, which compared the benefits and disadvantages of immediate and delayed implant placement, was chosen from eight finalists.

Pascale Habre-Hallage won her prize for a study entitled “fMRI shows cortical activation following mechanical stimulation of oral implants”; and Ulricke Kuchler for a study entitled “Intermittent PTH fails to stimulate osteointegration in diabetic rats.”

Smile 4 Life in Lancashire

Health minister Lord Howe has visited Lancashire to launch a new scheme aimed at improving the oral health of young children.

Teaming up with local primary care trusts, Lancashire County Council aims to tackle the county’s poor record on tooth decay.

Dental experts will visit pre-schools providing advice to youngsters and their carers on brushing teeth, making regular trips to the dentist and eating more healthily.

Lord Howe said that the Smile4Life scheme should help the NHS to achieve its goal of improving children’s oral health.

“Too much decay in children is a serious problem,” he revealed. “It can cause a great deal of pain and discomfort, and treating it is very costly for the NHS.

“Focusing on prevention is not only better for the children, but is also a better use of NHS resources. I’m delighted to see the local authorities and the NHS taking innovative action to address this very important local health issue, and I hope others will follow suit.”

A number of new dental practices have recently opened in Lancashire to reduce the number of people on waiting lists for an NHS dentist.

Janice Nicholson, head of dental commissioning at NHS Central Lancashire, recently announced that dentists in Leyland and west Lancashire are now opening their doors to patients who are prepared to travel from central Lancashire in a further attempt to improve access.

Dental technician David Smith, Chair of the Standards Committee, said: “The reviews of both of these documents could result in a radical redesign of the GDC’s guidance for registrants and it’s therefore extremely important that we hear from everyone who’ll be affected and make the right changes. The standards are the main ethical guide that we expect dental professionals to apply to their everyday work. This is a significant piece of work for the GDC and one that we anticipate will have a positive impact on dental professionals and therefore on patients.”
Editorial comment

So it’s finally here... after what seems the longest time, dental professionals can finally have their official say on the Care Quality Commission (CQC) registration fees now that the consultation documentation has been released.

‘The most cynical of you will be no doubt thinking it’s no bl**dy use anyway’

Now, the most cynical of you will be no doubt thinking ‘no bl**dy use anyway, they’ll do what they want no matter what we say’ but a public consultation does have the advantage of being just that, public.

I am well aware of the strength of feeling against the CQC and the confusion and resentment that has been created, and I am also aware of how some quarters are using their right to protest by canvassing their MPs to investigate the necessity of extra regulation.

All stakeholders should have their say and at least make their sentiments known, if only to be able to say to yourself that you have. Who knows, someone may even be listening?

Snap-On Smile

In recent years, the number of people opting for cosmetic surgery has increased and continues to be popular with people who desire to improve the aesthetic appearance of their smile. Now, for those who fear needles and worry about drilling, a new treatment is available in the UK: The Snap-On Smile.

The Snap-On Smile does exactly what its name suggests; it fits onto the original teeth, much like false nails are placed over the top of nails.

Fitting over the teeth, the Snap-On Smile gives the illusion of a perfect smile, without the need for surgery. Patients who opt for this treatment can select a colour shade and choose the shape of the teeth.

For those who are worried about drilling and needles, and don’t want to pay hundreds or even thousands of pounds for treatments, such as veneers or dental implants, the Snap-On Smile would seem like a perfect option.

To make the Snap-On Smile photos and impressions are made of the patients’ teeth and in about four weeks the Snap-On Smile lab creates the smile.

Before

Images courtesy of Pearl Dental Clinic

After

Images courtesy of Pearl Dental Clinic

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Mouth Cancer News Update

With Mouth Cancer Action Month in full swing, the national press is full of news related to head and neck cancer, highlighting the condition to the general public. Here is just a taster of the latest news...

MCF benefits from new restaurant

The Mouth Cancer Foundation, with the support of six charities, established in Mumbai, India – Toybank, is retracing a step of Mahatma Gandhi’s walks for charity, led by Shweta Chari, an Electronics Engineer, Toybank aims to change their lives for the better.

Sunny and Kammi’s mother, Indu, died of mouth cancer in January after being diagnosed in June 2009. They have created a venue which provides people with fine food and excellent service, whilst making a difference.

Sunny said “I have decided to support the Mouth Cancer Foundation, not simply because of the horrific experience my family and I went through. The feeling of being helpless, as Mum fought mouth cancer, was truly awful. Therefore, if I can be of help in terms of helping to raise awareness or fundraising, then I am only too happy to help. The experience has left a deep scar on my family and we want to try and make something positive of this awful situation. It only seemed right to name the restaurant after her, who was not only an inspiration to me but to everyone who met her”.

Long term, Indu’s plans to make annual financial contributions to the Mouth Cancer Foundation and also plans to raise funds through the restaurant.

Key breakthrough in HPV-related mouth cancer

New research has shown that cancer patients with the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) have a greater chance of survival from mouth cancer than those whose cancer is HPV negative.

The new study found that monitoring cancer tu-

Some sites also recommend methods including brushing the teeth with salt, soap and bleach.

Teeth whitening has become extremely popular in recent years, as people look to recreate the famous Hollywood smile adopted by so many models, ac-
tors and pop stars; however, the trend has caused people to re-

Dental experts say the trend is alarming and have warned other members of the public are thinking of using ingredients

A call to action

Seema Sharma calls on Dental Tribune readers to support her as she walks 60 miles for char-
ity...from Baroda to Bharuch!

At the end of this month I will be packing my walking shoes to walk 60 miles of the 241 miles of Indian Friend-

• Apnalaya - An NGO founded in 1972 to help children living in slums towards a better life, Apnalaya strives to achieve this through urban community de-

• Door Step School - is an NGO established in Mumbai, India in 1988 and later expanded to Pune in 1989. It was started with the aim of addressing lit-
eracy amongst the marginalised sections of society. Door Step School provides education and support to the often-forgotten children of pavement dwellers, slum dwellers, construction site

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“CMA system is very simple and straightforward to use, producing consistently good results. The files are strong and stable and I have not had one fracture yet.

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Dr Graeme Fisher BDS, Preston
Regarding Revalidation

Dentist Denis Toppin is on the Council of the GDC and is also Chair of its Revalidation Working Group. Most of you will probably be familiar with the term revalidation by now, although it’s likely you hear most about it in relation to doctors and the General Medical Council. The General Medical Council has recently confirmed medical revalidation in the UK is expected to start from late 2012, after numerous delays. Although the GDC doesn’t plan to introduce revalidation for dentists until 2014, and at a later date still for DCs, the GDC has just launched a 12 week consultation on the issue and is encouraging as many of its registrants as possible to have their say. The consultation can be found on the GDC website at www.gdc-uk.org

For those of you who are less familiar with revalidation and what it will mean for dentists, I’d like to take this opportunity to explain a little more about it. Revalidation will provide, for the very first time, a way of checking that dentists carry on meeting the GDC’s standards after they have first joined its registers. The GDC’s Fitness to Pracise proceedings are reactive rather than proactive; they assume that dental professionals meet its standards unless the regulator receives information which suggests otherwise. With patient protection in mind, this is no longer good enough. Our research has shown that patients believe and expect that dental professionals’ compliance with standards is already checked by the GDC regularly, at least at the time of registration, and is expected to bring reality into line with patient expectations.

The structure

A standards and evidence framework will set out the standards dentists must meet under the new process, and it will include evidence, management and leadership, communi-
Judging panel announced

A team of leading dentistry experts has been revealed as the judging panel for the 3M ESPE Student Dentistry Awards 2010-2011.

This panel of influential industry figures and esteemed academics will select the UK and Ireland’s most innovative students and award them with funding to support their studies.

The awards panel includes Dr Amarjit Gill, President of the British Dental Association; Edward Attenborough, President of the British Dental Trade Association; Professor Trevor Burke, from the University of Birmingham and Professor Nairn Wilson, Dean and Head of King’s College London Dental Institute.

There are three categories in the 3M ESPE Student Dentistry Awards 2010-2011 – the Award for Innovation, the National Award for Innovation and the Award for Integrated Studies. Funding ranging from £500 (554 EUR) to a bursary worth £5500 (4130 EUR) is available to be won.

Speaking about the announcement of the judges, 3M ESPE’s commercial manager Steve Foster said: “We are delighted to have such a strong panel judging our awards programme that supports the future of UK and Irish dentistry.

“As leading industry figures, the judges’ shared experience will ensure that the very best dental students are recognised for their abilities.”

On his appointment to the panel, Dr Amarjit Gill said: “An awards programme such as this offers real support to talented young dental students.

“I am very much looking forward to reading the entries and meeting the winners.”

For more details on the awards programme, visit 3M ESPE’s new dedicated student website at www.3mespe.co.uk/studentstudies.

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L-R: David Sawyers, Gary Williams and Host Patrick Bailey