What should have been a simple task has turned into a frustrating task. Several calls made to different bodies gave me different answers causing me to be confused as to the correct process to apply for Enhanced CRBs for our dental care practitioners and providers; confusing me is rather easy to do these days with all the changes that are going on as well as trying to run successful dental practices! Not one person gave me a complete rundown as to how to apply for Enhanced CRBs for dental care providers in one go outside of CQC!

You would have thought that I would have learned my lesson when trying to implement the Medical Device Directives into the group! It is so important to source the correct person to talk to when dealing with any new implementations if you are not sure of what you are expected to do in the first place.

To make the application process easier for those of you who are still in the process I will break it down in point format what it is that you have to do to apply for Enhanced CRBs for general dental practitioners and providers.

Also be aware that any criminal record checks that were carried out prior to 2006 are no longer valid. You get two types of CRBs. The CRB that all dental care providers are required to have are ENHANCED CRB’s due to working with vulnerable people. I believe that some PCTs are carrying out the CRBs on behalf of their practices and are charging a fee, so it is worth making a call to them to find out. However, some may not as they are now short staffed due to cuts in staffing numbers and can’t handle the extra work load.

As you know, if you are a proprietor or in a position of responsibility, such as a
practice manager or a senior member of staff, you can apply through the Care Quality Commission. As for the rest of your dental care providers you have to go through a well established umbrella company to apply for Enhanced CRBs on their behalf as they cannot do it themselves.

You have got to be certain that you are using a reputable company and that the disclosure will be done thoroughly, with all the relevant disclosures required on the forms to be made clear as checked.

If you are an NHS practice you can call your PCT and they can inform you of the umbrella company that they use as you would be reassured they are reputable and that the fee will be fair. You could also use a recommend company from a reputable source as I have done.

You can go onto the Home Office web site homeoffice.gov.uk/crb and search umbrella company and it will bring up a list of recommended umbrella companies which are best to use.

It is much less complicated and simple to apply for Enhanced CRBs for general dental practitioners and providers as opposed to proprietors and personnel in senior roles.

Step by step all you need to do is:

1. Only a registered CQC manager can call the umbrella company as they have had an Enhanced CRB carried out already therefore you have clearance.

2. You need to have your Enhanced CRB number at hand as they will ask you for this.

3. Once you have called the umbrella company they will send you out an information pack as well as the application forms that you have applied for.

Make sure that you carry out an audit beforehand so that you apply for the correct amount of forms to avoid delays due to errors and to make sure you collect the correct fees if your associates/hygienist are paying for their own CRBs to be done have their own protocol so it would be good to follow this up with them.

As long as you have an application in the process CQC won’t place conditions on your practice however if you don’t have records of application they may take action against you.

Having to go through the whole process of becoming compliant with the CQC has been a bit of a challenge and really time consuming, but at the end of it I really can understand why the government have chosen to do this. Dentistry is all about patient care and at the end of the day all we want what is best for our families and for our patients.

I decided from the start to embrace the changes and I have said this to all our staff from the beginning you cannot fight change it makes it all the more difficult to adjust when you resist.

I don’t understand all the politics behind the aggravation although I have listened to the opinions of those around me and can understand the frustration that is being felt and the costs that are being incurred due to the process that we have to go to, to become compliant.

However, CQC is not going to go away, so as the English say ‘Be calm and carry on’.

As Winston Churchill once said: “We have no right to ask what sorrow comes. The difficulties of life are intended to make us better, not bitter.”

‘Only a registered CQC manager can call the umbrella company as they have had an Enhanced CRB carried out already therefore you have clearance’

‘Dentistry is all about patient care and at the end of the day we all want what is best for our families and for our patients’

About the author

Originally from South Africa, Sharren Holmes has worked in the field of dental practice management since 1992. In 2003, she moved to London City Dental Practice where after 18 months, was responsible for managing four practices in the group. The London City Dental Practice is now part of a mini co-operative group called the Dental Arts Studio, of which she has been instrumental in its creation.

Dental Air has one of the best customer service reputations in the dental industry and with our fast call out times, it is no surprise that we are the leading supplier of oil-free compressed air packages.

Freephone 0800 975 7530 to book a survey or to receive your FREE ‘Practice Managers Guide’.