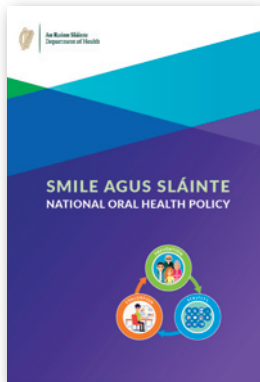


## Dental Council welcomes publication of **Smile agus Sláinte**



The Minister for Health, Mr Simon Harris TD and the Minister for Social Protection, Ms Regina Doherty launched the long-awaited new national oral health policy called 'Smile agus Sláinte' on the 3 April in Dublin Dental University Hospital. The policy is the first national policy for 25 years and we welcome its publication.

The policy is proposing the future public dental service will be delivered through a range of

healthcare packages targeted at different segments of the population. There are eight what are called preventative oral healthcare packages for all children under the age of 16. The oral healthcare packages for adults will only be available to medical card holders. The policy aims to put the local general practice dentist at the centre of this community-based initiative. The Minister intends that the plan will be supported by changes in how undergraduate dental education is delivered and organised, and with a revised Dentists Act.

The Dental Council welcomes the publication of the policy and especially the proposal to prioritise the new Dental Bill. This legislation has been long-promised and it will hopefully provide for the appropriate measures needed to effectively regulate a profession that has changed profoundly since the last Act was introduced in 1985.

The implementation of the policy is likely to have a significant impact on the scope of practice of all members of the dental team. Two of the priority issues which it is planned to address in the first three years are to reassess the scopes of practice for auxiliary dental workers to enable direct access where appropriate and to review the training and scopes of practice of dental technicians and clinical dental technicians.

The policy and the associated appendices can be downloaded from the Department of Health website: <https://health.gov.ie/blog/publications/smile-agus-slainte-national-oral-health-policy/>

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# BREXIT

## The threat of a 'No Deal' Brexit remains a real prospect

The threat of a 'No Deal' Brexit remains a real prospect as the Parliament in the United Kingdom (UK) continues to try to find an agreed way to implement the referendum decision to leave the European Union (EU). There is a long and collegial history between the dental profession in Ireland and the United Kingdom, which predates the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, and the standards of practice and education in both countries have always remained similar. The United Kingdom's exit from the European Union will certainly impact on this close relationship.

The Dental Council will continue to be obliged to operate under the provisions of the EU's Professional Qualifications Directive after Brexit but the United Kingdom will become a 'third country', that is a country outside of the EU's Single Market. From a regulatory perspective, the main difference between a 'No Deal' Brexit and an orderly Brexit – that is an exit with a transition agreement – is the date that the exit takes effect.

There are many registrants in Ireland holding UK qualifications and there are many holders of Irish qualifications practicing in the UK. In the future, dentists from both countries may still wish to cross the Irish Sea to practice. Brexit could also potentially impact those already enrolled as students on dental programmes. The Dental Council's focus is to minimise the disruption caused by Brexit and to ensure that the historically close links between Ireland and the United Kingdom will continue after the UK leaves the EU.

Additionally the Irish Government has published a significant amount of guidance on the potential impact of Brexit on the Ireland generally and this can be viewed on [www.gov.ie/brexit](http://www.gov.ie/brexit)



# What does Brexit mean for me?

## Already registered before Brexit?

### **I hold a UK qualification and I am currently registered with the Dental Council before Brexit**

Brexit will have no effect on your registration, and you will continue to be registered.

### **I hold an Irish qualification and I am registered with the GDC before Brexit**

The Dental Council understands that Brexit will not impact your registration in the United Kingdom.

## Thinking of registering after Brexit?

### **I hold a UK qualification and I am thinking of moving to Ireland**

Even though you are no longer entitled to avail of the provisions of the Professional Qualifications Directive, the Dental Council will continue to assume your qualifications meets the EU minimum standards. This will apply to any person obtaining a UK qualification by the 30 June 2021. This means we will process your application similarly to how we process applications from holders of dental qualifications from the other 27 EU member states. You will not be required to sit our examination for Non-EEA Qualified Dentists. This decision will be reviewed by the Dental Council in late 2020.

### **I hold an Irish Qualification and I am thinking of practicing in the United Kingdom**

The Dental Council understands that as part of its Brexit preparations, the United Kingdom Government intends to introduce new legislation that presumes that European Union qualifications will continue to be equivalent to UK standards immediately after Brexit. The legislation provides for this presumption of equivalence to last for approximately two years and it is subject to review. After Brexit, the General Dental Council will provide you with more information on how this process will operate in practice.

*The below article was kindly submitted by Mr John Tuffy from HIQA to explain the recent Ionising Regulation changes*

# Regulation of Medical Exposures to Ionising Radiation

Changes to the regulation of medical exposure to ionising radiation have significant implications for dentists. With HIQA now responsible for regulation in this area, dentists need to be aware of how these regulatory changes affect them.

In the new regulations, an 'undertaking' is the responsible person or body who provides or engages others to carry out a medical radiological procedure.

Each undertaking should have declared their existence to HIQA by 8 April 2019. If you are an undertaking as described above and have not declared, please contact HIQA immediately.

As part of the regulation process, HIQA will examine the way in which patients are exposed to ionising radiation. Factors that will be considered include how equipment is tested, the appropriateness of the referral, the amount of radiation given to a patient during a procedure and the record of doses given. Furthermore, notifications of radiation incidents above a certain threshold, which were previously sent to the HSE Medical Exposure Radiation Unit (MERU), must now be sent to HIQA.

We published guidance documents on the responsibilities of undertakings and on making notifications to HIQA in January. More recently, we published two further documents that explain further how regulation will take place in practice. These documents are a judgment framework on which compliance against the regulations is measured and general guidance to the assessment of the regulations. All the documents are available at [www.hiqa.ie](http://www.hiqa.ie)

To help dentists and other groups understand the implications of these regulatory changes, we are running a series of stakeholder roadshows around the country in June 2019. These events will explain HIQA's role in the regulation of ionising radiation and the implications for dentists. To find out more about the roadshows, email [radiationprotection@hiqa.ie](mailto:radiationprotection@hiqa.ie). HIQA realises that these are significant changes for dentists, and we are keen to work with you to ensure that the regulation of medical exposure to ionising radiation is effectively and efficiently implemented. Ultimately, our goal is to drive better, safer care for patients.

*John Tuffy, Regional Manager for Ionising Radiation, HIQA*



# Declaring Disciplinary Sanction

The new Regulated Professionals (Health and Social Care) Bill has been introduced in the Oireachtas as part of the basket of 'Brexit' related legislation that Ireland needs to pass arising from the United Kingdom's imminent departure from the European Union. This Bill has its origins in the 2013 revision to the European Union's Professional Qualifications Directive, which sets out how member states will recognise qualifications obtained elsewhere in the European Union.

This Bill will, when enacted, result in fundamental changes to the Dental Council's registration and fitness to practise powers. This Bill will immediately and especially affect any dentist who has been sanctioned in another country or by another regulatory body (even if it was by a non-healthcare regulatory body). When enacted and commenced, the Bill will:

- Oblige any dentist who has been sanctioned by another regulatory or professional body in Ireland, or abroad, to declare this to the Dental Council when renewing their registration. The failure to declare a sanction will itself become grounds for deciding to hold a Fitness to Practise Inquiry

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- Allow the Dental Council sanction dentists who have been subject to disciplinary sanction overseas

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- Oblige the Dental Council to publish details of all sanctions, including sanctions for health-related matters

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- Split the registration process into two parts: firstly, to recognise a qualification and secondly, to register. The Dental Council may charge for each part

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- Grant the Dental Council a discretionary power to publish information about sanctions it is made aware of from overseas if it considers it is in the public interest to do so

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- Allow the Dental Council to establish rules for dentists restoring their name to the register in circumstances where the person has been out of practice

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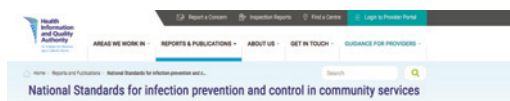
The new requirement to disclose sanctions is likely to have a major impact on the work of the Dental Council. We are aware of approximately thirty dentists who either were or are practicing in Ireland who have been sanctioned overseas. The Council at present is effectively powerless to consider these cases.

# Prescription of antibiotics

A recent review by the HSE of the prescription claims by dentists under the Dental Treatment Service Scheme (DTSS) has shown there is a considerable variation in claims. The issue of antimicrobial resistance has been well publicised and it is posing an increasing and significant risk to public health. The HSE are concerned that in some cases antibiotics are being routinely prescribed by dentists with an inadequate clinical justification. The Dental Council has been informed that the HSE intends to write to all DTSS contractors shortly with some specific guidance on this issue. The HSE has published a number of informative documents on antimicrobial stewardship on its website and HIQA has published national standards for infection prevention and control in the community-based health service that are part of a strategy to reduce the need to prescribe antibiotics. The HSE has published a number of documents for dentistry specifically. This is an important issue and we would ask that dentists familiarise themselves with this guidance and reflect on how this might be incorporated into your clinical practice.



<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/2/gp/antibiotic-prescribing/conditions-and-treatments/dental/dental-conditions.html>



<https://www.hiqa.ie/reports-and-publications/standard/national-standards-infection-prevention-and-control-community>

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## Renewal/Late Fees

The dentist and dental specialist retention fees were due on 31 January 2019. Unfortunately, a significant number have still not paid or, for those not practicing, submitted a letter of resignation. The Dental Council has decided to erase these names from the Register and it is now seeking to have this decision confirmed by the High Court. Any dentist who wishes to restore their name to the Register after the matter is confirmed by the High Court will be obliged to pay all the outstanding fees, including the late fee and costs.

## Practitioner Health Matters Programme

While we have mentioned this programme in previous publications, we think it is worth reminding dental professionals of this service. The Practitioner Health Matters Programme (PHMP) in Ireland offers a strictly confidential service to doctors, dentists and pharmacists. They have a confidential telephone line and email contact point for an expert clinical advice service. They welcome contact from any individual whether you are the person in need of help, a family member, a colleague or a friend.

E-mail:  
[confidential@practitionerhealth.ie](mailto:confidential@practitionerhealth.ie) Ph: 01 2222255



## Recent changes in Council

The Council would like to welcome Dr Niamh Galvin and Dr Shona Leydon to Dental Council.

Dr Galvin is an Assistant National Oral Health Lead in the National Oral Health Office (Quality and Risk). She qualified in Cork in 1982 and spent a number of years in general practice before moving to the public dental service. She has a first-class Master's Degree in Management of Healthcare Acquired Infections. She also holds an FFD (RCSI) in Community Dentistry and Diplomas in Healthcare Management and Business Studies. Dr Galvin replaces Professor Leo Stassen, who resigned from the Dental Council after he was elected as President of the Irish Dentists Association.

Dr Leydon is the principal orthodontist in a practice she founded in North Dublin. Dr. Leydon qualified as a dental surgeon in 1989 and obtained her Master's in Orthodontics qualification from Trinity in 1994. She was awarded a membership of the Royal College of Surgeons in London in 1997. Dr Leydon practiced as a specialist orthodontist at the Regional Orthodontic Unit, St James's Hospital, Dublin for over 5 years gaining a vast wealth of experience treating complex orthodontic cases from the public waiting list before establishing her own practice in 2002. Dr Leydon is an active member of the Irish and American Orthodontic Societies and is also a Fellow of the World Federation of Orthodontists. Dr Leydon replaces Dr Liam Lynch who resigned from the Council late last year.

### Minamata

By July  
1st, 2019, the  
Member



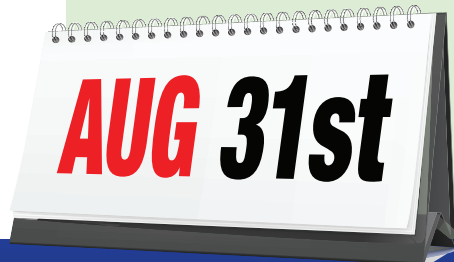
States shall set out a national plan on the measures they intend to implement to phase down the use of dental amalgam.

### Social Media

The Dental Council has two social media pages that we would encourage the profession to follow and engage with us on. We use these platforms to pass on relevant news and information for all dental professionals. You can find us on Facebook using the handle @dentalcouncilireland and on Twitter using the handle @dentalcouncilpr.

### Med 2 Forms

Dentists should note that the revised Form Med from the Revenue Commissioners has been amended to include a request for dentists to insert their Dental Council registration number on the form given to patients. The information is required by the Revenue Commissioners to assist them validate that the work was carried out by a registered dentist. Your registration number never changes and can be found on your registration certificate.



**DEADLINE - 31st AUGUST 2019**



Oral Health & Wellbeing  
Prevention  
Advocacy & Communications  
Public Policy  
Empowering  
Evidence-Based Information  
Care  
Respect  
Collaboration  
Trust  
Quality  
Innovation



*The below article was kindly submitted by Ms Etain Kett, MPRII Public Affairs & Communications Manager Dental Health Foundation*

## Dental Health Foundation

The Dental Health Foundation (DHF) established in 1977, is an independent charitable trust, governed by a Declaration of Trust. The DHF has emerged as a unifying voice in the field of oral health promotion, working with a wide variety of interested parties to champion change. The DHF (in partnership with the Department of Health and Children and the Health Service Executive) has acted as a central facilitator and strategist in placing oral health issues and solutions on the national health agenda. It has also become a valuable resource within the healthcare sector for advice and tools to promote best oral health practices.

Recommendations for oral health care are different to the Republic of Ireland than in the UK. One of the main reasons is due to the fact that approximately 69% of the Irish population drink fluoridated tap water. It is therefore important to refer to organisations such as the Dental Health Foundation and the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health regarding guidelines on oral health, tooth brushing and the use of fluoridated toothpaste to ensure accurate information for the public.

The Dental Health Foundation supports health professionals by providing evidence based best practice resources to increase awareness amongst the public, empowering them to make healthier oral and general health lifestyle choices. Having the right information on tooth tips, diet and general health will help keep teeth healthy for a lifetime. Good oral health is

of vital importance to the general health of everyone in Ireland.

We have developed partnerships and collaborations and have taken the lead on promoting positive oral and general health messages with different organisations, most recently including the Irish Men's Shed Association, The National Children's Network, Diabetes Ireland and Mental Health Ireland.

The Specialist Certificate in Health Promotion (Oral Health) developed in conjunction with NUIG and the HSE, provides health professionals with education and training in oral health promotion. This is now approved for non-core CPD points by the Dental Council.

Our four strategic objectives; Support to the Department of Health, Promoting Excellence, Empowering people and Advocacy and Communications deliver significant value both in terms of focused health promotion and excellent value for money.

We are an organisation inspired by our Vision, driven by our Mission and underpinned by our Values and we are strongly committed to our work programme. We look forward to working with all of our stakeholders to ensure that oral health is included as an essential part of overall health and wellbeing.

For further information about DHF and to download our resources please see [www.dentalhealth.ie](http://www.dentalhealth.ie) and link in with us on our **Facebook page**.