

Diagnostic Reference Levels

Under Section 11(1) of Statutory Instrument 478 of 2002 “The European Communities (Medical Ionising Radiation) Regulations” the Dental Council is required to promote the establishment and the use of standard diagnostic reference levels for the following medical exposures:

- the exposure of patients as part of their own medical diagnosis or treatment;
- the exposure of individuals as part of occupational health surveillance;
- the exposure of individuals as part of health screening programmes;
- the exposure of individuals as part of medico-legal procedures.

Under this regulation the “Diagnostic reference levels” means dose levels in medical radio diagnostic practices or, in the case of radio-pharmaceuticals, levels of activity for typical examinations for groups of standard-sized patients or standard phantoms for broadly defined types of equipment. These levels are expected not to be exceeded for standard procedures when good and normal practice regarding diagnostic and technical performance is applied.

To meet this requirement the Dental Council has adopted Recommendation 5F of the European Community document “Radiation Protection 136: European Guidelines on radiation protection in dental radiology, the safe use of radiographs in dental practice, 2004” which is a level of 4mGy absorbed dose in air measured at the end of the spacer cone for standard maxillary molar projection.

Dental Council endorses the collection of national Diagnostic Reference Level data for all standard dental radiographic procedures.