



Annual Report

2022

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Executive Summary

The Dental Council is pleased to present its 2022 Annual Report.

2022 was busy year across all its areas of activities and the council is pleased with the work that it has completed during the year. The Dental Council met nine times in 2022. The main highlights include:

- **Reciprocity agreement with Dental Council of New Zealand:** The Dental Council was very pleased to welcome the Dental Council of New Zealand to Dublin in October to sign a reciprocity agreement between the two organisations. These agreements are important and allow the Dental Council benchmark its standards of education against other countries. The council has an existing reciprocity agreement the Commission for Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC).
- **Legislative change:** The Dental Council continues to make the case for legislative change with Department of Health, public representatives and other stakeholders. The council is disappointed that there has been little engagement since it published its submission in 2021.
- **New Codes of Practice:** The Dental Council launched a reviewed Code of Practice regarding Professional Behaviour and Ethical Conduct in May 2022. This document is intended to provide ethical guidance to dentists in treating patients and informs patients of what they should expect when they attend their dentist.
- **New registration pathway:** In 2022, the Dental Council introduced a special registration pathway for dentists who have been granted either permanent or temporary protection in Ireland as refugees. This pathway was originally introduced as a response to the war in Ukraine, but the Dental Council has opened this pathway up to any dentist granted protection in Ireland, regardless of their initial country of origin.
- **Undergraduate Dental Education:** The council approved a significantly revised set of standard documents for undergraduate dental education, including a revised list of competencies required of graduating dentists. The Dental Council will assess the undergraduate dental programmes against these standards from 2022 onwards.
- **Applications under Section 44 and 42 of the Dentist Act, 1985:** Section 44 provides for the Dental Council to apply to the High Court to suspend a dentist from the register of dentists if it is in the public interest. In 2022, the council considered three matters under this section. In one case, it decided to apply to the High Court to suspend a dentist from the register, it accepted an undertaking from another dentist in lieu of it applying to the High Court to suspend him and it deferred consideration in another case as the dentist was seeking medical assistance. The council decided not to restore the name of a dentist to the register who was erased after being convicted of an offence triable on indictment under Section 42 of the Dentists Act, 1985.
- **Internal Dental Council:** The requested that an elected member of the Auxiliary Dental Workers Committee stand down due to his non-attendance at meetings. The council received no response to this request.

Annual Report by Area of Activity

Education and Training

The Education and Training Committee completed a significant body of work in reviewing and updating the Dental Council Accreditation Manual. This consolidates the updated accreditation process, accreditation ethos and supporting suite of standards/requirements/annotations. This is an iterative document that will be kept under review, and which will be expanded and further developed, as necessary. The Dental Council also carried out its accreditation visits to Cork University Dental School and Hospital and Dublin Dental University Hospital in November 2022. The reports from these visits will be considered by the council in 2023.

In 2022, the Dental Council worked closely with HIQA as responsibility for ionising radiation moved from the council to HIQA. The Dental Council published revised guidance to the profession and co-operated with HIQA as it assumed its new responsibilities. The Dental Council continues to work closely with HIQA in this area.

Demand to sit the Dental Council examination for non-EEA qualified dentists continues to outstrip the supply of places. In 2022, the Dental Council significantly revised its rules governing the operation of the examinations.

The Dental Council has confirmed with the General Dental Council that its standards for undergraduate dental education are still broadly in line with the standards applying when the United Kingdom left the European Union. On this basis, the Dental Council has agreed to roll forward its recognition of UK qualifications apply to those graduating before 31 December 2023.

Auxiliary Dental Workers

The main focus of the Auxiliary Dental Workers Committee continued to be in considering revised schemes and scopes of practice for each class of auxiliary dental worker. The committee is seeking to ensure that any changes it will approve are compatible with the provisions of the National Oral Health Policy and are changes that can be incorporated into the existing education programmes.

The council was engaging with a number of institutions who are considering changing their training model to a traineeship programme. The Dental Council also engaged with a small number of institutions who are considering introducing a dental nursing training programmes.

Registration

	2021	2022
Registrations		
Dentists	174	257
Specialists	10	14
Dental Nurses	64	137
Dental Hygienists	28	26
Orthodontic therapists	12	10
Clinical Dental Technicians	1	1
	289	445

Table 1: New registrations per year

There was a significant increase in demand to register as a dental healthcare professional in Ireland in 2022. The Dental Council was unsure whether this was a once off peak following the restrictions in place in society during the Covid-19 pandemic or a more permanent feature.

The registration process is becoming increasingly complex as the dental profession in Europe develops. The profession is mobile and many of the applicants who are seeking to register here are registered in one or more countries.

In 2022, the Dental Council introduced a special registration pathway for dentists who have been granted either permanent or temporary protection in Ireland as refugees. This pathway was originally introduced as a response to the war in Ukraine, but the Dental Council has opened this pathway up to any dentist granted protection in Ireland, regardless of their initial country of origin. This demand to access this pathway has increased year-on-year, and to the end of the year 2022, over 100 refugee dentists have applied for registration.

Fitness to Practise and Compliance

In 2022, the Dental Council considered the following (all references are to the Dentists Act, 1985):

- 1 matter under Section 42 (which allows the Dental Council to consider convictions for offences triable on indictment)
- 3 matters under Section 44 concerning the same dentist (which allows the Dental Council to apply to the High Court to suspend a registrant when it is in the public interest)

In relation to the Section 44 considerations, the Dental Council decided to apply to the High Court to suspend a dentist from the register, it accepted an undertaking from another dentist in lieu of it applying to the High Court to suspend him and it deferred consideration in another case as the dentist was seeking medical assistance. The council decided not to restore the name of a dentist to the register who was erased after being convicted of an offence triable on indictment under Section 42 of the Dentists Act, 1985. In addition, the Dental Council found that there were insufficient grounds to hold an inquiry under Section 38 of the Act in two other complaints.

Audit and Risk

The Audit and Risk Committee appointed Mazars as its internal auditor and the firm commenced their first audit to review the internal control framework in the Dental Council in late 2022.

Annual Report on Governance

1. Governance Statement and Board Members' Report

Governance

The Dental Council was established under the Dentists Act, 1985. The Dental Council is accountable to the Minister for Health and is responsible for ensuring good governance and performs this task by setting strategic objectives and targets and taking strategic decisions on all key business issues. The regular day-to-day management, control and direction of the Dental Council are the responsibility of the registrar and the senior management team. They must follow the broad strategic direction set by the Council and must ensure that all members have a clear understanding of the key activities and decisions related to the entity, and of any significant risks likely to arise. The registrar acts as a direct liaison between the Council and executive of the Council.

Board Responsibilities

The work and responsibilities of the Dental Council are set out in the 'Statement of Governance of the Dental Council' document which also confirm the matters specifically reserved for the council's decision. Standing items considered by the council include:

- declaration of interests
- reports from committees
- financial reports/management accounts
- performance reports, and
- reserved matters

Section 21 of the Dentists Act, 1985 requires the Dental Council to keep proper accounts of all income and expenditure and to keep proper accounts of the property, assets and liabilities of the Council. In preparing these financial statements, the Dental Council:

- selects suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- makes judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- prepares the financial statements on the going concern basis

The Council is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, its financial position and enables it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 21 of the Dentists Act, 1985.

The maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information on the Dental Council's website is the responsibility of the Dental Council. The Council is responsible for approving the annual plan and budget. An evaluation of its performance by reference to the annual plan and budget was carried in December 2022. The Council is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The Dental Council considers that the financial statements give a true and fair view of its financial performance and the financial position as of 31 December 2022.

Statement of Compliance

The council has adopted the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). Dental Council has complied with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, as published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in August 2016.

Board Structure

The Dental Council consists of nineteen members who are appointed under the provisions of Section 9 of the Dentists Act, 1985. The president and the vice-president are elected by the council. The members and the council's subcommittees are set out in Appendix 1:

Dental Council Committees

The Dentists Act, 1985 established three statutory committees: the Education and Training Committee, the Auxiliary Dental Workers Committee and the Fitness to Practise Committee. As well as these, the Dental Council has also established a Finance and General Purposes Committee, and Audit and Risk Committee and a Specialist Training and Registration Committee, which reports to the Education and Training Committee. A description of the responsibilities for each committee and its membership is set out in Appendix 1.

Key Personnel Changes

There were no changes in the membership of the Dental Council in 2022. Ms Michelle Spearman-Geraghty has been appointed due to Mr Ian Caffrey's non-attendance at Auxiliary Dental Workers Committee

2. Statement on Internal Control

Scope of Responsibility

The Dental Council acknowledges its responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal control is maintained and operated. This responsibility takes account of the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). Internal control and risk management are presently being overseen by the Dental Council's Audit and Risk Committee.

Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a tolerable level rather than to eliminate it. The system can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or detected in a timely way. The system of internal control is overseen by the Dental Council's Audit and Risk Committee. It has been in place in Dental Council for the year ended 31 December 2022 and up to the date of approval of the financial statements.

Capacity to Handle Risk

Responsibility for control and risk rests with the registrar and this is overseen by the Dental Council's Audit and Risk Committee. This committee met four times in 2022. The council policy is to manage identified risks conservatively and to build an internal resilience, including a financial resilience, to allow it deal with unexpected risk. The risk management processes in place detail the roles and responsibilities in relation to risk.

Risk and Control Framework

The Dental Council has implemented a risk management system which identifies and reports key risks and the management actions being taken to address and, to the extent possible, to mitigate those risks. A risk register is in place which identifies the key risks facing the Dental Council, and these have been identified, evaluated and graded according to their significance. The register is reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee. The risk register is a standing item on the Audit and Risk Committee and Dental Council meeting agendas. The outcome of these assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level. The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibility for operation of controls assigned to specific staff.

I confirm that a control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- procedures for key business processes have been documented
- financial responsibilities have been assigned with corresponding accountability
- there is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review
- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the information and communication technology systems
- there are systems in place to safeguard the assets and
- There is no grant funding to outside agencies.

Ongoing Monitoring and Review

The Finance and General Purposes Committee monitors control processes and control deficiencies are communicated to those responsible for taking corrective action.

I confirm that the following ongoing monitoring systems are in place:

- key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies.
- reporting arrangements have been established where responsibility for financial management has been assigned, and
- there are regular reviews of periodic and annual performance and financial reports which indicate performance against budgets/forecasts

Procurement

I confirm that the Dental Council has procedures in place to ensure compliance with current procurement rules and guidelines and that the Dental Council complied with those procedures.

Review of Effectiveness

I confirm that the Dental Council has procedures to monitor the effectiveness of its risk management and control procedures. The Dental Council's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the system of internal financial control is informed by the work of the external auditors, internal auditors and the Audit and Risk Committee, and the senior management within Dental Council responsible for the development and maintenance of the internal financial control framework.

I confirm that the Board conducted an annual review of the effectiveness of the internal. No weaknesses in internal control were identified in relation to 2022 that require disclosure in the financial statements.

3. Other Disclosures Required by Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies

The Board is responsible for ensuring that the Dental Council has complied with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, as published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in August 2016. The following disclosures are required by the code:

Registrar's Salary and Benefits

The registrar's salary is in accordance with the Civil Service Principal Officer salary scale. He is on the maximum of this scale which was €116,712 as of 31 December 2022.

The registrar is a member of the Dental Council's pension scheme, and his entitlements in that regard do not extend beyond the terms of the model public service pension scheme.

Consultancy and Legal Costs

The Dental Council did not incur any consultancy costs relating the cost of external advice to management and excluding outsourced 'business-as-usual' functions.

The only legal costs incurred were those relating to fitness to practise and these are disclosed in the annual financial statements.

Schedule of Fees and Expenses paid in 2022

Members of Dental Council or its committees are not paid fees. The amounts set out above are the travel and subsistence claimed by individuals. The Dental Council procures the costs of accommodation and flights where relevant directly. A schedule of the expenses received by each member is set out below.

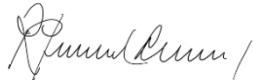
	€
Niamh Galvin	3,311.56
Rory Fleming	1,606.84
John Murray	1,007.13
Mark Kane	999.60
Gerry Cleary	787.04
Anthony Roberts	783.62
Catherine Gallagher	717.40
Michelle Spearman Geraghty	195.38
Patrick Quinn	150.69
Ann Marie-Connolly	106.96
Ursula Byrne	26.38

Protect Disclosures

The Dental Council received no protected disclosures in 2022.

4. Statement of Compliance

The council has adopted the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). Dental Council has complied with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, as published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in August 2016 in as far as they are relevant to the Dental Council.



Dr Gerry Cleary
President

Appendix 1 – Council and Committee Members

Council Members	Appointed by	Serves on
Dr Gerry Cleary	Elected	President, Council, Education and Training, Auxiliary, Finance and General Purposes (Chair)
Dr Catherine Gallagher	UCC	Vice-president, Council, Education and Training, and Finance and General Purposes
Prof Anthony Roberts	UCC	Council, Education and Training (Chair), STAR (Chair), Auxiliary, Finance and General Purposes
Dr Niamh Galvin	Elected	Council, Auxiliary (Chair), Education and Training, Fitness to Practise, Finance and General Purposes,
Dr Rory Fleming	Elected	Council, Fitness to Practise (Chair), Education and Training, Auxiliary and Finance and General Purposes
Dr Sarah-Jane Grufferty	Elected	Council, Education and Training, Auxiliary, Fitness to Practise and Registration Assessment Committee (International Protection)
Dr Paul Leavy	Elected	Council, Education and Training and Auxiliary and ARC
Dr Patrick O’Brien	Elected	Council, Auxiliary, ARC and Fitness to Practise
Dr Patrick Quinn	Elected	Council, Education and Training, Auxiliary, ARC and Fitness to Practise
Dr Prof Gerry Kearns	RCSI	Council, Education and Training and STAR
Prof Brian O’Connell	Trinity College	Council, Education and Training and Auxiliary
Dr Mary Clarke	Trinity College	Council, Education and Training and STAR
Mr John Gleeson	Medical Council	Council, Fitness to Practise, and ARC (Chair)
Mr John Murray	Medical Council	Council and Finance and General Purposes
Dr Ruth Casey	Minister for Health	Council and Education and Training
Ms Mary Faulkner	Minister for Health	Council and Fitness to Practise
Ms Ursula Byrne	Minister for Health	Council, Fitness to Practise and Registration Assessment Committee (International Protection)
Mr Mark Kane	Minister for Health	Council, Fitness to Practise and ARC

Dr Bryan Maguire	Minister for Education and Skills	Council, Education and Training, and Auxiliary
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Committee Members	Appointed by	Serves on
TBC	Irish Committee for Specialist Training in Dentistry (Chair)	Education and Training
TBC	Irish Committee for Specialist Training in Dent.	Education and Training
Ms Michelle Spearman-Geraghty (co-opted) Mr Ian Murray (non-attendee)	Elected Dental Nurse	Auxiliary
Ms Yvonne Howell	Elected Dental Hygienist	Auxiliary
Mr Hugh Ennis	Elected Clinical Dental Technician	Auxiliary
Ms Anne-Marie Connolly	Elected Orthodontic Therapist	Auxiliary
Mr Glenn McEvoy (Co-opted)	Dental Technician representative	Auxiliary
TBC (Chair of Oral Surgery Advisory Committee)	Irish Committee for Specialist Training in Dent.	STAR
TBC (Chair of Orthodontic Advisory Committee)	Irish Committee for Specialist Training in Dent.	STAR
Dr Frank Burke	Dental Academic (former Chair Ed and Training)	Registration Assessment Committee (International Protection) (Chair)

STAR – Specialist Training and Registration Committee

ARC – Audit and Risk Committee

Attendance at Council and Committee Meetings

	Council	ETC	ADWC	FTPC	ARC	FGPC
	7	4	4	2	4	8
Dr Gerry Cleary	7/7	4/4	4/4			8/8
Dr Catherine Gallagher	6/7	4/4				7/8
Prof Anthony Roberts	6/7	4/4	4/4			7/8
Dr Niamh Galvin	6/7	4/4	4/4	2/2		8/8
Dr Rory Fleming	6/7	3/4	2/4	2/2		7/8
Prof Brian O'Connell	5/7	2/4	2/4			
Dr Mary Clarke	5/7	4/4				
Prof Gerry Kearns	4/7	4/4				
Dr Sarah Jane Grufferty	6/7	2/4	2/4	2/2		
Dr Patrick Quinn	5/7	4/4	4/4	2/2	4/4	
Dr Patrick O'Brien	5/7		1/4	1/2	4/4	
Dr Paul Leavy	4/7	4/4	3/4		3/4	
Mr John Murray	6/7					
Mr John Gleeson	5/7			1/2	4/4	
Dr Bryan Maguire	4/7	4/4	4/4			
Mr Mark Kane	6/7			1/2	4/4	
Ms Ursula Byrne	7/7			2/2		
Dr Ruth Casey	7/7	4/4				
Ms Mary Faulkner	6/7			2/2		
-						
<u>Auxiliary Dental Workers</u>						
Ms Yvonne Howell			4/4			
Ms Michelle Spearman Geraghty			1/1			
Mr Ian Caffrey			0/3			
Ms Anne-Marie Connolly			4/4			
Mr Hugh Ennis			4/4			
Mr Glenn McEvoy (in attendance)			1/4			
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Committees

Education and Training	ETC
Auxiliary Dental Workers	AWDC
Fitness to Practise	FTPC
Audit and Risk	ARC
Finance and Gen Purposes	FGPC

*There are four scheduled meeting of Dental Council each year. The additional meetings are special meetings and are often called at short notice and as a result council members may be unable to attend.

Committees of the Dental Council

1. Statutory Committees under Dentists Act, 1985

- Education and Training Committee.

The Education and Training Committee is responsible for all matters relating to dental education and training, including post-graduate and specialist training set out under Part IV of the Dentists Act, 1985. The membership of this committee is:

- Prof Anthony Roberts (Chair and University College Cork)
- Dr Gerry Cleary (President)
- Dr Catherine Gallagher (University College Cork)
- Prof Brian O’Connell (Trinity College Dublin)
- Dr Mary Clarke (Trinity College Dublin)
- Prof Gerry Kearns (Royal College of Surgeons)
- Dr Paul Leavy (Elected Dentist)
- Dr Rory Fleming (Elected Dentist)
- Dr Niamh Galvin (Elected Dentist)
- Dr Patrick Quinn (Elected Dentist)
- Dr Sarah Jane Grufferty (Elected Dentist)
- Dr Bryan Maguire (Minister for Education)
- Dr Ruth Casey (Minister for Health)
- Chair of ICSTD (Irish Committee for Specialist Training in Dentistry)
- Member of ICSTD (Irish Committee for Specialist Training in Dentistry)

- Auxiliary Dental Workers Committee

The Auxiliary Dental Workers Committee is responsible for all matters relating the auxiliary dental workers professions set out in Part IV of the Dentists Act, 1985. This committee includes a member elected by each class of auxiliary dental worker. The membership of this committee is:

- Dr Niamh Galvin (Chair of Auxiliary Dental Workers)
- Dr Gerry Cleary (President)
- Prof Anthony Roberts (University College Cork)
- Prof Brian O’Connell (Trinity College Dublin)
- Dr Paul Leavy (Elected Dentist)
- Dr Rory Fleming (Elected Dentist)
- Dr Bryan Maguire (Minister for Education)
- Mr Ian Caffery (Elected by Dental Nurses)
- Ms Anne-Marie Connolly (Elected by Orthodontic Therapists)
- Mr Hugh Ennis (Elected by Clinical Dental Technicians)
- Ms Yvonne Howell (Elected by Dental Hygienists)
- Dr Patrick O’Brien (Elected Dentist)
- Dr Patrick Quinn (Elected Dentist)
- Dr Sarah Jane Grufferty (Elected Dentist)
- Ms Michelle Spearman-Geraghty (nominated Dental Nurse)
- Mr Glenn McEvoy (*in attendance representing Dental Technicians*)

- **Fitness to Practise Committee**

The Fitness to Practise Committee is responsible for all matters relating to the council's fitness to practise functions set out under Part V of the Dentists Act, 1985. The membership of this committee is:

- Dr Rory Fleming (Chair of Fitness to Practise and Elected Dentist)
- Dr Patrick O'Brien (Elected Dentist)
- Dr Patrick Quinn (Elected Dentist)
- Dr Sarah Jane Grufferty (Elected Dentist)
- Dr Niamh Galvin (Elected Dentist)
- Mr John Gleeson (Medical Council)
- Mr Mark Kane (Minister for Health)
- Ms Mary Faulkner (Minister for Health)
- Ms Ursula Byrne (Minister for Health)

2. Committee Recognised under Dentists Act, 1985

- **Irish Committee for Specialist Training in Dentistry (ICSTD)**

The ICSTD is responsible for advising the council of matters pertinent to specialist training in Ireland.

- New committee to be appointed.

3. Standing Committees

- **Finance and General Purposes Committee**

The Finance and General Purposes Committee is responsible for all matters concerning the Dental Council's financial control, corporate governance and routine administrative matters. The membership is:

- Dr Gerry Cleary (President)
- Dr Catherine Gallagher (Vice-President)
- Prof Anthony Roberts (Chair of Education and Training)
- Dr Rory Fleming (Chair of Fitness to Practise)
- Dr Niamh Galvin (Chair of Auxiliary Dental Workers Committee)
- Mr John Murray (Medical Council)

- **Specialist Training and Registration Committee**

The Specialist Training and Registration Committee is responsible for considering applications for registration as a specialist which fall outside of the provisions of the automatic recognition of qualifications under the Professional Qualifications Directive. The membership of the committee is:

- Dr Anthony Roberts (Chair and University College Cork)
- Dr Mary Clarke (Trinity College Dublin)
- Prof Gerry Kearns (Royal College of Surgeons)
- Chair of Oral Surgery Advisory Committee of ICSTD
- Chair of Orthodontic Advisor Committee of ICSTD

- Audit and Risk Committee
- The Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for reviewing the council's internal control framework and risk management.
 - Mr John Gleeson (Chair of Audit and Risk Committee and Medical Council)
 - Dr Patrick Quinn (Elected Dentist)
 - Dr Patrick O'Brien (Elected Dentist)
 - Mr Mark Kane (Minister for Health)
 - Dr Paul Leave (Elected Dentist)

- Registration Assessment Committee (International Protection)
The Registration Assessment Committee reviews registration applications from dentists availing of the international protection pathway to registration.
 - Dr Frank Burke (Chair of Registration Assessment Committee)
 - Dr Sarah Jane Grufferty (Elected Dentist)
 - Ms Ursula Byrne (Minister for Health)