



established since 1959

The Dental Council of Hong Kong

Annual Report

2020

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Message from the Chairman



Dr LEE Kin-man, JP
Chairman, The Dental Council of Hong Kong

Introduction

2020 marked my sixth year as the Chairman of the Dental Council of Hong Kong (“the Council”). I am honoured to be re-appointed as a member and re-elected as the Chairman of the Council and continue to serve and lead the Council for another three years. It was a year full of challenges. Amid the unprecedented upheaval of COVID-19, the Council’s commitment in safeguarding public interests and fostering public’s confidence in the dental profession has never wavered.

Major Accomplishments

The Council responded to the impacts on the dental profession brought by the pandemic with strong governance and resilience. To help combating the epidemic locally, our registered dentists wasted no time in shouldering their social responsibilities and participating in the COVID-19 Community Testing Scheme (“CTS”) in September 2020. In recognition of their contributions, the Council has included the dentists’ participation in the COVID-19 CTS as a core Continuing Professional development (“CPD”) activity for the award of CPD points.

The various social distancing measures under the epidemic situation had changed the way CPD was conducted. The Council initiated to revise the relevant guidelines related to the conduct of online CPD activities to allow greater flexibility to both the programme providers and the attendees. There was however no compromise of authenticity and quality of these online activities as the attendance verification and confirmation mechanism were strictly observed.

With the introduction of the new policy of the Council’s voluntary CPD programme, it was encouraging to know that seven organisations had been accredited as the newly introduced Provisional CPD Programme Providers for the CPD Cycle 2020-2022. In this way, an adequate supply of quality CPD activities could be secured. This is also a step further to make the implementation of a mandatory CPD programme feasible.

The Council did not let the epidemic disrupt the momentum of its Licensing Examination (“LE”) – the channel in which non-locally trained dentists may apply for registration in Hong Kong. With cautious planning and implementation of all necessary infection control measures to protect the safety of candidates and staff, the Council successfully conducted one sitting of the Part I Written Test in October 2020. Majority of the candidates are holders of dental qualifications from the Mainland China, the Philippines and Australia and a total of five candidates had passed the Test.

Following the implementation of the enhancement measures for the LE in 2015, the Council rose to meet further challenges from the increasing number of non-locally trained dentists, the need to stay updated with the international practice on all parts of the LE, etc. For this assessment mechanism to stay robust, fair

and accountable, the Council had kick-started another round of revamp of the LE. Despite the difficulties encountered including the recruitment of overseas experts to participate in this exercise under the pandemic situation, the Council spared no effort in laying a solid foundation for the review to embark and proceed.

Accreditation of the undergraduate dental education and training in dentistry required for a person to become a registered dentist in Hong Kong is one of our most important and core responsibilities. The Council has made definitive effort in ensuring the relevant training is in compliance with the accreditation recommendations with the ultimate goal to ensure the standard of the training and hence the graduates are up to the Council's requirements. The pandemic has imposed challenges to dental education globally and Hong Kong is no exception to the changes in the training environment. The Council has embraced the challenges and expected appropriate reactive measures to be taken by the training institute. Close communication has therefore been attempted to safeguard that the quality of the training was in no way compromised under the COVID-19 pandemic. We would take all the factors into account in our next Accreditation Exercise scheduled for 2022.

Regarding another core responsibility of the Council in the regulation of the conduct and discipline of registered dentists, the Council received in the year 113 complaints against registered dentists with 8 cases proceeding to the Preliminary Investigation Committee ("PIC") or the disciplinary inquiry stages. A decrease of 31% in the total number of complaints received was recorded comparing to that of the year 2019.

Tasks Ahead

In recognition of the further training received by dentists and to facilitate the public to have an informed choice of dentists, the Council has devised the "List of Registrable / Quotable Additional Qualifications" ("the List"). Noting the speedy growth of the dental profession, the Council considered it an optimal time to have a comprehensive review of the Guidelines for the Inclusion of Qualifications in the List. Before the close of 2020, the Council has tasked the Education and Accreditation Committee ("EAC") to look into the matter for enhancement. A taskforce, comprising of representatives of stakeholders, was shortly established on the recommendation of the EAC to take up this important mission. The outcomes of the review will be subject to further deliberation and refinement before implementation.

The achievements of the Council are results of the valuable contribution and dedication of our Council Members, members of various Committees and Taskforces and the Council Secretariat. My heartfelt thanks go to the outgoing Dr Robert NG who had chaired the EAC and the PIC for 6 years and 3 years respectively. He had also contributed to the successful conduct of the Accreditation Exercise of the undergraduate dental education in 2017. Moreover, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to the support of the profession to the Council.

Challenges are there always and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic persist. The Council will remain resolute and strive to keep pace with the volatile environment in fulfilling its statutory functions.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This annual report, covering the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020, is published by the Dental Council of Hong Kong (“the Council”). Through this report, the Council aims to keep members of the dental profession as well as the general public better informed of the functions and activities of the Council and its various committees and working groups/taskforces during the year under report.
- 1.2 As this report is intended for general information to the readers, certain functions of the Council have accordingly been simplified and/or presented in the form of an information document. Readers who are interested in the more specific details of the statutory functions of the Council and its committees and working groups/taskforces are invited to refer to the relevant provisions under the Dentists Registration Ordinance, Chapter 156 of the Laws of Hong Kong, the Dentists (Registration and Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations, Chapter 156A of the Laws of Hong Kong and the Ancillary Dental Workers (Dental Hygienists) Regulations, Chapter 156B of the Laws of Hong Kong.

Enquiries relating to the functions and work of the Council can be addressed to –

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99 Wong Chuk Hang Road, Aberdeen, Hong Kong

Tel. No. : (852) 2873 5862 (General Enquiries) (852) 2873 5003 (Complaints Matters)

Fax No. : (852) 2554 0577

E-mail : dchk@dh.gov.hk

Enquiries relating to registration matters can be addressed to –

Central Registration Office

17/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen’s Road East, Wanchai, Hong Kong

Tel. No. : (852) 2961 8655 Fax No. : (852) 2891 7946

E-mail : cro1@dh.gov.hk

The Council’s website : <https://www.dchk.org.hk>

2 Functions of the Dental Council of Hong Kong

- 2.1 The Council is established under section 4 of the Dentists Registration Ordinance to carry out the following statutory functions in accordance with the Ordinance and the Dentists (Registration and Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations –
- (a) registration of dental practitioners in Hong Kong, including processing applications for registration, applications for specialist registration and applications for registration of additional qualifications, as well as issuing various types of certificates relating to the practice of dentistry to registered dental practitioners;
 - (b) conduct of licensing examinations; and
 - (c) disciplinary regulation of dental practitioners in Hong Kong.
- 2.2 The Council and its various committees and working groups/taskforces meet regularly to consider and decide on policies to facilitate the proper conduct of their statutory functions. The Council Secretariat provides executive and secretariat support to the Council at these meetings. During the year, aside from holding routine policy and committee meetings, the Council has processed, with the support of the Secretariat –
- (a) 37 applications to sit for the licensing examination;
 - (b) 60 applications for new registration;
 - (c) 13 applications for inclusion in the Specialist Register;
 - (d) 2,381 invitations by issuing letters to the registered dentists in Hong Kong for renewing their practising certificates for 2021;
 - (e) 113 complaints or information received against registered dentists; and
 - (f) over 10,000 general enquiries from members of the profession and the public on registration and regulation-related matters.

3 Membership of the Dental Council of Hong Kong

- 3.1 Under section 4 of the Dentists Registration Ordinance, there should be 12 members in the Council and the composition of the Council is as follows –
- (a) the Registrar (the consultant dental surgeon in charge of the Dental Service of the Department of Health (“DH”));
 - (b) a consultant dental surgeon of the Dental Service of DH;
 - (c) a registered dentist, who is a full-time member of the teaching staff of the Faculty of Dentistry of the University of Hong Kong (“HKU”);
 - (d) 2 medical practitioners;
 - (e) 6 registered dentists to be appointed –
 - (i) from a panel of not less than 12 such registered dentists nominated by the Hong Kong Dental Association (“HKDA”); or
 - (ii) in the event of HKDA failing to nominate at least 12 such registered dentists, at the discretion of the Chief Executive; and
 - (f) 1 lay member.

Members in (b) to (f) above are all appointed by the Chief Executive.

- 3.2 The membership of the Council in 2020 is as follows –
- Dr Lee Kin-man, JP (Chairman)
 - Dr Lam Tak-chiu, Wiley, JP (Registrar)
 - Dr Tong Chi-kit, Antonio
 - Professor Cheung Shun-pan, Gary
 - Dr Tung Sau-ying, MH
 - Dr Leung Kwok-ling, Ares
 - Dr Ng Pong-yin, Robert (up to 12.10.2020)
 - Dr Lau Kin-kwan, Kenny
 - Dr Foo Tai-chuen
 - Dr Chan Chi-chun
 - Dr Wai Tak-shun, Dustin
 - Ms Wong Yu-pok, Marina, JP

The Council’s Legal Adviser is Mr Ng Cheuk-kwan, Stanley, and its Secretary is Ms Maria CHOW.

4 Preliminary Investigation Committee and Disciplinary Proceedings

- 4.1 The Council's jurisdiction over dentists' professional conduct is laid down in the Dentists Registration Ordinance and the Dentists (Registration and Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations.
- 4.2 Disciplinary proceedings may be instituted against a registered dentist who –
- (a) has been convicted in Hong Kong or elsewhere of an offence punishable with imprisonment; or
 - (b) has been guilty of unprofessional conduct; or
 - (c) has obtained registration by fraud or misrepresentation; or
 - (d) has procured his name to be included in the Specialist Register by fraud or misrepresentation; or
 - (e) was not at the time of his registration qualified to be registered; or
 - (f) is practising dentistry in premises or under conditions which are unsuitable for such practice.
- 4.3 If any applicant for registration –
- (a) has been convicted in Hong Kong or elsewhere of an offence punishable with imprisonment; or
 - (b) has been guilty of unprofessional conduct; or
 - (c) is the subject of an existing order made under section 17(1)(i) or (ii) of the repealed Dentists Registration Ordinance 1940,

an inquiry may be instituted to determine whether or not the name of the applicant should be admitted by the Council for entry to the General Register.

- 4.4 The Council has published a Code of Professional Discipline for information to each registered dentist to provide general guidance to him on the proper behaviour to be observed in the profession and what may commonly constitute unprofessional conduct. The Code is not a complete guidebook on professional ethics, nor can it specify all offences which may lead to disciplinary action. Ultimately it is for the Council to decide on the merits of each individual case as to whether the conduct of an individual dental practitioner under complaint or information received constitutes unprofessional conduct.

- 4.5 Complaints or information received against registered dentists touching on matters of unprofessional conduct are normally either lodged with the Council by individuals or referred to the Council by the media, the police or such other organizations as the Consumer Council. In accordance with the statutory procedure, individual complaints may normally be handled under the following procedures –
- (a) initial consideration by the chairman of the Council’s Preliminary Investigation Committee (“PIC”) who must, unless it appears to him that the complaint is frivolous or groundless and should not proceed further, direct that the case be referred to PIC for consideration;
 - (b) examination by PIC of the complaint or information received as well as the explanation of the defendant dentist to determine whether or not there is a prima facie case for a formal inquiry; and
 - (c) inquiry by the Council, which sits in a panel of at least 4 Council Members, to hear the evidence of the complaint and representations from the defendant dentist.
- 4.6 PIC is made up of 3 members. Its composition is as follows –
- (a) 1 member of the Council elected by the Council, who shall be the chairman of PIC;
 - (b) 2 registered dentists who are not members of the Council and who shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Council –
 - (i) from a panel of not less than 12 such registered dentists nominated by HKDA; or
 - (ii) in the event of HKDA failing to nominate at least 12 such registered dentists, at the discretion of the Chairman.
- 4.7 The membership of PIC in 2020 is as follows –
Dr Ng Pong-yin, Robert (Chairman) (*up to 12.10.2020*)
Professor Cheung Shun-pan, Gary (Chairman) (*since 22.10.2020*)
Dr Chiu Tin-yan
Dr Yiu Bun-ka (*up to 30.10.2020*)
Dr Sun Yee-waha, David (*since 31.10.2020*)
- 4.8 In 2020, the Council had processed a total of 113 complaint cases. **Table 1** shows the different nature of the complaints received. Comparative figures for the years 2018 and 2019 are also shown in the table. 76% of the complaints received were related to the disregard of professional responsibilities to patients.
- 4.9 The number of complaints processed in 2020 under the 3-stage process mentioned in paragraph 4.5 above is given in **Table 2**. 156 cases were dismissed by the chairman of PIC. PIC held 3 meetings in 2020 and considered 7 cases, out of which, 1 case (i.e. 14%) was referred to the Council for inquiry.

- 4.10 **Table 3** gives a closer look into PIC's work in 2020. 7 cases involving 14 dentists were discussed. The 1 case referred for formal inquiry was scheduled to be heard in 2021.
- 4.11 The majority of complaints did not reach the inquiry stage but were dismissed either by the PIC chairman or at the decision of PIC. They were dismissed either due to their frivolous nature or because they were related to such allegations which could not be taken as unprofessional conduct. It was worth pointing out that some of the complaints touched on civil claims or compensation of professional negligence, rather than unprofessional conduct of the registered dentist which should more appropriately be dealt with through civil proceedings.
- 4.12 At an inquiry, the defendant dentist is normally represented by his defence counsel. The Secretary of the Council, who is normally represented by a Government Counsel of the Department of Justice, is responsible for presenting evidence to substantiate the disciplinary charges, including the calling of witness and independent expert opinion. Hence, it is normally not necessary for the complainant to engage his own legal representative to present the case at the disciplinary hearing.
- 4.13 The Legal Adviser to the Council sits throughout the hearing to assist the Council to deal with any legal issues raised at the disciplinary hearing. It should be stressed that, in deciding on whether the defendant dentist is guilty of the charges laid against him, the Council has to be satisfied with the evidence put before it, and the standard of proof applied in each case has to be commensurate with the gravity of the offence charged.
- 4.14 In the event that the Council is satisfied after an inquiry that a dentist has committed an offence which amounts to unprofessional conduct, any one of the following disciplinary sanctions may be considered –
- (a) removal of the dentist's name from the General Register and/or Specialist Register as appropriate; or
 - (b) removal of the dentist's name from the General Register and/or Specialist Register as appropriate for such period as the Council may think fit; or
 - (c) reprimand; or
 - (d) any other order as the Council thinks fit, but no such order is to be of greater severity than those in (a) to (c) above.

The Council has the power to suspend the operation of an order made under (a), (b) or (c) for a period or periods not exceeding 2 years, in which case the order will not take effect unless during the suspension period the dentist is found guilty of another disciplinary offence or is in breach of a condition of the suspension order.

- 4.15 **Table 4** shows the number of inquiries conducted by the Council in 2020. 6 inquiry cases were heard and concluded. Out of the 6 inquiries, 2 applications for restoration were allowed. The remaining 4 cases involving 4 dentists in which 2 of them were found guilty.
- 4.16 Any dentist who is aggrieved by the order of the Council may appeal to the Court of Appeal of the High Court and the Court of Final Appeal. The Courts may affirm, reverse or vary the order appealed against. **Table 5** shows the number of appeals lodged against the Council's orders in the years 2018 through 2020.

5 Licensing Examination of the Dental Council of Hong Kong

- 5.1 The Council has appointed the Examination Committee (“EC”) and the Board of Examiners (“BoE”) to assist in administering the licensing examination of the Council. EC is the policy arm of the Council in recommending the policy, format and rules governing the examination whereas BoE is responsible for conducting the licensing examination.
- 5.2 EC consists of –
- (a) 2 members of the Council (one of them shall be the Chairman);
 - (b) 2 registered dentists/full-time teaching staff of the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU nominated by HKU;
 - (c) 2 registered dentists nominated by the College of Dental Surgeons of Hong Kong (“CDSHK”) of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (“HKAM”);
 - (d) 2 registered dentists nominated by HKDA; and
 - (e) 2 registered dentists being public officers and nominated by DH; and
 - (f) the incumbent Chairman of BoE.
- 5.3 The membership of EC in 2020 is as follows –
- Dr Lau Kin-kwan, Kenny (the Council) (Chairman)
 - Dr Chan Chi-chun (the Council)
 - Dr Lee Hiu-man, Gillian (HKU) (*up to 12.4.2020*)
 - Dr Wong Hai-ming (HKU) (*since 13.4.2020*)
 - Dr Lai Man-lung, Stanley (HKU)
 - Dr Chan Sai-kwing (CDSHK) (*up to 7.6.2020*)
 - Dr She Tsang-tsang (CDSHK) (*since 8.6.2020*)
 - Dr Leung Chiu-man, Katherine (CDSHK) (*up to 7.6.2020*)
 - Dr Ho Wai-mei (CDSHK) (*since 8.6.2020*)
 - Dr Foo Tai-chuen (HKDA) (*up to 7.6.2020*)
 - Dr Mui Sau-fung, Michael (HKDA) (*since 8.6.2020*)
 - Dr Wai Tak-shun, Dustin (HKDA) (*up to 2.3.2020*)
 - Dr Zhang Chen (HKDA) (*since 3.3.2020*)
 - Dr Wong Yiu-kai (DH)
 - Dr Hse Mei-yin, Kitty (DH)
 - Professor Cheung Shun-pan, Gary (Chairman, BoE)

5.4 The composition of BoE is as follows –

- (a) 5 registered dentists/full-time teaching staff of the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU nominated by HKU;
- (b) 1 registered dentist nominated by CDSHK;
- (c) 1 registered dentist nominated by HKDA; and
- (d) 1 registered dentist being a public officer and nominated by DH.

5.5 The membership of the BoE in 2020 is as follows –
Professor Cheung Shun-pan, Gary (HKU) (Chairman)

- Dr Leung Yiu-yan, Mike (HKU)
- Professor Leung Wai-keung (HKU)
- Dr Pow Ho-nang, Edmond (HKU)
- Professor Yiu Kar-yung, Cynthia (HKU)
- Dr Lee Chun-kei (CDSHK)
- Dr Chan Chiu-ye, Spencer (HKDA)
- Dr Law Chi-ming (DH)

5.6 A panel of Additional Examiners for up to 25 persons who are registered dentists with extensive general dental practice experience as nominated by the chairman of EC of the Council work with BoE in the process of examination.

5.7 The Panel of Additional Examiners in 2020 is as follows -

- Dr Chan Kam-sau, Echo
- Dr Chan Shu-yuen, Andrew
- Dr Chan Wai-kit, Raymond
- Dr Chan Wo-chi, Francis
- Dr Chiu Tin-yan
- Dr Chow Lop-keung, Raymond
- Dr Fang Tak-sang, Daniel
- Dr Foo Tai-chuen
- Dr Kum Chun-sing
- Dr Lam Tak-chiu, Wiley, JP
- Dr Lau Chi-kai, George
- Dr Lau Sze-lok
- Dr Lee Pak-cheung, Patrick
- Dr Ma Andrew Kwok-yui
- Dr Mak Wing-yiu
- Dr Ng Chi-hong
- Dr Siu Hin-ho
- Dr Sun Yee-wa, David

Dr Tang Kam-kee
Dr Tsang Leung-hei
Dr Wong Johnny
Dr Yiu Bun-ka
Dr Zhang Chen

- 5.8 Licensing examination is conducted by BoE with the assistance of the Panel of Additional Examiners. The examination is intended for those non-Hong Kong trained dentists who wish to register as dentists in Hong Kong. On passing the examination, the candidate is qualified to apply for registration with the Council. For the purpose of monitoring and maintaining the standard of the examination at an international level, an overseas examiner is appointed to give comments on the multiple choice question papers and to examine some of the candidates in the practical and clinical parts of the examination. The overseas examiner would also provide comments on the content and conduct of the examination for consideration of the BoE.
- 5.9 The examination consists of the following 3 parts –
- (a) Part I – Written Test which consists of multiple-choice question papers on professional subjects including Applied Basic Sciences; Medicine and Surgery in relation to Dentistry; Dental Pharmacology and Therapeutics, and Medical Emergencies in relation to Dentistry; Oral Surgery, Oral Medicine and Oral Pathology; Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics; Conservative Dentistry; Periodontology, Preventive Dentistry and Dental Public Health; and Prosthodontics.
 - (b) Part II – Practical Test which is designed to test the candidates' manual dexterity and professional competence in Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics; Prosthodontics; Conservative Dentistry; Periodontology and Dental Public Health; and Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery.
 - (c) Part III – Clinical Test which is designed to test the candidates' ability to apply professional knowledge to clinical situations particularly in diagnosis, treatment planning and treatment in the restoration of teeth; diagnosis and treatment of periodontal conditions; prosthodontic treatment provision; surgical management of patients; and the diagnosis, treatment planning, and management of infants, children and adolescents.
- 5.10 Details of the results of the examinations since 1997 are shown at **Table 6**.

5.11 The Council has set up a Licensing Examination Appeal Mechanism for applicants seeking permission to take the Licensing Examination and for candidates who are aggrieved by the decisions of the EC and/or the BoE regarding the examination. A Licensing Examination Review Committee (“LERC”) with membership independent of the Council was established in 2010.

5.12 The composition of LERC is as follows –

- (a) 1 registered dentist nominated by DH;
- (b) 1 registered dentist nominated by the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU;
- (c) 1 registered dentist nominated by CDSHK;
- (d) 1 registered dentist nominated by HKDA; and
- (e) 1 lay person.

5.13 The membership of LERC in 2020 is as follows –

Professor Chu Chun-hung (HKU) (Chairman) (*up to 8.1.2020*)

Dr Cham Kwong-man (DH) (Chairman) (*since 17.9.2020*)

Dr Ho King-lun (HKU) (*since 9.1.2020*)

Dr Ho Kam-yuen (CDSHK) (*up to 8.1.2020*)

Dr Mak Yun-lok, Raymond (CDSHK) (*since 9.1.2020*)

Dr Mui Sau-fung, Michael (HKDA) (*up to 7.6.2020*)

Dr Chow Ming-chung (HKDA) (*since 16.7.2020*)

Dr Ho Chi-shing, David, JP (Lay person)

5.14 From 2015/2016 onwards, the number of sittings of the Licensing Examination has been increased from 1 to 2 per annum.

5.15 To enhance the conduct of the Licensing Examination, the Council reviewed the examination policy and established a bank of validated past questions and new questions in 2015. The revised examination policy, with revisions on the areas of result retention and admission, has been adopted for use from the 2015 Licensing Examination onwards. An Expert Panel was set up for the Licensing Examination in 2020 to review and replenish the question bank.

6 Registration and Restoration of Names of Dentists on the Register

- 6.1 As at 31 December 2020, names of 2,651 dentists were entered in the General Register, either as being residents in Hong Kong or residents outside Hong Kong. **Table 7(A)** shows that there has been a steady increase in the number of registered dentists from 2,553 in 2018, 2,611 in 2019 to 2,651 in 2020.
- 6.2 One of the major tasks for the Council Secretariat is to keep the entries in the General Register accurate and up-to-date while enabling public access to those names currently registered on the list. Hundreds of transactions are carried out on the updating of the General Register on a monthly basis, which include change and/or addition of practising addresses, registration of additional qualifications, deletion from or restoration of the dentists' names to the General Register, transfer to and from the resident and non-resident lists respectively, as well as issuance of Certificate of Good Standing, Duplicate Copy of Certificate of Registration, Certified Copy of Certificate of Registration (which is required when a dentist opens a new clinic for the practice of dentistry) and certificates verifying registration, etc. In addition, with the aim of providing a public service, the Council Secretariat processes an annual average of over 5,000 general enquiries from members of the profession and the public on registration-related matters.
- 6.3 **Table 7(B)** lists in detail the registration figures as well as cases of restoration to the General Register in 2018, 2019 and 2020 respectively.
- 6.4 In addition to the registered dentists with full registration, there were 27 “deemed-to-be registered” dentists in 2020. The “deemed-to-be registered” clause was introduced under section 30(3) of the Dentists Registration Ordinance to enable all persons on full-time teaching employment of the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU to discharge their teaching duties or perform hospital work in the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU.
- 6.5 A dentist who has the qualifications, experience and other attributes approved by the Council may apply to the Council for inclusion of his name in the Specialist Register under a specialty. The objective of maintaining a Specialist Register is for the recognition of expertise so that patients may be referred to them for opinion and/or consultation if the need arises.
- 6.6 As at 31 December 2020, a total of 302 registered dentists had their names included in the Specialist Register under the following eight specialties – Orthodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Periodontology, Endodontics, Paediatric Dentistry, Prosthodontics, Family Dentistry and Community Dentistry.
- 6.7 Another key task for the Council Secretariat is the annual exercise of renewal of practising certificates for all registered dentists whose names are on the General Register. In 2020, a total of 2,381 letters were issued to inform the registered dentists of the arrangement for application for annual practising certificates for 2021 and the fee waiver for renewal of annual practising certificates under the Dentists (Fee Concessions) Regulation 2020.
- 6.8 Every registered dentist whose name is on the General Register for dentists resident in Hong Kong is reminded at the end of the year that his practising certificate is due for renewal. A dentist who fails to renew his/her practising certificate on time may be liable for his name to be removed from the General Register and the Specialist Register.

7 Education and Accreditation Committee

- 7.1 The Education and Accreditation Committee (“EAC”) was set up under Section 5C of the Dentists Registration Ordinance. EAC has the following functions –
- (a) to recommend to the Council the specialties under which the names of registered dentists may be included in the Specialist Register;
 - (b) to recommend to the Council the qualifications, experience and other attributes that qualify a registered dentist to have his name included in the Specialist Register under a specialty recommended by the Committee under (a) above;
 - (c) to recommend to the Council the procedures and documentations for an application to include the name of a registered dentist in the Specialist Register;
 - (d) to make recommendations to the Council so that it may decide whether the name of a registered dentist should be included in, or removed from, the Specialist Register;
 - (e) to review and recommend to the Council the standard and structure of undergraduate dental education and training in dentistry required for a person to become a registered dentist; and
 - (f) such other functions as are imposed on it under the Dentists Registration Ordinance.
- 7.2 EAC considers and recommends to the Council in respect of applications for registration of additional qualifications. A new set of “Guidelines for Inclusion of Qualifications in the List of Registrable/Quotable Additional Qualifications” has been put in place since November 2010. A “List of Registrable/Quotable Additional Qualifications” was also established. Once a qualification has been included in the List, a dentist possessing that qualification may quote such in the dissemination of his service information to the public. If the dentist so chooses, he may also apply for including the said qualification in his entry in the General Register.
- 7.3 As for the accreditation exercise on undergraduate dental education and training in dentistry, EAC has maintained a close working relationship with the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU to ensure proper implementation of the recommendations.
- 7.4 The composition of EAC consists of the following members appointed by the Council –
- (a) 3 members of the Council (one of them shall be the Chairman);
 - (b) a registered dentist nominated by HKU;
 - (c) a registered dentist nominated by HKAM;
 - (d) a registered dentist nominated by Director of Health; and
 - (e) a registered dentist nominated by HKDA.

- 7.5 The membership of EAC in 2020 is as follows –
- Dr Ng Pong-yin, Robert (the Council) (Chairman) (*up to 12.10.2020*)
 - Dr Foo, Tai-chuen (the Council) (Chairman) (*since 22.10.2020*)
 - Dr Wai Tak-shun, Dustin (the Council)
 - Dr Tung Sau-ying, MH (the Council)
 - Dr Leung Chiu-man, Katherine (HKU)
 - Dr Pow, Ho-nang, Edmond (HKAM) (*up to 15.10.2020*)
 - Dr Lee, Chun-kei (HKAM) (*since 22.10.2020*)
 - Dr Yeung Kar-hing (DH)
 - Dr Cheung Tat-leung, Mike (HKDA)

- 7.6 As at 31 December 2020, a total of 302 dentists have been included in the Specialist Register under the following specialties –

<u>Specialist title</u>	<u>No. of specialist dentists</u>
Specialist in Orthodontics	70
Specialist in Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery	64
Specialist in Periodontology	47
Specialist in Endodontics	21
Specialist in Paediatric Dentistry	38
Specialist in Prosthodontics	39
Specialist in Family Dentistry	13
Specialist in Community Dentistry	10

8 Continuing Professional Development Committee

- 8.1 A Continuing Professional Development Committee (“CPDC”) has been set up to monitor and review the Continuing Professional Development (“CPD”) Programme. The terms of reference of CPDC are as follows –
- (a) to monitor the process of accreditation of CPD activities;
 - (b) to recommend CPD Programme Providers, CPD Programme Accreditors and CPD Programme Administrators for approval by the Council;
 - (c) to recommend award of the CPD certificate for approval by the Council; and
 - (d) to conduct review of the CPD Programme for practising dentists.
- 8.2 CPDC comprises the following representatives –
- (a) 3 representatives from the Council (one of them shall be the Chairman);
 - (b) a representative from CDSHK;
 - (c) a representative from HKDA; and
 - (d) a representative from the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU.
- 8.3 The membership of the CPDC in 2020 is as follows –
- Dr Lee Kin-man, JP (the Council) (Chairman)
 - Professor Cheung Shun-pan, Gary (the Council)
 - Dr Lau Kin-kwan, Kenny (the Council)
 - Dr Ho Wai-mei (CDSHK)
 - Dr Liu Wai-ming, Haston (HKDA)
 - Dr Leung Yiu-yan (HKU)
- 8.4 The CPD Programme has been running since 2002. In view of the fact that dentists in many countries are required to undergo “mandatory continuous learning” in order to maintain their professional status, the Council considers that it is necessary to explore the feasibility of mandatory CPD Programme for registered dentists in Hong Kong. In this regard, the Council has been reviewing the CPD Programme in order to formulate a strategic plan for long-term development. 1-year cycle of CPD Programme for practising dentists on voluntary basis was adopted for the years 2014 to 2016 as an interim measure. The Council endorsed to resume the CPD cycle, which will remain voluntary, to 3 years starting from CPD cycle 2017-2019 in order to tie in with the CME/CPD cycle of CDSHK. Same as the CPD cycle 2017-2019, a minimum of 45 credit points have to be accumulated over the 3-year cycle from 2020-2022. Out of the 45 CPD points, a registered dentist must obtain at least 6 CPD points by attending activities from the core CPD areas.

- 8.5 On the recommendation of the CPDC, the following CPD Programme Accreditors, CPD Programme Administrators and CPD Programme Providers have been appointed by the Council for the CPD cycle 2020-2022. Moreover, to ensure an adequate supply of quality CPD activities, the Council has approved a list of Provisional CPD Programme Providers for the CPD cycle 2020-2022 –

CPD Programme Accreditors

CDSHK

HKDA

CPD Programme Administrators

CDSHK

HKDA

DH (for Dental Officers of the DH only)

CPD Programme Providers

CDSHK

HKDA

DH

Faculty of Dentistry of HKU

Hong Kong Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons

Hong Kong Society of Orthodontists

Hong Kong Endodontic Society

Hong Kong Society of Paediatric Dentistry

Hong Kong Prosthetic Dentistry Society

Hong Kong Society of Family Dentistry

Provisional CPD Programme Providers

Hong Kong Stomatological Association

Young Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon Group of Hong Kong

Hong Kong Society of Periodontology and Implant Dentistry Ltd

Hong Kong Association for Oral and Facial Rehabilitation Limited

The University of Hong Kong Dental Alumni Association

The Hong Kong Society of Esthetic Dentistry Limited

Hong Kong Chinese Dentists Association

- 8.6 As in the past, all registered dentists, including those deemed-to-be registered but excluding those on the overseas list, can enroll in the CPD Programme.

- 8.7 The government launched the COVID-19 Community Testing Scheme (“CTS”) in September 2020. Dentists are one of the targeted recruits for the sampling stations. In recognition of the effort of the dentists participating in the COVID-19 CTS, the participating dentists of the COVID-19 CTS are allowed to apply for CPD points through designated CPD Programme Providers as participation in core CPD activity under the category of “Dental and Medical Public Health Issue of Local Relevance” with 1 CPD point/hour and a maximum of 15 CPD points be awarded under the COVID-19 CTS within the year of 2020.
- 8.8 The Council launched a Pilot Voluntary Continuing Professional Programme for New Registrants 2020-21. New registrants entering the General Register of the Council during the period from 1 October 2020 to 31 March 2021 are eligible for enrolment. All accredited CPD Programme Providers may offer a structured and targeted programme to new registrants in order to –
- (a) familiarize them with knowledge and information for fulfillment of the core competences which are essential for them to practise independently in Hong Kong; and
 - (b) provide them with opportunities for clinical skill maturation and decision-making enhancement under a guided mode of a mentorship.

9 Communication with the Profession and the Public

- 9.1 In order to enhance communication between the Council and members of the profession, the Council, apart from publishing an annual report, will issue circular letters to all dental practitioners in Hong Kong from time to time.
- 9.2 The Council welcomes any views from members of the profession on issues which the Council can undertake to further explore and review so as to keep the profession abreast of the latest development in knowledge and skills in dental services for the benefits of members of the public.
- 9.3 The Council hosts a website <https://www.dchk.org.hk> to provide the following information –
- (a) Membership of the Council and its subsidiary committees and boards;
 - (b) Information on the date of an upcoming inquiry of the Council;
 - (c) Code of Professional Discipline for the Guidance of Dental Practitioners in Hong Kong;
 - (d) Guidelines on Personal Web Pages and Social Media for Dentists;
 - (e) Information and form in relation to complaints against registered dentists;
 - (f) List of registered dentists;
 - (g) Guidelines and form in relation to application to be a specialist dentist;
 - (h) Annual Report of the Council;
 - (i) Information on the Continuing Professional Development Programme for Practising Dentists;
 - (j) Guidelines and Form in relation to Inclusion of Qualifications in the List of Registrable/Quotable Additional Qualifications;
 - (k) List of Registrable/Quotable Additional Qualifications;
 - (l) Application for sitting the Licensing Examination of the Council;
 - (m) Scope of dental work that may be undertaken by enrolled dental hygienists;
 - (n) Competences for the Hong Kong Dentist; and
 - (o) Judgments of the disciplinary inquiries held by the Council.
- 9.4 To facilitate members of the public to have access to the practice information of dental practitioners, the Council has approved dentists to provide such information through an electronic directory of dentists developed by approved organizations. Since 2003, the Council has approved HKDA to maintain an electronic directory of dentists.

10 Future Developments

- 10.1 The Council is committed to continue leading the dental profession in its role for greater professionalism. In meeting the community's changing needs and rising public expectations on the profession, the Council must stay up-to-date of the community's aspiration as well as the latest developments in technology and demands in dental service.
- 10.2 The Council believes that with the rapid clinical and scientific development, dental practitioners have the obligation to keep themselves updated on the latest development in knowledge and skills in the various fields of professional practice in order to maintain quality professional service. The Council will continue to review and closely monitor the CPD programme, and to encourage active participation of the registered dentists in the CPD Programme so as to maintain and raise further their professional competence.
- 10.3 The Council will continue to regularly look into the scope for improving procedures and processes in the handling of disciplinary cases of registered dentists to further enhance efficiency and transparency. Save for exceptional circumstances, the Council's disciplinary inquiries are normally held in public. This will remain the practice of the Council. Information on the date and venue of an upcoming disciplinary inquiry has also been posted on the Council's website for information to members of the public and interested parties.
- 10.4 The Council's Secretariat will continue to enhance its efficiency in the provision of services to members of the profession as well as the public. In particular, arrangement has been made to update regularly the information posted on the Council's website such that the most up-to-date information on various issues pertaining to the activities of the Council as well as the practice of dentistry in Hong Kong can be made available to the public.
- 10.5 The Council is answerable to the public and has the continuing statutory duty to ensure that all persons are of the required professional standard before they are given the registration to practise in Hong Kong. To this end, the Council will conduct accreditation exercise on the degree of Bachelor of Dental Surgery of HKU at 5-year cycle intervals. The first accreditation exercise was completed in 2013 and the Council has granted accredited status to the University of Hong Kong. The Council successfully conducted the second accreditation exercise in 2017 in collaboration with the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU. An Accreditation Report presenting the findings of the accreditation exercise with recommendations/suggestions has been passed to HKU. The next accreditation exercise will be held in 2022.
- 10.6 The Council has kick-started the review of the "Guidelines for Inclusion of Qualifications in the List of Registrable/Quotable Additional Qualifications" in order to keep pace with the changing environment and the current needs of the profession. The comprehensive review on the Guidelines will continue in 2021.

Table 1

Statistics on Complaints Received by the Dental Council of Hong Kong

Nature	No. of Cases		
	2018	2019	2020
1. Conviction punishable with imprisonment	-	1	2
2. Disregard of professional responsibilities to patients	83	127	87
3. Abuse of alcohol or drugs	-	-	-
4. Abuse of dangerous or scheduled drugs	-	-	-
4A. Mandatory labeling of all dispensed medicines	-	-	-
5. Abuse of professional position in order to further an improper association or commit adultery	-	2	-
6. Abuse of professional confidence	-	-	-
7. Depreciation of other dental practitioners	2	2	-
8. Canvassing	9	12	7
9. Misleading and unapproved descriptions and announcements	2	3	1
10. Improper financial transactions	-	-	-
11. Untrue or misleading certificates and other professional documents	-	1	-
12. Covering	1	-	-
13. Improper delegation of dental duties	-	-	-
14. Responsibility of partners and directors	-	-	-
15. Miscellaneous	21	17	16
Total :	118	165	113

Table 2

Work of the Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) of the Dental Council of Hong Kong in 2020

Nature	Total no. of Cases
Cases received	113
Cases dismissed by PIC Chairman (including cases carried forward from previous years)	156
Cases considered by PIC (including cases carried forward from previous years)	7
Case referred by PIC to Dental Council for disciplinary inquiry	1

Table 3

Work Statistics of the Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) of the Dental Council of Hong Kong in 2020

	Quarter				Total
	Jan.-Mar.	Apr.-Jun.	Jul.-Sept.	Oct.-Dec.	
No. of PIC Meeting	1	1	-	1	3
No. of new case considered	1	3*	-	4	8*
No. of case carried forward from previous meeting/referred back to the PIC	-	-	-	1*	1*
No. of case dismissed (%)	-	2 (66.7%)	-	2 (40%)	4 (57%)
No. of case referred to inquiry (%)	-	1* (33.3%)	-	1* (20%)	1* (14%)
No. of case with investigation in progress (%)	1 (100%)	-	-	2 (40%)	3 (29%)

* A complaint case was first discussed at the PIC meeting held in the quarter of April to June 2020 and PIC decided to refer it to the council for inquiry. The Council subsequently referred it back to the PIC for reconsideration in accordance with regulation 19(1) of the Dentists (Registration and Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations. The PIC then decided at the meeting held in the quarter of October to December 2020 to refer the case to inquiry.

Table 4 Inquiries Conducted by the Dental Council of Hong Kong in 2020

No. of Inquiries	Nature	Decisions of the Council
4	Disregard of professional responsibilities to patients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case 1 1 dentist was not found guilty • Case 2 1 dentist was served of warning letter (order gazetted) • Case 3 1 dentist was not found guilty • Case 4 1 dentist's name was removed from the General Register for 3 months with suspension of 24 months subject to conditions (order gazetted)
2	Application for restoration	2 applications were allowed subject to conditions
Total : 6		

Table 5

Figures on Appeal Cases

	2018	2019	2020
No. of appeals lodged	1	-	-
No. of appeal cases carried forward from previous years	-	-	-
Total no. of appeal cases concluded in the year	1	0	0

Result of appeal cases concluded in the year:

(a) Dismissed by Consent	-	-	-
(b) Dismissed by Court of Appeal	1	-	-
(c) Allowed	-	-	-
(d) Allowed with Substitute Order	-	-	-
Total no. of appeal cases concluded in the year	1	0	0

Table 6

Results of the Licensing Examination of the Dental Council of Hong Kong since 1997

Year	PART I			PART II			PART III			No. Passed the Whole Examination
	No. Sat	No. Passed	Pass %	No. Sat	No. Passed	Pass %	No. Sat	No. Passed	Pass %	
1997	35	15	43%	37	17	46%	19	12	63%	12
1998	30	18	60%	28	14	50%	23	14	61%	14
1999	27	13	48%	26	10	38%	20	8	40%	8
2000	38	21	55%	30	11	37%	21	12	57%	12
2001	28	10	36%	21	11	52%	19	13	68%	13
2002	24	8	33%	13	5	38%	9	7	78%	7
2003	26	7	27%	12	5	42%	7	7	100%	7
2004	23	10	43%	16	6	38%	6	5	83%	5
2005	30	10	33%	20	5	25%	6	4	67%	4
2006	29	18	62%	30	14	47%	12	6	50%	6
2007	27	10	37%	25	10	40%	16	9	56%	9
2008	41	18	44%	33	12	36%	16	12	75%	12
2009	49	20	41%	33	10	30%	16	10	63%	10
2010	48	21	44%	36	8	22%	14	6	42%	6
2011	46	8	17%	29	2	7%	10	7	70%	7
2012	46	4	9%	28	9	32%	10	7	70%	7

Year	PART I			PART II			PART III			No. Passed the Whole Examination
	No. Sat	No. Passed	Pass %	No. Sat	No. Passed	Pass %	No. Sat	No. Passed	Pass %	
2013	45	4	9%	16	3	19%	8	6	75%	6
2014	53	17	32%	27	7	26%	8	3	38%	3
2015	40	3	8%	17	7	41%	18	12	67%	6
2016 (First Sitting)	21	8	38%	18	6	33%	14	10	71%	8
2016 (Second Sitting)	30	5	17%	14	3	21%	8	5	63%	4
2016 (Third Sitting)	38	7	18%	15	4	27%	10	4	40%	4
2017 (First Sitting)	38	8	21%	37	9	24%	30	20	67%	7
2017 (Second Sitting)	50	16	32%	31	14	45%	14	7	50%	16
2018 (First Sitting)	40	10	25%	24	8	33%	13	3	23%	6
2018 (Second Sitting)	60	18	30%	35	14	40%	30	16	53%	13
2019 (First Sitting)	53	16	30%	36	12	33%	27	16	59%	12
2019 (Second Sitting)	54	18	33%	44	13	30%	31	14	45%	15
2020*	26	5	19%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

* Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only one sitting of Part I of the LE was held in 2020.

Table 7

Number of Registered Dentists

(A) Total Number of Dentists on the Register of Dentists of Hong Kong (as at 31 December 2020)	2018	2019	2020
Dentists resident in Hong Kong	2,334	2,392	2,430
Dentists resident outside Hong Kong	219	219	221
Total	2,553	2,611	2,651

(B) Breakdown of New Registration and Restoration of Names to the Register	2018	2019	2020
New Registration	71	69	60
Restoration to the Register	0	4	4
Total	71	73	64

