



established since 1959

The Dental Council of Hong Kong



2021

**Annual
Report**



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Message from the Chairman



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

Introduction

2021 was a challenging and rewarding year for the Dental Council of Hong Kong (“the Council”). While the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact the society on different fronts, the Council did not let this unprecedented threat disrupt its governance of the core business and the enhancement to the development of the profession. Rather, the Council rose to the challenge and had spearheaded a number of initiatives with the firm vision of safeguarding the public interests and upholding public confidence in the dental profession.

Stepping into my seventh year as the Council Chairman, I am delighted to give an account of the major accomplishments of the Council over the past year covering a spectrum of subjects.

Major Accomplishments

The Council was pleased to note that the amendment of the Dentists Registration Ordinance (Cap. 156) was raised in the Chief Executive’s 2021 Policy Address as part of the Government’s initiatives in building a caring and just society. As stated in the Report of the Strategic Review on Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development promulgated in 2017, the amendment of this legal framework for regulation of the dental profession was recommended with a view to modernising the regulatory structure and enhancing the professional standards. Building on the foundation of the amendment proposal compiled earlier, the Council will continue to work closely with the Government to take forward this important initiative.

In response to the Chief Executive’s 2021 Policy Address to make continuing professional education and/or continuing professional development (“CPD”) a mandatory requirement for dentists, alongside the supplementary medical professionals and nurses by way of legislation, the Council had set up a dedicated Taskforce on Preparation for Mandatory CPD Programme in 2021. Comprising members from different stakeholders, the Taskforce would gauge the wisdom of the profession, examine the programme mechanism and make recommendations on the policies and implementation of the mandatory CPD programme. Upon completion of the review, the Taskforce will be in a position to put forth its recommendations for the Council’s consideration, having due regard to the schedule of the relevant legislative amendments.

In recognition of the effort of dentists in acquisition of further and significant dental knowledge and skills, and to benefit the public by keeping them informed of the dentists’ qualifications, the Council has maintained a List of Registrable/Quotable Additional Qualifications (“the List”). The current set of “Guidelines for Inclusion of Qualifications in the List of Registrable/Quotable Additional Qualifications” (“the Guidelines”) has been in force since 2010. As an enhancement measure, the Council had set up a taskforce to conduct a thorough review of the Guidelines in 2021. With an extensive research into other jurisdictions, the taskforce would examine the Guidelines on handling additional qualifications of dental practitioners taking into account recent changes and developments of postgraduate qualifications. We are confident that the revised Guidelines will become an even more effective tool to achieve the stated purposes.



The Council always accords high priority to its statutory function to review the standard and structure of undergraduate dental education and training in Hong Kong. Over the past year, the Council had kept in close communication with the Faculty of Dentistry of the University of Hong Kong regarding the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the conduct of its Bachelor of Dental Surgery Programme. On a related note, the third Accreditation Exercise of the local university undergraduate dental programme, operated at a 5-year interval, would be mounted in 2022. The Council had enthusiastically kick-started relevant preparatory work during the year. An Accreditation Panel comprising a Reviewing Team and a Visiting Team had been established and all the necessary accreditation documents were being thoroughly reviewed and compiled.

Locally trained dental graduates aside, the Council also spares no effort in ensuring that the non-locally trained dentists are up to the required standard for registration through the conduct of the Licensing Examination (“LE”). With cautious planning and implementation of effective infection control measures to protect the safety of all participants, the Council successfully conducted all three parts of the two sittings of the LE in 2021. A total of ten candidates had passed the whole LE with majority of the candidates being holders of dental qualifications from the Mainland China, Singapore and Malaysia.

In the face of rising expectation of the professionalism and ethical standards of the profession, the Council had reinforced its regulatory role to maintain the conduct and discipline of registered dentists in Hong Kong through various statutory procedures, thereby ensuring the provision of high standards and quality of dental care for the general public. In 2021, the Council had received 174 complaints against registered dentists. This figure represented some 54% more than that of the total number of complaints received in the year 2020.

Tasks Ahead

The Council will keep track of the progress of the aforesaid initiatives and ensure their success by working closely with the Government, the stakeholders and the profession.

The success of governance over registration and regulation of the profession counts on the concerted effort and support from Members of the Council, Committees and Taskforces. My heartfelt thanks go to the outgoing Council Members, Dr LAU Kin-Kwan, Kenny and Ms WONG Yu-pok, Marina for their support and contribution to the Council over the past years. In meeting increased workload and new initiatives with great complexity throughout the year, the Council Secretariat, despite its stringent manpower, continued to provide exemplary service and unwavering support for the Council to the highest standard. I would therefore like to express my appreciation to the Council Secretariat for its hard work and dedication. Moreover, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to all dental professionals for their commitment in providing safe dental services during the trying times. With immense dedication and strategical planning, the Council is well equipped to respond to any challenges ahead in 2022.

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 2021 to 31 December 2021, 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 –

The Dental Council Secretariat

4/F, Hong Kong Academy of Medicine Jockey Club Building

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) 199 applications to sit for the licensing examination;
 - (b) 62 applications for new registration;
 - (c) 11 applications for inclusion in the Specialist Register;
 - (d) 2,421 invitations by issuing letters to the registered dentists in Hong Kong for renewing their practising certificates for 2022;
 - (e) 174 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 2021 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 Liu Wai-ming, Haston (*since 24.9.2021*)
 - Dr Lau Kin-kwan, Kenny (*up to 30.9.2021*)
 - Dr Tsang Hin-kei, Century (*since 1.10.2021*)
 - Dr Foo Tai-chuen
 - Dr Cheung Tat-leung (*since 1.1.2021*)
 - Dr Wai Tak-shun, Dustin
 - Ms Wong Yu-pok, Marina, JP (*up to 31.8.2021*)
 - Ms Yu Hoi-man (*since 21.12.2021*)

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 organisations 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 2021 is as follows –
Professor Cheung Shun-pan, Gary (Chairman)
Dr Chiu Tin-yan
Dr Sun Yee-wha, David

- 4.8 In 2021, the Council had processed a total of 174 complaint cases. **Table 1** shows the different nature of the complaints received. Comparative figures for the years 2019 and 2020 are also shown in the table. 82% of the complaints received were related to the disregard of professional responsibilities to patients.

- 4.9 The number of complaints processed in 2021 under the 3-stage process mentioned in paragraph 4.5 above is given in **Table 2**. 102 cases were dismissed by the chairman of PIC. PIC held 5 meetings in 2021 and considered 29 cases, out of which, 9 cases (i.e. 31%) were referred to the Council for inquiries.



- 4.10 **Table 3** gives a closer look into PIC’s work in 2021. 29 cases involving 34 dentists were discussed. Among the 9 cases referred to the Council for inquiries, 1 case was concluded in 2021, 1 case was referred back to PIC for re-consideration and the remaining 7 cases were scheduled to be heard in 2022 or 2023.
- 4.11 The majority of complaints did not reach the inquiry stage but were dismissed either by 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 2021. 2 inquiry cases were heard and concluded. In those 2 inquiries, one dentist was found guilty and reprimanded.

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. There is no appeal lodged against the Council's decision from 2019 to 2021 nor any appeal cases carried forward from previous years for the same period of time.

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) 3 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;
 - (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 2021 is as follows –
- Dr Lau Kin-kwan, Kenny (the Council) (Chairman) (*up to 30.9.2021*)
 - Dr Wai Tak-shun, Dustin (the Council) (Chairman) (*since 28.10.2021*)
 - Ms Wong Yu-pok, Marina, JP (the Council) (*up to 31.8.2021*)
 - Dr Liu Wai-ming, Haston (the Council) (*since 28.10.2021*)
 - Dr Tsang Hin-kei, Century (the Council) (*since 28.10.2021*)
 - Dr Wong Hai-ming (HKU)
 - Dr Lai Man-lung, Stanley (HKU)
 - Dr She Tsang-tsang (CDSHK)
 - Dr Ho Wai-mei (CDSHK) (*up to 8.11.2021*)
 - Dr Wong Tsz-leung (CDSHK) (*since 19.11.2021*)
 - Dr Mui Sau-fung, Michael (HKDA)
 - Dr Zhang Chen (HKDA)
 - Dr Wong Yiu-kai (DH)
 - Dr Hse Mei-yin, Kitty, JP (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 2021 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 Fang Tak-sang, Daniel (CDSHK)
- Dr Chan Chiu-yee, 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 2021 is as follows -

- Dr Chan Kam-sau, Echo
- Dr Chan Shu-yuen, Andrew
- Dr Chan Wo-chi, Francis
- Dr Chiu Tin-yan
- Dr Chow Lop-keung, Raymond
- 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-wah, 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 5](#).



- 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 2021 is as follows –
- Dr Cham Kwong-man (DH) (Chairman)
 - Dr Ho King-lun (HKU)
 - Dr Mak Yun-lok, Raymond (CDSHK)
 - Dr Chow Ming-chung (HKDA)
 - 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. To review the format and standard of the licensing examination, a Taskforce of Enhancement on the Conduct of the Licensing Examination was set up in 2020. The work of the Taskforce, including the enhancement of the question bank, was in progress.

6 Registration and Restoration of Names of Dentists on the Register

- 6.1 As at 31 December 2021, names of 2,706 dentists were entered in the General Register, either as being residents in Hong Kong or residents outside Hong Kong. **Table 6(A)** shows that there has been a steady increase in the number of registered dentists from 2,611 in 2019, 2,651 in 2020 to 2,706 in 2021.
- 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 6(B)** lists in detail the registration figures as well as cases of restoration to the General Register in 2019, 2020 and 2021 respectively.
- 6.4 In addition to the registered dentists with full registration, there were 32 "deemed-to-be registered" dentists in 2021. 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 2021, a total of 307 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 2021, a total of 2,421 letters were issued to inform the registered dentists of the arrangement for application for annual practising certificates for 2022 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” (“the Guidelines”) has been put in place since November 2010. A “List of Registrable/Quotable Additional Qualifications” (“the List”) 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 on the General Register.
- 7.3 To facilitate the review of the Guidelines, a Taskforce on the Review of the Guidelines was set up in 2021. Besides, a moratorium on applications for inclusion of new additional qualifications in the List has been imposed since April 2021 pending completion of the full review.
- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 The composition of EAC is as follows –
- (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.



7.6 The membership of EAC in 2021 is as follows –

- Dr Foo Tai-chuen (the Council) (Chairman)
- Dr Wai Tak-shun, Dustin (the Council)
- Dr Tung Sau-ying, MH (the Council)
- Dr Leung Chiu-man, Katherine (HKU)
- Dr Lee Chun-kei (HKAM)
- Dr Yeung Kar-hing (DH) (*up to 13.12.2021*)
- Dr Lee Siu-man, Sharon (DH) (*since 14.12.2021*)
- Dr Yeung Yat-cheong (HKDA) (*since 8.4.2021*)

7.7 As at 31 December 2021, a total of 307 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	73
Specialist in Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery	67
Specialist in Periodontology	47
Specialist in Endodontics	24
Specialist in Paediatric Dentistry	36
Specialist in Prosthodontics	37
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 The composition of CPDC is as follows –
- (a) 3 members of the Council (one of them shall be the Chairman);
 - (b) a registered dentist nominated by CDSHK;
 - (c) a registered dentist nominated by HKDA; and
 - (d) a registered dentist nominated by the Faculty of Dentistry of HKU.
- 8.3 The membership of CPDC in 2021 is as follows –
- Dr Lee Kin-man, JP (the Council) (Chairman) (*up to 10.1.2021*)
 - Dr Cheung Tat-leung (the Council) (Chairman) (*since 14.1.2021*)
 - Professor Cheung Shun-pan, Gary (the Council)
 - Dr Tsang Hin-kei, Century (the Council) (*since 28.10.2021*)
 - Dr Lau Kin-kwan, Kenny (the Council) (*up to 30.9.2021*)
 - Dr Ho Wai-mei (CDSHK) (*up to 8.11.2021*)
 - Dr Cho Shiu-yin (CDSHK) (*since 19.11.2021*)
 - 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 In response to the Report of the Strategic Review on Health Manpower Planning and Professional Development promulgated in 2017 and the Chief Executive’s 2021 Policy Address to make continuing professional education and/or continuing professional development mandatory by way of legislation, the Council has established a Taskforce on Preparation for Mandatory CPD Programme to make recommendation to the Council on the establishment of a statutory CPD Committee and the policies and guidelines on the Mandatory CPD Programme. The review was in progress.
- 8.6 On the recommendation of 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)

Full 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

- 8.7 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.
- 8.8 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 organisations. The Council has approved HKDA and the former Food and Health Bureau (now re-organised as Health Bureau) to maintain electronic directories of dentists since 2003 and 2010 respectively.

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. The Council has also launched a study on the introduction of mandatory CPD Programme in order to maintain and raise further the professional competence of registered dentists.
- 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 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 HKU. 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 and the preparation work has already been kick-started in 2021.
- 10.6 The Council has commenced 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 2022.

Table 1

Statistics on Complaints Received by the Dental Council of Hong Kong

Nature	No. of Cases		
	2019	2020	2021
1. Conviction punishable with imprisonment	1	2	4
2. Disregard of professional responsibilities to patients	127	87	142
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	-	-
8. Canvassing	12	7	14
9. Misleading and unapproved descriptions and announcements	3	1	1
10. Improper financial transactions	-	-	-
11. Untrue or misleading certificates and other professional documents	1	-	-
12. Covering	-	-	-
13. Improper delegation of dental duties	-	-	-
14. Responsibility of partners and directors	-	-	-
15. Miscellaneous	17	16	13
Total :	165	113	174

Table 2

Work of the Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) of the Dental Council of Hong Kong in 2021

Nature	Total no. of Cases
Cases received	174
Cases dismissed by PIC Chairman (including cases carried forward from previous years)	102
Cases considered by PIC (including cases carried forward from previous years)	29
Cases referred by PIC to Dental Council for disciplinary inquiries	9

Table 3

Work Statistics of the Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) of the Dental Council of Hong Kong in 2021

	Quarter				Total
	Jan.-Mar.	Apr.-Jun.	Jul.-Sept.	Oct.-Dec.	
No. of PIC Meeting	-	2	2	1	5
No. of new cases considered	-	7	12 ^{Note 1}	10	29
No. of cases carried forward from previous meetings/referred back to PIC	-	-	-	3	3
No. of cases dismissed (%)	-	6 (86%)	5 (42%)	8 (62%)	19 (66%)
No. of cases referred to inquiry (%)	-	1 (14%)	3 (25%)	5 (38%)	9 (31%)
No. of cases with investigation in progress (%)	-	-	4 (33%)	-	1 ^{Note 2} (3%)

Note 1: A complaint case was first discussed at PIC Meeting held in the quarter of July to September 2021 and PIC decided to refer it to the Council for inquiry. The Council subsequently referred it back to PIC for reconsideration in accordance with regulation 19(1) of the Dentists (Registration and Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations. The case will be discussed at PIC Meeting in the quarter of April to June 2022.

Note 2: Three out of the four cases which required further investigation in the quarter of July to September 2021 have been concluded at PIC meeting in the subsequent quarter of 2021.

Table 4

Inquiries Conducted by the Dental Council of Hong Kong in 2021

No. of Inquiries	Nature	Decisions of the Council
2	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 reprimanded (order gazetted)
Total : 2		

Table 5

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



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 %	
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
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



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 %	
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%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2021 (First Sitting)	26	7	27%	21	8	38%	14	5	36%	8
2021 (Second Sitting)	43	17	40%	27	4	15%	23	12	52%	2

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

Table 6

Number of Registered Dentists

(A) Total Number of Dentists on the Register of Dentists of Hong Kong (as at 31 December 2021)	2019	2020	2021
Dentists resident in Hong Kong	2,392	2,430	2,460
Dentists resident outside Hong Kong	219	221	246
Total	2,611	2,651	2,706

(B) Breakdown of New Registration and Restoration of Names to the Register	2019	2020	2021
New Registration	69	60	62
Restoration to the Register	4	4	0
Total	73	64	62

