

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BRIEF

Dentists Registration Ordinance
(Chapter 156)

DENTISTS REGISTRATION ORDINANCE (AMENDMENT OF SCHEDULES 4 AND 5) NOTICE 2025

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to section 29C(3) of the Dentists Registration Ordinance (“the Ordinance”) (Cap. 156), the Secretary for Health has made the Dentists Registration Ordinance (Amendment of Schedules 4 and 5) Notice 2025 (“the Notice”) (at **Annex I**) to add 35 organisations (comprising 34 non-governmental organisations (“NGOs”) participating in designated publicly-funded dental programmes and 1 training institution for dental care professionals (“DenCPs”)) to Schedules 4 and 5 to the Ordinance. This enables the organisations to admit qualified non-locally trained dentists through the pathways of limited registration (“LR”) and special registration (“SR”) as and when necessary in order to better address the demand for local dental services and manpower training.

JUSTIFICATIONS

2. Hong Kong has been facing a shortage of dentists, which is particularly acute in the public sector. Currently, the proportion of dentists in public and private practice is estimated to be roughly 1:3. If the manpower issue is not duly addressed, it will unavoidably affect the dental health of our citizens, especially for the underprivileged who rely on

public or subsidised dental services. In this connection, the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) passed the Dentists Registration (Amendment) Bill 2024 in July 2024 to introduce new pathways for admitting qualified non-locally trained dentists, including LR which is open to all dentists and SR which is provided for specialist dentists, allowing them to work in specified institutions direct upon having their applications approved by the Dental Council of Hong Kong (“DCHK”).

3. Pursuant to sections 9D(2)(a)(i) and 9K(2)(a) of the Ordinance, a non-locally trained dentist must have been selected for full-time employment in a Schedule 4/Schedule 5 institution before making an LR/SR application to the DCHK. Specified institutions currently listed in these schedules are Department of Health (“DH”), Hospital Authority, The University of Hong Kong and The Prince Philip Dental Hospital. Section 29C(3) of the Ordinance also provides that the Secretary for Health may, by notice published in the Gazette, amend these two schedules. As mentioned by the Government during the legislative process, the Secretary for Health will add more specified institutions to the list, which are expected to include NGOs (e.g. those assisting in publicly-funded dental initiatives) or training institutions (e.g. those supporting the training of dentists and DenCPs), to meet the actual needs of our society.

4. The Working Group on Oral Health and Dental Care (“Working Group”) subsequently released its Final Report in December 2024, recommending the Government to assist citizens in managing their oral health through publicity and education as well as promotion and development of primary oral health and dental care, with a view to putting into action prevention, early identification and timely intervention of dental diseases with the objective of retaining teeth. In particular, the Government should focus on providing appropriate oral health and dental care services for underprivileged groups with financial difficulties and special needs in a bid to ensure access to essential dental care services by these groups.

5. To dovetail with the above policy objectives, DH has been providing emergency dental treatments (commonly known as “General Public Sessions”) to the general public through its dental clinics and also collaborating with NGOs to launch various service programmes targeting

persons with different special needs in dental care. The Government now proposes to add the 34 NGOs which participate in the following publicly-funded dental programmes to Schedules 4 and 5 to the Ordinance, enabling them to recruit non-locally trained dentists as and when necessary in order to better serve local underprivileged groups –

- (a) **Healthy Teeth Collaboration Programme:** NGOs operate dental clinics to provide free dental services, including oral check-ups and various dental procedures (e.g. preventive treatment, treatment of gum diseases, fillings, extractions and/or pulp treatment), for adults with intellectual disability and autism spectrum disorder, as well as oral care training for their caregivers. Where necessary, NGOs will arrange for patients to receive required dental procedures under conscious sedation or general anaesthesia at collaborating private hospitals in the programme;
- (b) **Outreach Dental Care Programme for the Elderly:** NGOs deploy dental outreach teams to provide free and professional on-site oral check-ups and dental care for frail elderly persons residing in residential care homes/nursing homes or using services of day care centres regularly, as well as oral care training for their caregivers. If the elderly person is considered suitable for further curative dental procedures, the team will provide free dental treatment on-site or in a dental clinic; and
- (c) **Community Dental Support Programme:** In response to the keen public demand for General Public Sessions, DH will collaborate with NGOs to provide dental services for underprivileged groups (including elderly persons with financial difficulties) with enhancement in capacity, addition in service points and expansion of service scope in 2025. Apart from tooth extraction, dental filling services will be provided where dentists consider appropriate to encourage tooth retention.

6. On the other hand, the Working Group has recommended the Government to allow DenCPs to undertake more important roles in primary oral health and dental care, and increase training places of DenCPs. As such, the Vocational Training Council (“VTC”) will launch a programme for Professional Diploma in Dental Hygiene Care in Q1 2025 to increase the supply of local dental hygienists. The Government proposes to also add VTC to Schedules 4 and 5 to the Ordinance, enabling it to recruit non-locally trained dentists as and when necessary to support training.

7. The list of 35 specified institutions that are proposed to be added is set out at **Annex II** for reference. The Health Bureau will establish a mechanism with the DH and the DCHK to oversee the LR/SR application status in relation to the aforementioned NGOs and training institution, with a view to monitoring the number of non-locally trained dentists engaged, their qualifications, scopes of practice as well as respective roles in facilitating the provision of dental services to local underprivileged groups and training support. This will prevent abuse of the LR/SR pathways, ensuring that the admission of non-locally trained dentists will serve the interests of Hong Kong.

SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION

8. The Notice will amend Schedules 4 and 5 to the Ordinance to add the 35 organisations mentioned above.

LEGISLATIVE TIMETABLE

9. The legislative timetable will be –

Publication in the Gazette and Commencement of the Notice	21 February 2025
Tabling at the LegCo for negative vetting	26 February 2025

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

10. The Notice seeks to allow more organisations to admit qualified non-locally trained dentists through the LR and SR pathways. Relevant implications are mentioned in the LegCo brief submitted by the Government earlier for the Dentists Registration (Amendment) Bill 2024.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

11. The LegCo Panel on Health Services discussed the Final Report of the Working Group, which covered the admission of non-locally trained dentists to address manpower shortage and recommendations on strengthening primary oral health and dental care etc., at the meeting on 13 December 2024. Members generally supported the relevant policy objectives.

12. The DCHK also noted at its policy meeting on 15 January 2025 that the Government would expand the list of specified institutions for LR and SR through the Notice.

ENQUIRIES

13. Any enquiries on this brief can be addressed to Mr Ronald Cheng, Principal Assistant Secretary for Health (Tel: 3509 8929).

Health Bureau
19 February 2025

Dentists Registration Ordinance (Amendment of Schedules 4 and 5) Notice 2025

(Made by the Secretary for Health under section 29C(3) of the Dentists Registration Ordinance (Cap. 156))

1. Dentists Registration Ordinance amended

The Dentists Registration Ordinance (Cap. 156) is amended as set out in sections 2 and 3.

2. Schedule 4 amended (Schedule 4 institutions (limited registration))

Schedule 4—

Add

- “5. Chung Shak Hei (Cheung Chau) Home for The Aged Limited
6. Emmanuel Medical Mission
7. H.K.S.K.H. Lady MacLehose Centre Dental Clinic Limited
8. Hong Kong Baptist Mr. & Mrs. Au Shue Hung Rehabilitation And Healthcare Home Limited
9. Hong Kong Christian Service
10. The Hong Kong Health Care Federation Limited
11. Hong Kong Young Dentist Federation Limited

12. Hope Worldwide
13. Ka Shui Garden Limited
14. Kwai Tsing Safe Community and Healthy City Association
15. The Lok Sin Tong Benevolent Society, Kowloon
16. The Methodist Church, Hong Kong Yang Dental Clinic Limited
17. Po Leung Kuk
18. Prestige Health Care Charity Limited
19. S.K.H. Crown of Thorns Church Kit Tak Dental Clinic Limited
20. St. James' Settlement
21. Sunny Days Smile Limited
22. United Christian Medical Service
23. Caritas Dental Clinics Limited
24. Christian Family Service Centre Dental Services Limited
25. Community Elderly and Special Care Dental Service Foundation Limited
26. Haven of Hope Christian Service

27. Hello Smile Hong Kong Limited
28. The Hong Kong Tuberculosis, Chest and Heart Diseases Association
29. Loving Smiles Foundation Limited
30. Pok Oi Hospital
31. Project Concern Hong Kong
32. Stewards Peace Dental Clinic Limited
33. Tak Shun Dental Clinic Limited
34. Tung Wah Group of Hospitals
35. Yan Chai Hospital
36. YOT Tin Ka Ping Dental Clinic Limited
37. Yan Oi Tong Limited
38. Chi Lin Nunnery
39. Vocational Training Council”.

3. Schedule 5 amended (Schedule 5 institutions (special registration))

Schedule 5—

Add

- “5. Chung Shak Hei (Cheung Chau) Home for The Aged Limited
6. Emmanuel Medical Mission
7. H.K.S.K.H. Lady MacLehose Centre Dental Clinic Limited
8. Hong Kong Baptist Mr. & Mrs. Au Shue Hung Rehabilitation And Healthcare Home Limited
9. Hong Kong Christian Service
10. The Hong Kong Health Care Federation Limited
11. Hong Kong Young Dentist Federation Limited
12. Hope Worldwide
13. Ka Shui Garden Limited
14. Kwai Tsing Safe Community and Healthy City Association
15. The Lok Sin Tong Benevolent Society, Kowloon
16. The Methodist Church, Hong Kong Yang Dental Clinic Limited
17. Po Leung Kuk
18. Prestige Health Care Charity Limited

19. S.K.H. Crown of Thorns Church Kit Tak Dental Clinic Limited
20. St. James' Settlement
21. Sunny Days Smile Limited
22. United Christian Medical Service
23. Caritas Dental Clinics Limited
24. Christian Family Service Centre Dental Services Limited
25. Community Elderly and Special Care Dental Service Foundation Limited
26. Haven of Hope Christian Service
27. Hello Smile Hong Kong Limited
28. The Hong Kong Tuberculosis, Chest and Heart Diseases Association
29. Loving Smiles Foundation Limited
30. Pok Oi Hospital
31. Project Concern Hong Kong
32. Stewards Peace Dental Clinic Limited
33. Tak Shun Dental Clinic Limited

34. Tung Wah Group of Hospitals
35. Yan Chai Hospital
36. YOT Tin Ka Ping Dental Clinic Limited
37. Yan Oi Tong Limited
38. Chi Lin Nunnery
39. Vocational Training Council



Secretary for Health

13 February 2025

Explanatory Note

Under the Dentists Registration Ordinance (Cap. 156) (*Ordinance*), a person with a qualification in dentistry obtained outside Hong Kong may practise dentistry in Hong Kong through limited registration or special registration.

2. To obtain limited registration or special registration, the person must have been selected for full-time employment in an institution listed in Schedule 4 (for limited registration) or Schedule 5 (for special registration) to the Ordinance.
3. This Notice amends Schedules 4 and 5 to the Ordinance to add 35 institutions to each of the Schedules.

**List of Specified Institutions Proposed to be Added
to Schedules 4 and 5 to the Dentists Registration Ordinance**

(a) 34 non-governmental organisations (“NGOs”) participating in designated publicly-funded dental programmes¹

	English Name	Chinese Name	Dental Programme		
			Health Teeth Collaboration Programme	Outreach Dental Care Programme for the Elderly	Community Dental Support Programme
1.	Chung Shak Hei (Cheung Chau) Home for The Aged Limited	鍾錫熙長洲安老院有限公司			✓
2.	Emmanuel Medical Mission	靈光醫務所			✓
3.	H.K.S.K.H. Lady MacLehose Centre Dental Clinic Limited	香港聖公會麥理浩夫人中心牙科診所有限公司			✓
4.	Hong Kong Baptist Mr. & Mrs. Au Shue Hung Rehabilitation And Healthcare Home Limited	香港浸信會區樹洪伉儷康復護養院有限公司			✓
5.	Hong Kong Christian Service	香港基督教服務處			✓
6.	The Hong Kong Health Care Federation Limited	香港醫護學會有限公司			✓
7.	Hong Kong Young Dentist Federation Limited	香港苗齒協會有限公司			✓
8.	Hope Worldwide	寰宇希望			✓
9.	Ka Shui Garden Limited	嘉瑞園有限公司			✓

¹ All NGOs are charitable bodies that are exempted from tax under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112), and under the monitoring of the Department of Health when participating in the designated publicly-funded dental programme(s).

	English Name	Chinese Name	Dental Programme		
			Health Teeth Collaboration Programme	Outreach Dental Care Programme for the Elderly	Community Dental Support Programme
10.	Kwai Tsing Safe Community and Healthy City Association	葵青安全社區及健康城市協會			✓
11.	The Lok Sin Tong Benevolent Society, Kowloon	九龍樂善堂			✓
12.	The Methodist Church, Hong Kong Yang Dental Clinic Limited	香港基督教循道衛理聯合教會楊震牙科診所有限公司			✓
13.	Po Leung Kuk	保良局			✓
14.	Prestige Health Care Charity Limited	優越護理慈善有限公司			✓
15.	S.K.H. Crown of Thorns Church Kit Tak Dental Clinic Limited	聖公會荊冕堂傑德牙科醫務所有限公司			✓
16.	St. James' Settlement	聖雅各福群會			✓
17.	Sunny Days Smile Limited	笑晴會有限公司			✓
18.	United Christian Medical Service	基督教聯合醫務協會			✓
19.	Caritas Dental Clinics Limited	明愛牙科診所有限公司		✓	✓
20.	Christian Family Service Centre Dental Services Limited	基督教家庭服務中心牙科服務有限公司	✓	✓	✓
21.	Community Elderly and Special Care Dental Service Foundation Limited	社區長者及特殊牙科服務有限公司	✓		✓

	English Name	Chinese Name	Dental Programme		
			Health Teeth Collaboration Programme	Outreach Dental Care Programme for the Elderly	Community Dental Support Programme
22.	Haven of Hope Christian Service	基督教靈實協會		✓	✓
23.	Hello Smile Hong Kong Limited	微笑·開齒有限公司	✓		✓
24.	The Hong Kong Tuberculosis, Chest and Heart Diseases Association	香港防癆心臟及胸病協會	✓	✓	✓
25.	Loving Smiles Foundation Limited	盈愛·笑容基金有限公司	✓		✓
26.	Pok Oi Hospital	博愛醫院		✓	✓
27.	Project Concern Hong Kong	香港醫藥援助會		✓	✓
28.	Stewards Peace Dental Clinic Limited	香港神託會平安牙科診所有限公司	✓		✓
29.	Tak Shun Dental Clinic Limited	德信牙科診所有限公司	✓	✓	✓
30.	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	東華三院	✓	✓	✓
31.	Yan Chai Hospital	仁濟醫院		✓	✓
32.	YOT Tin Ka Ping Dental Clinic Limited	仁愛堂田家炳牙科診所有限公司			✓
33.	Yan Oi Tong Limited	仁愛堂有限公司		✓	
34.	Chi Lin Nunnery	志蓮淨苑		✓	

(b) 1 training institution for dental care professionals

	English Name	Chinese Name	Dental Programme
35.	Vocational Training Council	職業訓練局	Administering a programme for Professional Diploma in Dental Hygiene Care