



THE SOUTH AFRICAN DENTAL TECHNICIANS COUNCIL
DIE SUID-AFRIKAANSE RAAD VIR TANDTEGNICI

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Dear Registered Member,

Although we are already in the third month of this year, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you, your staff and loved ones a very happy and prosperous 2021. The world currently finds itself in an unfamiliar environment and having to operate on what is termed as the 'new normal' due to the impact of COVID-19. This first newsletter of 2021 presents itself in a time where most of Dental Laboratories are uncertain of the future given the tough economic situation because of the pandemic.

The SADTC believes that a sustainable regulatory council is derived from, and maintained by, fostering good relations with you, our valued registered members. Thank you for your support in 2021. I will report briefly on the following:

- Vaccine rollout
- Education Committee
- Accreditation
- National Professional Exams Task Team
- CPD
- Annual Fees
- Roll Out of Vaccines

Vaccine Rollout

The department of Health has advised us that members should be registered for vaccine using the registration portal (National Department of health Electronic vaccine data system). Apparently, all practitioners/members are allowed and/or required to register.

Education Committee

Education Committee held two meetings in 2020 and two workshops with all the institutions to discuss the rubrics and the minimum requirements for exit-level practical cases. It was agreed that the rubrics used for teaching and assessment were to be revised to maintain an objective, fair and reliable system for students to assess their own work and understand how their work would in turn be assessed by their teachers and examiners. Although there are some misunderstandings on some of the criteria used to deem the work produced by students' clinically acceptable, we hope that by continuing to use these jointly developed rubrics, standards will be raised and aligned to the professional practice of Dental Technology.

Accreditation

In order to ensure that the Dental Technology training at Universities of Technology aligns with the educational practices of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), as well as the Council for Higher Education (CHE), Council is required to undertake the regular and ongoing evaluation of programmes for the recognition of the qualifications for registration purposes.

The process entails following an accepted accreditation model used in medicine and dentistry. Dental Technology training institutions of higher learning must first complete and submit a comprehensive self-evaluation report to Council. Subsequently, an evaluation panel then visits the institution and conducts an intense process over 3-4 days. This is in line with what other professional regulators do.

At the completion of the visit, the evaluation panel prepares a report, which will contain an accreditation recommendation for either a full accreditation for a given number of years, or conditional / provisional accreditation for a limited period before the panel re-evaluates, or, in extreme cases, withdrawal of accreditation for a particular institution. It must be noted that the evaluation report comprises a list of commendations and recommendations for improvement, and the institution is then required to submit annual reports on the progress made in fulfilling the recommendations / conditions. All three institutions were previously granted provisional accreditation on the old programme and have since been granted provisional accreditation on the new first year level programmes.

National Professional Council Exams

As previously reported, Council is working towards reinstating a National Professional Registration Examination (NPRE). This type of 'board exam', is familiar to some of Council's more senior and established registered members. A task team has been established and has tasked a number of small working groups to work out the details.



Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Council's CPD mandate is derived from Regulation No. R353 issued by the Minister of Health on 12 May 2014. As previously reported, the underlying driver for the CPD regime, is linked to public interest. A professional who does not continuously develop their professional knowledge in a structured manner that is monitored and measured by Council, is deemed to be a threat to public safety. The new CPD guideline document has since been approved by the Council and has been shared on the Council website and can be requested via the Council's offices.

Annual fees

We are experiencing delays from the department of Health with the approval and promulgation of 2021 fees. We will continue to follow up with the department.