



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

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Dear Registered Member,

Welcome to the first edition of the SADTC Newsletter for 2022, a publication that includes information highlighting important information relevant to the work of the Council. We trust that the profession is starting to enjoy some degree of normality with the President having declared that the country is out of the state of disaster. It has been a busy year for everyone at Council with new developments, changes and confronting persisting challenges, which I will briefly share and report in this newsletter.

#### **Governance of the Council**

The Council would like to inform our stakeholders and congratulate Mr. Irfaan Noorshib who was appointed as the Vice-President of the Council. The Minister has also appointed Dr. Lynn Moeng-Mahlangu as the representative of the National Department of Health on Council, which was previously occupied by Dr M Mcuba.

#### **Stakeholder engagements**

The Council has had two meetings with DENIS, which was a joint effort by DENTASA and the Council to discuss the illegal laboratories claiming directly from the medical aids. The outcome of this joint effort exposed five laboratories that were illegally claiming from the medical aids. The second meeting took place between the Board of Health Care Funders (BHF) and the Council to strengthen the working relationship and curb the unregistered members who are still members of the BHF. The success of these meetings led to all stakeholders agreeing to hold biannual meetings to discuss issues of common interest.

#### **Accreditation**

The Accreditation of the new programmes at each University of Technology (UoT) is ongoing and high on the Council agenda. All three institutions were previously granted provisional accreditation for the new first-year level programmes, only. The accreditation of the remaining years of the programmes is still outstanding, as the documentation submitted by the institutions has not yet met the accreditation

requirements. Earlier this year Council was invited by Universities South Africa (USAF) to assist the UoTs with the curriculum documents. The Universities have been given another opportunity to submit their curriculum documents for consideration by Council.

#### **Exit-level Practical Tests**

In 2019, accreditation visits to each UoT revealed the disparity between the results of the UoT internal and external examiners, and the Council examiners. Consequently, Council established an examination panel consisting of established discipline-specific dental technicians to assess the standards of the work being produced in the final practical examinations. Unfortunately, the disparity continues to persist, and standards have been deemed not sufficient for professional registration. Unfortunately, the UoTs went ahead and qualified the students which had failed to meet the standards, and now these students are in limbo. Council has had several meetings with the UoTs, facilitated by Universities South Africa, and is committed to continuing to assist the UoTs in raising the standards of the work of their students to a level that is acceptable for professional registration with Council.

Furthermore, Council has developed a document detailing the exit-level outcomes and associated assessment criteria and practices which will form the basis of the minimum standards for dental technology. Council is also revising the Self Evaluation Questionnaire, which a university must submit for accreditation, which details the criteria used to assess the programmes.

#### **Inspectorate**

Council has conducted 85 inspections over the period of nine months in 2021. The compliance rate per province is as follows:

Period	Province/s	Compliant	Non-Compliant
March 2021	Gauteng	86%	14%
April 2021	North West & Free State	67%	33%
May 2021	Western Cape	58%	42%
June 2021	KwaZulu-Natal	0%	100%
August	Gauteng	52%	48%
September	Eastern Cape	31%	69%

Although some of the non-compliant laboratories can be considered to be 'pending compliance' when they are given some time to make the necessary corrections, the figures outlined in the Table are concerning. Nevertheless, we would urge all laboratory owners to be more vigilant about compliance, as failure to achieve can lead to dire consequences.

Somewhat related to this, is the fact that the profession does not have an Ethical Code of Conduct, as is the case for all other health professions. As a result, the Legal Committee was tasked to draft such a code, which is currently being discussed. Of course, all documents referred to above will be shared with members once approved by Council.

#### **Unregistered persons**

SADTC has noted with concern the proliferation of persons on Facebook, LinkedIn, and various social media platforms who promote dental services without being registered in any of the categories of registration. These persons advertise denture work. These persons have no education or training in

Dental Technology; thus, their conduct places patients/members of the public at risk and their work will certainly compromise the Dental Technology profession. SADTC has a memorandum of understanding with the South African police services to report all illegal practices. SADTC intends to write to Facebook and LinkedIn management to raise concerns about persons who are misleading unsuspecting members of the public.

**CPD**

This aspect of our work has been in a state of flux of late, with new and more innovative ways of obtaining CEUs emerging out of the necessity of the COVID-19 pandemic. New criteria and activities have been drafted and a new fee structure to take these into account is currently under discussion. We will continue to keep members informed of this and hope to create an online system for recording and tracking points.