

### **A view from the Chair**

Our Chair, [Lord Toby Harris](#), [highlights the publication of our report](#) on the dental professionals who died while fitness to practise concerns were investigated or remediated between 2019 and 2022 and the importance of minimising the negative health and wellbeing impacts of what we know can be a difficult and stressful process.

The Chair also thanks the dental care professionals (DCPs) who provided information about their working patterns during the recent renewal period and confirms Council's recent decision to maintain the Annual Retention Fee (ARF) at current levels for 2025.

### **Annual renewal for dentists opens on 11 November**

The annual renewal window for dentists will open on **11 November**. You'll need to pay your ARF by **31 December**, ensure you've made your indemnity declaration and check that you've completed the minimum number of CPD hours you need to do.

Like last year, alongside your renewal, there will be short working patterns survey for you to complete in your [eGDC account](#). Your response will help ensure that we can continue to build the sector's understanding of dental professionals' working patterns and support future workforce planning. We would be grateful if you could take five minutes to complete the survey.

### **The working patterns of dental care professionals**

We have now published data about the working patterns of DCPs. This follows the dentists' working pattern data released in March and is part of our commitment to play our part in supporting the sector to better understand the dental workforce.

Almost 44,000 DCPs responded to the latest working patterns survey. The data includes information on the proportion of DCPs who are providing NHS and private care, whether they are working in clinical or non-clinical roles, and how many hours they are working.

You can find [summaries of both datasets and a combined summary](#) on our website.



### **Government issues rallying cry to the nation to help fix NHS**

Members of the public as well as NHS staff and experts have been invited to share their experiences, views and ideas for fixing the NHS. The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has called upon the entire nation to share their experiences of our health service and views on what could be done to help turn the NHS around.

You can share your ideas through the [Change NHS online platform](#), which will be live until the start of next year. This public engagement exercise will help shape the government's 10 Year Health Plan which will be published in spring 2025.

### **Initial inquiries processes adopted to speed up investigations**

We have revised our fitness to practise processes to improve timeliness when investigating clinical practice concerns following completion of our [initial inquiries pilot](#).

We have used initial inquiries in around 250 cases since the pilot was launched last year. Of the completed cases, 84% were closed with no further action. Allegations were raised in just 16% of cases and referred to case examiners for consideration. The average time taken to assess cases was 13 weeks, more than half of the 30-week key performance indicator for single clinical incident cases to reach the end of the assessment stage.

Find out more about [how we investigate public protection concerns](#).

### **Consultation on practice committee guidance closes 26 November**

Our consultation on revised guidance for practice committees will close at midnight on Tuesday 26 November. Practice committees are made up of independent panellists who make decisions about whether a dental professional's fitness to practise is currently impaired, and any action that needs to be taken to protect the public.

You can find out [more about the consultation](#) on our website.