



17 April 2020

Ms Narelle Mills

Chief Executive Officer

Australian Dental Council

By email: narelle.mills@adc.org.au

Dear Ms Mills,

Re: Consultation on the draft Australian Dental Council and Dental Council (New Zealand) Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs

I would like to thank the Australian Dental Council and Dental Council (New Zealand) for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs.

I am particularly pleased to have received this request given the recent acceptance by the Health Ministers of the recommendations relevant to my office in the *Independent Accreditation Systems Review Final Report*. In particular, it has been agreed that the role of my office will be extended to include oversight of accreditation entities and also that my office will conduct a review of the existing grievance and appeal processes of accreditation entities.

While an implementation plan is currently being coordinated regarding these new bodies of work, I want to express my readiness and enthusiasm to collaborate with you to respond effectively to these recent developments. I know that there will be much to learn about the accreditation process and current complaints procedures.

Regarding my office's response to the draft Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs, I note that the consultation paper's discussion questions are substantive and focus on the content of the Standards.

My office's primary role is to provide oversight of how the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) is regulated. My office provides a free, impartial and independent complaint-handling service for the public and health practitioners. We hear complaints and work with the relevant parties to address concerns about whether relevant processes, policies and laws have been followed.

Given the role of my office and the nature of the consultation questions, at this stage I will not provide a formal response to this consultation paper. I am very pleased, however, to continue to be invited to provide feedback on any relevant standards, guidelines, policies and procedures.

In responding to invitations to provide feedback, my office draws on our complaints data to provide suggestions related to specific areas for improvement and provide advice regarding administrative matters. This is generally through:

- identifying complaints related to the issue at hand to provide insights into what led to the complaints and what could be done in the future to avoid similar complaints
- ensuring consistency with other relevant policies and procedures in the National Scheme
- providing suggestions related to more accessible and comprehensive content based on the identified audience.

Following more substantive content-based consultation on the Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs, please feel free to contact my office if you would like for us to undertake a review of this nature. Please direct any requests of this nature to my communications officer, Lara Beissbarth, on (03) 9096 9414 or by email via lara.beissbarth@nhpopc.gov.au.

Thank you again for contacting my office. If you require any further information or would like to discuss my office's role or how we can work together, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be contacted on (03) 9096 9413 or richelle.mccausland@nhpopc.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,



Richelle McCausland

National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner