

The General Dental Council response to the Consultation on Proposals for an Offence of Wilful Neglect or Ill-treatment in Health and Social Care Settings

About the General Dental Council

The General Dental Council (GDC) is the statutory regulator of dental professionals for the United Kingdom and its main objective is to protect patients and the public. The GDC registers the following groups of dental professionals who make up the dental team:

- Dentists; and
- dental care professionals, namely
 - clinical dental technicians;
 - dental hygienists;
 - dental nurses;
 - dental technicians;
 - dental therapists; and
 - orthodontic therapists.

The GDC sets the standards for dentists and dental care professionals, provides guidance and takes action against those registrants who breach our standards through our Fitness to Practise process.

The GDC also sets standards for the education and training of dental professionals and requires all registrants to undertake Continuing Professional Development in order to keep their skills and knowledge up to date.

Summary

The GDC welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Consultation on Proposals for an Offence of Wilful Neglect or Ill-treatment in Health and Social Care Settings in Scotland.

In our response to this Consultation, the GDC expressed its support for consistency between these proposals, and the outcomes of the consultation on new criminal offence of ill-treatment or wilful neglect for England and Wales. This will help professional regulators such as the GDC, who regulate individuals across all four countries of the UK operating under varying regulations, to achieve consistency and equity in patient protection.

We are supportive of the aims and principles stated in the draft complaints procedure document which correspond with the GDC's own objectives

The proposed new criminal offence of ill-treatment or wilful neglect of those receiving care or treatment in health and social care settings is consistent with the GDC's ethical requirements of registrants - [Standards for the Dental Team](#). The first principle of this guidance – putting patients first – is particularly relevant.

The GDC is keen to engage with the relevant bodies on the implementation of a criminal offence of ill-treatment or wilful neglect of those receiving care or treatment in health and social care settings through our Director for Scotland.

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