

BY E-MAIL

Rt Hon Layla Moran MP
Chair of Health and Social Care Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

19 December 2025

Dear Chair,

Regulatory performance at the General Dental Council (GDC)

I write to update you on the GDC's performance in terms of its fitness to practise work. I understand you recently met with Alan Clamp, our Chief Executive, and as part of that meeting you discussed exploring a closer working relationship between the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) and the Health and Social Care Select Committee.

We wrote to you in December 2024, following publication of our last annual GDC performance review report. We are writing again because we have today published our performance review report of the GDC for 2024/25. We continue to be concerned with elements of the GDC's performance.

We are particularly concerned about how long the GDC takes to progress and close complaints against registrants through its fitness to practise process, and the backlog of older cases that has now built up.

As you will know, the PSA reports to Parliament each year on the performance of the 10 statutory health and social care regulators of professionals.¹ We judge a regulator's performance against our 18 Standards of Good Regulation, which cover the four key

¹ These are the General Chiropractic Council, the General Dental Council, the General Medical Council, the General Optical Council, the General Osteopathic Council, the General Pharmaceutical Council, the Health and Care Professions Council, the Nursing and Midwifery Council, the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland and Social Work England.

regulatory functions of guidance and standards, education and training, registration and fitness to practise. Each Standard is assessed as being 'met' or 'not met'.

The GDC has not met our Standard for fitness to practise timeliness since 2017/18, despite taking various measures to try and improve its performance. We recognise the GDC's commitment to improving its fitness to practise process and the measures it has put in place to improve its performance in this area. However, although some improvement has been made at the initial stages of the GDC's fitness to practise process, the GDC is still taking too long to reach decisions in cases.

Additionally, the GDC now has more open cases older than 156 weeks than at any time in the last four review periods. The GDC has therefore not met our Standard relating to the quality and timeliness of investigations for the eighth successive year. We recognise that whilst this is one Standard out of 18, it represents a critical part of the GDC's work in protecting the public. Delays to fitness to practise cases also have negative impacts on registrants, complainants and witnesses and present a risk to public confidence.

It should be noted that the GDC continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to improving its fitness to practice timeliness and has met 16 out of 18 Standards this year. We are strongly encouraging the GDC to address our concerns about the timeliness of its fitness to practise processes and we would welcome your support as we take this forward with the GDC.

Please let me know if it would be helpful to have any further detail on any of the issues covered above. I have copied this letter to Dr Helen Phillips, Chair of the GDC. I am writing in similar terms to the Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, and counterparts in the devolved administrations.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Corby
Chair

Copy to: Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
Neil Gray MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Scottish Government
Jeremy Miles MS, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Welsh Government
Mike Nesbitt MLA, Minister of Health for Northern Ireland
Dr Helen Phillips, Chair, General Dental Council
Tom Whiting, Chief Executive and Registrar, General Dental Council