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# College of General Dentistry

"Doesn't dentistry have its own College?" is a common, surprised reaction by colleagues in other healthcare professions, who simply assumed that dentistry must have a College. Then comes the question: "Is anything being done to create a College for dentistry?". Yes, the Faculty of General Dental Practice (UK) (FGDP(UK)) has 'grasped the nettle'. After 27 years of being hosted by the Royal College of Surgeons of England, FGDP(UK) is now preparing for its independence to become the foundation of a new College – the College of General Dentistry (CGDent). It is hoped that CGDent will become a multi-faculty organization, with faculties, in addition to the founding Faculty of Dental Practitioners, for both dental care professionals (DCPs) and members of the dental team wishing to set and promote standards in fields such as leadership, management, law and ethics and information technologies. A founding priority of CGDent, presently led by a Board of Trustees, will be to pursue a Royal Charter. As a 'new kid on the block', CGDent aims to be inclusive and forward-looking, with appeal to an inclusive membership, ranging from students, through members of the dental team of all ages and in all sectors of general dentistry, to senior members of the profession. CGDent is not being modelled on existing Colleges: form will follow function.

## Purpose

The purpose and mission of CGDent will span: fostering excellence in oral healthcare, setting standards to further enhance quality of care, and complementing professional body support for members of the dental team who, in recent times, have experienced unprecedented levels of stress and burnout. Through realizing its purpose, CGDent will benefit patients and enhance the standing of dentistry in healthcare.

Once established, it is hoped that CGDent will develop ways to work with existing Colleges, typically Royal Colleges, across the spectrum of healthcare in the UK. CGDent, in addition to building on the work of FGDP(UK) to set and promote standards in dentistry, intends to promote preventively-orientated, patient-centred, minimum intervention care as part of holistic, inter-professional attainment and maintenance of general health and wellbeing. The strength of the College will be its membership, independence, relevance and effectiveness. Over time, it is hoped that CGDent will have substantial national and international impact and influence.

## Building success

The CGDent will build on the successful Divisional structure of FGDP(UK) to give new impetus to the established communities of professional practice. In this way, the College will build relevance and credibility across the nations and regions of the UK. It will, in addition, provide leadership in establishing much-needed career pathways for all members of the dental team, giving proper recognition to talent and experience in all sectors of primary care. And, as you would expect, CGDent will be committed to providing a portfolio of programmes of education and training, culminating in the award of world-class diplomas. These diplomas will be complemented by a range of distinctive, high-quality short courses offering credits which may collectively lead to postgraduate qualifications. These qualifications may include higher degrees awarded through collaborative working with the University of Buckingham Dental Institute, which CGDent is in discussion with to develop innovative, educational opportunities of practical relevance for all members of the profession.

## Independence and standards

With its own UK-wide college, dentistry can look forward to independent control of standards in everyday oral healthcare, and the possibility of full membership and representation in key bodies with responsibilities for future healthcare provision. The CGDent, which will be operational within a matter of a few months, will be team-orientated, nurture trust, excellence and professionalism in general dentistry, and be agile in the rapidly-changing environment in which dentistry will continue to operate. Through increasing membership, CGDent will hopefully go from strength to strength in serving patient and public interests, while supporting its members in realizing career goals and enhancing professional fulfilment. It is time for general dentistry in the UK to move on, clarify and reinforce its identity and impact and, in the process, enhance its professional recognition, credibility and standing through the formation and development of its own College.

## Further information

Further information and an invitation for individuals and organizations to register support for the formation of CGDent may be found on the evolving CGDent website: [www.cgdent.uk](http://www.cgdent.uk)

There is no better time for a collective effort across the profession to enhance the standing and public perception of general dentistry, reflecting the 'cradle to grave' importance of routine oral healthcare to general health and wellbeing. Together, the dental profession can contribute to making a new future.

