

1. *From your perspective, how is the current registration standard and guidelines working?*

From my perspective, as an Oral Health Therapist and a team leader for the Top End Oral Health Services Child Oral Health Team, the current registration standard is not reflective of today's contemporary dental team. It's outdated because it does not focus on a collaborative team approach, it focuses on a hierarchical style or approach to dentistry which is not indicative of the contemporary collaborative dentistry of today.

It does not acknowledge the varying knowledge and skills sets of those within the dental team, or identify that knowledge and skills are separate, despite being similar in nature.

2. *Are there any issues that have arisen from applying the existing registration standard and guidelines?*

Yes, as mentioned above.

Structured Professional Relationship

Additionally, Dental Professionals who are not Dentists, who, as per the standard are reliant on a Structured Professional Relationship (SPR) to work clinically. If they are not able to obtain an SPR they are not able to practice. While best practice promotes collaborative care planning; this restriction, especially in the context of the Northern Territory impacts on a high proportion of the priority population; limiting or effecting their access to clinical culturally appropriate service delivery in regional and remote localities.

This has been a consistent issue for Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) who have been unsuccessful in recruiting Dentists to the Dental team meaning that the other Dental Professionals within that team are not able to easily continue service delivery within scope, without outsourcing an SPR.

Education and training and extension of clinical scope of practice

Currently, there is an assumption of professionalism in maintaining and/or enhancing clinical skills and knowledge for Dentists that is not extended to other registered Dental Professionals. As a registered Dental Professional it is your responsibility to only work within your skills and knowledge. The consequence of not doing so is the loss or restriction to your registration. If as a registered Dental Professional you seek training to expand your clinical skills/knowledge and competence it should be the responsibility of that Dental Professional to ensure that firstly, the course meets the registration standard and that the training course has provided them with the sufficient expertise to allow them to incorporate these skills into their clinical practice.

3. *Is the content and structure of the proposed revised registration standard and guidelines helpful, clear, relevant and more workable than the current registration standard and guidelines?*

Yes, it offers a clearer structure around education and training and roles within the dental team.

4. *Is there any content that could be changed or deleted in the proposed revised registration standard and guidelines?*

Not at this stage.

5. *Do you think that a review period of at least every five years (rather than three) is appropriate? Why or why not?*

If this is successfully implemented it should be reviewed initially at 3 years and following in 5 year intervals to ensure it remains relevant for different contexts.

5. *Do you have any other comments on the proposed revised registration standard and guidelines?*

The proposed revision to the registration standard and guideline provide more clarity around clinical roles and the professional responsibility of all Dental Professionals.

6. *Is the content and structure of the new reflective tool helpful, clear and relevant?*

Yes- it easily identifies gaps and promotes a personal responsibility in the maintenance and currency of the Dental Practitioner's clinical scope in alignment with their registration requirements.

8. Is there anything missing that needs to be added to the new reflective tool?

No, it covers all areas and is in alignment with the registration standard.