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Professional Regulation Consultation Team
Department of Health
Room 2N35A, Quarry House
Quarry Hill
Leeds LS2 7UE

Dear Sir or Madam

Consultation on the Regulation of the Non-Medical Healthcare Professions

Thank you for including the Faculty of General Dental Practice (UK) in the consultation on *The regulation of the non-medical healthcare professions*. I am responding as chairman of the Faculty's Lay Advisory Group, which represents the patient perspective.

The Lay Advisory Group welcomes this document, which sets out clearly what the Department of Health is aiming to achieve. Using the summary of decisions on page 6 as our reference, our response to those we feel applicable to a patient group is as follows:

2. We endorse this recommendation and agree both on the importance of a single definition of 'good character' and that this should be based on objective tests.
3. Anything which reduces duplication and encourages the sharing of information within a common framework and to a single consistent standard is to be encouraged.
6. Where appropriate, the employer's resources appear to be a useful asset in the process of revalidation if the regulatory body has confidence in their standards. The Healthcare Commission or equivalent is a suitable guarantor of those standards in many cases, but can it deal with small private employers?
7. The detail of risk assessment for the various professions and individuals within those professions needs quite a lot of development to flesh out the proposal.
9. A single point of contact for 'complainants' is a good idea with a variety of recommendations for the treatment of their complaint. Advice may be solicited from a variety of patient sources. We believe that solely web-based portals would not be acceptable for the majority of the public, and telephone assistance is essential.
12. Of the options indicated, we favour (c) for independence and consistency/
15. One group with specialisms is likely to be less bureaucratic, more consistent and easier for the public to engage with rather than five separate groups.
20. Regarding the future balance of Councils, we would like to see equal representation of lay and professional members working with a lay chairman, who would have a casting vote on the rare occasion that a majority was not

achieved. This would enhance public confidence and communicate the importance which the professionals attached to public representation and independence.

22. & 23. We strongly support both recommendations.

We would be keen to be kept involved with this project, and are happy to provide further input as required.

Yours sincerely

Peter E Sanders
Chairman, Lay Advisory Group