

# BOARD BUSINESS

*From the Registrar's Desk*

No. 74, October 2021



## NEW REGISTRAR

Dr. Gillis retired from his role as Registrar on June 30, 2021. Dr. Doug Mackey assumed the Registrar position on July 1, 2021 after shadowing Dr. Gillis for the month of June. A small gathering took place on October 1, 2021 to thank Dr. Gillis. The numbers were kept small to comply with COVID-19 guidelines.

## BOARD MEETING

On September 24, 2021, the Board held its first in-person meeting since the beginning of the pandemic, with one Board member joining remotely via Zoom. It was very productive and those present appreciated the format which led to greater engagement and discussion than the virtual meetings which had taken place since March of 2020.

The meeting was held in the Council Chambers of the Dalhousie Student Union Building, which was economical and allowed appropriate physical distancing. Dalhousie's protocols around masking and COVID-19 vaccinations were observed. Plans have been made to hold the November 27, 2021 meeting at the same venue.

## LICENSING REPORT

As of September 24, 2021, the number of licensed dentists, students, registered dental assistants, and corporations were:

Year	DDS	Students	RDA's	Corporations
2021 (Sept. 24/20)	579	17	811	399
2020 (Sept. 30/20)	560	17	822	411
2019 (Dec.31/19)	560	17	831	394
2018 (Dec.31/18)	570	19	805	376
2017 (Dec.31/17)	559	18	789	393



PROVINCIAL DENTAL BOARD OF NOVA SCOTIA

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## **FUNCTIONAL COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS AND REAPPOINTMENTS**

At the September 24, 2021 meeting of the Provincial Dental Board, there were no appointments or reappointments requiring approval.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

At the September 24, 2021 meeting of the Provincial Dental Board, the following slate of candidates was presented to the Board and, following a call for further nominations from the floor, elected by acclamation:

- Chair: Dr. Shelly Anderson
- Vice-Chair: Dr Russell MacSween

The Board would like to thank Drs. Anderson and MacSween for letting their names stand. Their terms will commence on January 1, 2022.

## **FUNCTIONAL COMMITTEE UPDATE**

### **Complaints Committee**

#### September 13, 2021

A meeting of the Complaints Committee was held on September 13, 2021 to hear 3 cases.

Case 1: The complaint was dismissed, with publication to be on a no-name basis.

Case 2: The complaint was tabled, pending the submission of further documentation.

Case 3: A letter of counsel to be issued, with publication to be on a no-name basis.

#### September 27, 2021

A meeting of the Complaints Committee was held on September 27, 2021 to hear 2 cases.

Case 1: The complaint was tabled, pending the review of newly submitted documentation from the complainant.

Case 2: The complaint was dismissed, with publication to be on a no-name basis.

### Trends in Complaints

The members of the Complaints Committee have noted that a large percentage of the complaints received would be avoided if the dentists involved had more robust procedures in place for informed consent and recordkeeping.

After discussing this issue at its September 24 meeting, the Board is strongly recommending that dentists have protocols in place to ensure that there is:

- Evidence of informed consent, signed by the patient, outlining the risks and benefits of treatment options.
- Evidence, signed by the patient, that fees were explained to the patient.

At a minimum, these protocols should be in place whenever treatment is planned beyond preventive and direct restorative treatment.

### **Discipline Committee**

The Discipline Committee has not met since June. However, there continues to be a significant amount of administrative and legal work required to deal with the implementation of Settlement Agreements for previously heard cases.

#### **Costs of Complaints and Discipline**

To date, the Complaints Committee has heard 75 complaints since the beginning of 2017. Additionally, there are presently 14 outstanding complaints to be heard by the Committee.

During this same period, 8 cases have been referred by the Complaints Committee to the Discipline Committee. These cases are typically much more involved than those which are dealt with by the Complaints Committee alone.

The PDBNS Finance and Audit Committee and the Board are cognizant of the increasing costs of these proceedings, some of which are becoming quite complicated. In addition to administrative and Committee expenses, the legal costs are significant. Although a portion of the legal costs for these proceedings is recovered by the Board through Settlement Agreements, there is a substantial amount that is not.

### **Mandatory Continuing Dental Education (MCDE) Committee**

The MCDE Committee has not met since June. It has come to our attention that there is some understandable confusion around the extensions of CE cycles (announced in the [April 20, 2021 Advisory](#)) and the interplay of those extensions with the new mandatory course on the Management of Medical Emergencies in the Dental Office, which will first be required for the cohort of registrants whose cycle began in **2020**.

*Continued...*

Original MCDE Cycle	Revised MCDE Cycle
January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2020	January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2021
January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2021	January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2022
<b>January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2022</b>	<b>January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2023</b>

The 3<sup>rd</sup> cohort in the above table is the first one for which the Management of Medical Emergencies in the Dental Office will be required. Since all cohorts have been given an extension, the earliest any registrants will be required to complete this course is 2023.

Registrants in the other 2 cohorts will be required to complete this course for the first time in their next 3-year cycles beginning in 2022 and 2023.

If you are uncertain or have lost track of the years for your CE cycle, please email the Board office at [reception.pdbns@eastlink.ca](mailto:reception.pdbns@eastlink.ca) or [pdbns@eastlink.ca](mailto:pdbns@eastlink.ca).

Concern has been expressed about the potential cost and accessibility of this course, considering the fact that it will be mandatory for both dentists and RDAs. As mentioned in the [June 25, 2021 Advisory](#), and also indicated on the [PDBNS website](#), *“the Office of Continuing Professional Education at Dalhousie University will be offering a medical emergencies course in the coming months which will fulfill these educational requirements. It will be offered asynchronously (on-demand). This format will allow participants to review the course material at their convenience after which they will complete the post test.”*

We are confident that the course offered by Dalhousie will fulfill the requirement, as well as being more accessible and economical than some other options. The Mandatory Continuing Dental Education Committee appreciates the need for such an option considering the fact that all registrants across the province will require the course. It is for this reason that the members of the Committee were so pleased that Dalhousie agreed to deliver an online option.

Registrants can expect to receive more details of this course offered by Dalhousie in the coming months but can be assured that there is no urgency since, once again, it will not be required for any registrants before December 2023.

### **Dental Practice Review (DPR) Committee**

The Dental Practice Review (DPR) Committee has not met since its virtual meeting June 24, 2021. Since then, the Registrar and Deputy Registrar have completed the site visits remaining from the 2020 review and begun the site visits for the 2021 DPR. It has been noted that all offices visited thus far have been quite effective at implementing the recommendations in the PDBNS Covid-19 Reopening Plan.

## Registration Appeal Committee

An appeal has been brought before this Committee for the first time. This Committee was established to provide an avenue for appeal when a registrant's application for registration or (re-)licensure has been denied by the Registrar.

An orientation session for the Committee was held via Zoom videoconference on August 24, 2021, led by the Board's legal counsel, Mr. Jason Cooke. A panel has been struck and will meet for the hearing on October 7, 2021.

## OTHER NEWS

At its September 24, 2021 meeting, the Board unanimously approved adoption of a *Guideline for Prescribing Opioids and Benzodiazepines in Dental Practice*. This document was developed by an *ad hoc* Committee under the guidance of Dr. Curtis Gregoire and will be published on the PDBNS website once formatting is finalized.

As well, a document on *Guidelines for the Use of Social Media by Dentists and Registered Dental Assistants* has been developed by an *ad hoc* Committee chaired by Dr. Russell MacSween. It is anticipated that this will be presented to the Board for adoption at its November 2021 meeting.

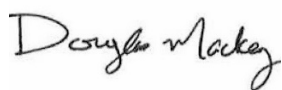
## THANK YOU

I would like to thank staff, Deputy Registrar Dr. Curtis Gregoire, and all Board and Committee members for their support as I have transitioned into the role of Registrar. It is truly an honour to work with such a dedicated group of individuals who are committed to protecting the public's interests in matters related to the delivery of dental care.

Lastly, I would like to thank Dr. Martin Gillis. Martin worked tirelessly in his role, often quietly behind the scenes putting in many undocumented hours. I am appreciative of his guidance and the groundwork he has laid.

Enjoy this next phase of your personal and professional life, Martin!

Respectfully submitted,



Dr Doug Mackey,  
Registrar

