

NEWS RELEASE 26th March 2008

Embargoed until 00:01 27 Mar 2008

Dentists Asking for Retired List

Baroness Gardner of Parkes has stated her intention to table an amendment to the forthcoming Health and Social Care Bill to enable retired dentists to stay on the General Dental Council Register at a nominal cost and without CPD requirements.

During the second reading of the Bill in the House of Lords on 25th March 2008, she said *“This lack of distinction between the honourable and the dishonourable absence from the register is invidious and upset many dentists...There is a public interest in non-practising dentists remaining on the list, as many non-practising dentists continue to work on boards, trusts, charities and other bodies, public and private. If they claim to have been dentists with an honourable record, it should be verifiable”*. Baroness Gardner is appealing to interested dentists to write to their MPs in April supporting her amendment, which will enable the General Dental Council to set up a separate list for dentists not currently practising. At present, dentists who retire and do not wish to keep up with the requirements for CPD and pay the £438 registration fee are struck off.

“This is what I object to the most”, said Baroness Gardner speaking to the DPA, *“You get a letter saying you have been struck off after a lifetime of honourable service. It is the same whether you are a retired dentist or have been struck off for malpractice”*. The proposed system will be similar to that which already operates for other healthcare professionals such as doctors as laws governing the General Medical Council permit this and do not permit the General Dental Council to have this type of list

Baroness Gardner said *“The Department of Health and the General Dental Council have told me that such a system is not currently possible under existing laws. I am not entirely convinced of that, however if my amendment is agreed then it will be possible for the GDC to see which dentists are honourably retired. I am also looking to see if there is a case for a reduced registration fee for dentists who are not retired, but for various reasons have only a minimal or no commitment to practice”*. Final decision as to whether to have a non-practising list would be with the GDC but they do not have this choice at present. If adopted in the House of Lords, the amendment may be accepted by the Commons. If not, it will be referred for further debate. You can find the address of your MP by visiting www.WriteToThem.com

Notes for Editors

The Dental Practitioners Organisation believes that all dental professionals have a right to appear on the General Dental Council Register as a right by virtue of their qualifications—except those who have been removed on disciplinary grounds. The Register can and should differentiate between those practitioners who are entitled to practice clinically and other groups such as those who are taking career breaks or who have retired, which should be entitled to a reduced or no subscription on the grounds that no disciplinary action is likely.

The GDC has failed to follow the General Medical Council in applying for this power under s.60 of the Health Act 1999. The Dental Practitioners Association was established in 1954 and supports and represents dentists in general practice on terms and conditions in the UK.

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