

2 in 5 dentists who graduated overseas faced FtP hearing without representation

Nearly two in five dentists (38%) who graduated overseas did not have legal representation when facing a GDC Fitness to Practise hearing.

The figures, obtained by Dental Protection through an FOI request to the GDC, also showed that those overseas graduates without legal representation were more likely to receive a harsher sanction, compared to overseas graduates with representation. 81% were either suspended or erased from the dentists register, and only 10% received a 'no impairment' judgment.

In comparison, 19% of overseas dental graduates *with* legal representation were either suspended or erased from the dentists register, and 29% received a no impairment judgment.

Dental Protection said it has been working with education and training providers to stress the importance of professional protection that goes beyond claims to all dentists but particularly to those who are new to the country and trying to decipher the guidelines. It is also calling on the GDC to make

it a requirement for all dentists to have protection which includes support with fitness to practise proceedings. Currently it is only a requirement to have protection against claims.

Dr Raj Rattan, Dental Director at Dental Protection, said: 'These figures serve as a powerful reminder for all dentists of how important it is to obtain professional protection which includes the ability to request assistance with GDC investigations.'

'Dental Protection supports dentists from the moment a GDC complaint is received, to its conclusion at a hearing, providing the very best legal defence and a team of professionals committed to achieving the best possible outcome for members. I cannot imagine facing this lengthy and complex process alone, without someone fighting my corner. Sadly though, 38% of dentists who graduated overseas do, along with 31% of dentists who graduated in the UK.'

I will continue to work with key stakeholders across the UK to help them understand the importance and value of comprehensive professional protection

to dentists who graduated in the UK and those who join the workforce from other countries.

'The GDC may also be able to do more to help. It is clear in its indemnity guidance that dental professionals must have appropriate indemnity arrangements in place for clinical negligence claims so patients can seek compensation if they are harmed, and this must be declared before they are able to register or renew registration.'

'We welcome this but would like the GDC to consider extending this requirement to include wider protection beyond just claims in the next review of its standards. GDC investigations impact on a dentists' mental health and reputation, and for some have career ending implications. A requirement to have protection and support with regulatory proceedings would be helpful to all dental professionals but particularly for those who are new to the UK, are trying to decipher the various requirements and may be focussing solely on obtaining protection against claims.'

Market sees big drop

There has been a sharp reverse in the recent pattern of increases in goodwill values.

That's according to the latest results from the NASDAL (National Association of Specialist Dental Accountants and Lawyers) Goodwill Survey statistics.

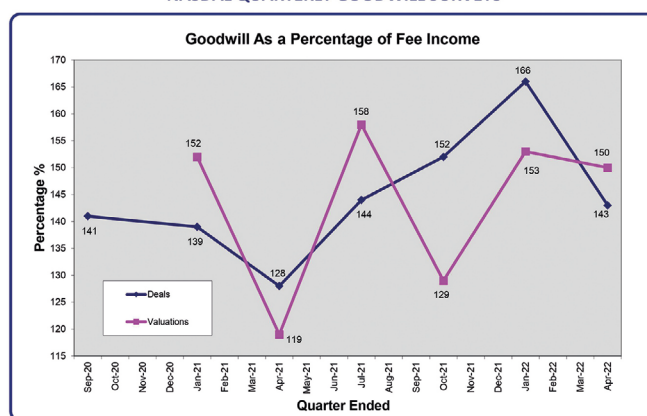
This survey covers the quarter ending 30 April 2022 and includes data on valuations as well as deals completed (i.e., practices bought or sold by NASDAL members' clients in the period), showed a sharp reverse in the recent pattern of increases in goodwill values. Overall, there was a substantial decrease in goodwill as a percentage of fee income in the quarter across all types of practice – deals averaged 143% of gross fees – down from 166% in the quarter to 31 January 2022.

Private practices saw practice goodwill at 124% of gross fees – a big decrease from 155% in the last quarter. Mixed practice goodwill values were also on the slide as they dropped to 132% of gross fees (189% in the previous quarter). NHS practices did

see an increase – they were at 178% of gross fees – up from 141% in the quarter to 31 January 2022.

Mike Blenkarn, specialist dental accountant and partner in UNW LLP who compiles the goodwill survey, said: 'It is interesting to see a big fall back across many practice goodwill values. We can perhaps speculate that as the market returns to a bit more normality it should be expected that figures fall back a little. It also could be symptomatic of wider concerns in the economy as a whole.'

NASDAL QUARTERLY GOODWILL SURVEYS



'We have seen a low number of NHS practices come to market this quarter which may have skewed that data somewhat and the rise. However, there is a lack of confidence in the market for NHS practices and it will therefore be interesting to see if this trend in goodwill values continues in future quarters.'