

C Shah

18 November 2019

By email only: request-615803-d5c1a455@whatdotheyknow.com

Dear C Shah

I write further to my emails dated 28 October and 7 November 2019 which requested further clarification on the time period you wanted your request to cover.

Although the GDC has not received clarification on the time periods we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

I have conducted a search on our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database to identify whether we hold or can provide the information you requested.

In answer to your first two questions:

Whether the GDC has ever investigated a dentist who:

- (i) failed to either diagnose or treat periodontal disease in a patient; and
- (ii) extracted the patient's teeth which could otherwise have been saved if the periodontal disease had been treated.

I can confirm that the GDC has investigated dentists that failed to diagnose periodontal disease and carried out a tooth extraction which could have been saved if the periodontal disease had been treated.

With regards to your subsequent requests:

- The number of such investigations that have been carried out (broken down by year) and the outcome of the investigations.

While it is possible for us to identify individual cases through a general search, the CRM system does not have the facility to report on failure to diagnose periodontal disease or whether there were tooth extractions which could have been avoided. We have carried out a search of our CRM system with the words 'Failure to diagnose periodontal disease' which brought a total of 8,949 documents. To accurately work out the actual numbers by year would entail carrying out a manual review of each document to check the background and allocate it to an individual investigation.

We are, therefore, unable to provide the information requested within the time and cost limit set out in section 12 of the FOI Act. Section 12 of the FOI Act allows a public authority to refuse to deal with a request where it estimates that it would exceed the appropriate limit to locate, extract, and/or retrieve the information requested. The appropriate limit for the GDC is 18 hours or £450. The estimate must be reasonable in the circumstances of the case. We estimate that it would take a minimum of 3 minutes to review each entry to identify whether the complaint was about failure to diagnose periodontal disease and whether the patient's teeth had been extracted unnecessarily. With a total of 8,949 documents it would take a total of 447.5 hours to complete. Please let us know if you would like to refine your request in any way.

Internal review and complaints procedure

I am sorry we cannot provide all of the information from your request but I hope you have found what we have provided helpful. However, if you are unhappy with our reply or with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review of our decision by writing to our Principal Legal Advisor at the following address:

Requests for a review should be addressed to:

Executive Director, Legal & Governance
General Dental Council
37 Wimpole Street
London
W1G 8DQ
Email: foirequests@gdc-uk.org

If, at the end of the review process, you are not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may write to the Information Commissioner, who is appointed to consider such complaints, at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 0303 123 1113
Website: www.ico.org.uk

Yours sincerely,



Colin Lench
Deputy Information Governance Manager
General Dental Council
Email: foirequests@gdc-uk.org