



## Consultation on International Society of Dental Regulators dentist accreditation principles

Issue date: 28 July 2017

Closing date: 1 September 2017

### Summary

Following the adoption of the [ISDR accreditation standards and competencies](#) for dentists by the ISDR general assembly in May 2016, the general assembly requested the ISDR accreditation working group to further consult on the ISDR international dentist accreditation principles and dentist competencies, the endorsement process and implementation. The general assembly asked the working group to report back to the general assembly in 2017 and provide options for implementation.

The purpose of this consultation is to consult on the:

- ISDR international dentist accreditation principles and dentist competencies
- ISDR endorsement process and implementation.

### Background

The majority of jurisdictions where dental professions are regulated have an accreditation or educational quality assurance framework. The primary objective is to ensure that dental practitioners achieve the necessary knowledge and skills to be eligible to be licensed/registered to practise dentistry competently and safely. Accreditation standards are used to assess whether a programme of study meets the threshold standards to fulfil this objective.

In 2016, the ISDR consulted with its members on international accreditation standards and competencies for dentists—collectively referred to as the accreditation framework. The objective of this framework is to set out the minimum accreditation principles for ISDR members when setting accreditation standards and developing competencies for dentists. The framework can be further refined by individual jurisdictions to align with their own educational, regulatory and legislative systems.

The framework was developed by an ISDR working group, mapping six ISDR members' accreditation standards and dentist competencies.<sup>1</sup> In addition two international organisations' competencies further informed the working group development of the dentist competencies.<sup>2</sup> The working group then agreed on what components should be features of an internationally accepted minimum accreditation framework.

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<sup>1</sup> Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States

<sup>2</sup> The Association of Canadian Faculties of Dentistry (ACFD) and the Association for Dental Education Europe (ADEE).

The accreditation framework sets out principles underpinning five areas that all jurisdictions should address through their own accreditation standards:

1. Public safety
2. Academic governance and quality assurance
3. Programme of study
4. Student journey
5. Assessment.

A total of [27 principles](#) are defined across these areas.

The ISDR accreditation standards are underpinned by ISDR dentist competencies that must be achieved by dental programmes.

It is the expectation of ISDR that all members will employ the framework as the minimum principles for accreditation of dentist education programmes. This supports the ISDR mandate to encourage best practices amongst dental regulatory authorities worldwide in protecting, promoting and maintaining the health and safety of the public by ensuring minimum standards for the dental professions.

The accreditation framework was considered during the May 2016 ISDR general assembly, and the decision, as per the minutes, was:

***ADOPTION OF ACCREDITATION STANDARDS PROPOSAL***

*Ms. Warner asked for direction from the General Assembly on how to proceed with the revised International Accreditation Principles document, as presented. After fulsome discussion during the conference, the Accreditation Working Group was directed to continue with its work to develop an endorsement process in working with larger organizations and bring back to the General Assembly for its consideration in 2017.*

*MOTION: Warner/Segal*

*THAT the General Assembly approves the ISDR Dental Accreditation Principles and Dentist Competencies and the development of an endorsement process, including implementation date, for consultation with ISDR members and report back to the General Assembly at its 2017 meeting. A friendly amendment was made to request that the Working Group consult further on the document having heard the conversation of the General Assembly and report back to the General Assembly, providing options for implementation.*

*MOTION (AMENDED): Marburg/Dolman*

*THAT the General Assembly requests the ISDR Accreditation Working Group to further consult on the ISDR Dentist Accreditation Principles and Dentist Competencies, endorsement process and implementation, having heard the conversation at the General Assembly meeting and report back to the General Assembly in 2017 and provide options for implementation.*

*CARRIED (Unanimously)*

The ISDR accreditation working group made the changes to the accreditation standards and dentist competencies as requested by the general assembly. Proposed endorsement options were also developed.

## Purpose of proposed ISDR endorsement

Endorsement is public recognition that a specific jurisdictions' accreditation standards and dentist competencies meet the minimum principles of the ISDR accreditation framework.

The purpose of ISDR endorsement is to:

- promote the ISDR accreditation framework and its use by members to better facilitate international workforce mobility through more aligned standards across jurisdictions
- provide leadership and guidance to jurisdictions as they develop their own accreditation processes, standards and competencies.

The ISDR endorsement process does not alter the accreditation function and responsibilities of individual accreditation authorities, or the accreditation status of any individual accredited programmes within an endorsed jurisdiction.

In addition, the endorsement process will not replace the existing competent authority model or any mutual recognition agreements in place.

## ISDR endorsement process

The consultation in February 2016 asked members if they agreed with the proposal to provide ISDR endorsement to members whose accreditation standards and dentist competencies aligned with the accreditation framework. Members agreed in principle, but wanted more detail on what the proposed process would entail.

The endorsement process must:

- provide clear direction on how the ISDR will treat applications so they can be treated fairly and consistently
- be credible and robust.

## Proposed accreditation endorsement approach

If members support the concept of endorsement, the following approach to endorsement is proposed.

### i. ISDR accreditation logo

An ISDR-endorsement logo or brand should be developed. ISDR members whose accreditation standards and dentist competencies have been endorsed by ISDR will be able to publicly display the logo.

The logo would include the following subscript: *ISDR-endorsed accreditation framework*.

### ii. ISDR accreditation endorsement panel

An endorsement panel of six people should be established, by appointment. The members of the group should be appointed for terms of three years.

The six people should represent a range of ISDR member jurisdictions. Within the six should be a broad mix of skills with at least two people with senior dental academic backgrounds and two representing accreditation authorities/regulators; with at least five years' experience in the respective roles.

The ISDR executive would call for interested parties to submit their CVs. Appointments would be made by the ISDR executive committee.

No more than two members of the same jurisdiction should serve on the panel at a given time.

The panel will annually elect a new chair, with no more than two consecutive years as chair.

This panel will:

- Have bi-annual meetings (via videoconferencing or face-to-face) to consider any issues arising in relation to the accreditation framework; major changes to endorsed jurisdictions' standards or dentist competencies; endorsement applications; and complaints or concerns that call into question an endorsed jurisdiction's ability to adhere to the accreditation framework.
- Provide the membership for review groups to consider new applications.

### iii. Proposed process

1. Applications can either come from existing members of the ISDR, or from non-members who are seeking membership and endorsement at the same time. It will not be possible for non-members to receive endorsement.
2. The jurisdiction's application must be supported by at least one ISDR member.
3. The application should include a mapping of the jurisdiction's accreditation standards and dentist competencies against the ISDR accreditation framework. In addition, examples of the type of evidence that programmes within the jurisdiction can provide to satisfy the accreditation authority that it meets the respective standard should be listed against the jurisdiction's specific accreditation standard.
4. When an application is received, the endorsement panel will select a three-person review group from its membership. The review group should include at least one person with a dental academic background and at least one person from an accreditation authority/regulator. It should not include any person from the applying jurisdiction's country or any country where there could be a conflict of interest.
5. The proposed review group membership will be communicated to the applicant to raise any concern about conflict of interest with the proposed membership.
6. Once agreed, the review group will appoint a chair who will lead the application review process.
7. The review group will convene via videoconference to consider the application. A representative from the applicant should attend the meeting to answer any questions and provide information on how the jurisdiction meets the framework principles.
8. It is expected the process will be conducted within an eight-week period.
9. The review group will submit a report and recommendation to the endorsement panel. The panel will make the final decision.
10. The outcome options available to the review group are: approve or decline.
11. If a consensus decision could not be reached by the review group, the report and recommendation will be considered by the ISDR executive.

12. Once a decision has been reached, the panel chair will communicate the outcome to the ISDR executive and the applicant.
13. If the application is successful, the ISDR office will provide a certificate to the applicant, and the applicant will be entitled to use the ISDR endorsement logo on their website/s and publications. Endorsed jurisdictions will also be listed on the ISDR website.
14. If the application is unsuccessful, the panel will indicate which of the framework principles the review group does not believe the applicant has met.
15. The applicant has a 21-day right of appeal, the appeal will be considered by the ISDR executive.
16. An unsuccessful applicant can reapply for endorsement once they believe they have addressed the areas identified by the review group.

#### iv. Costs

At this point, it is proposed that the costs be covered through the ISDR membership fees. It is not envisaged that the costs will be major, as most functions will be performed via videoconferencing.

#### v. Ongoing monitoring and compliance issues

Endorsed jurisdictions have a responsibility to the ISDR to uphold the principles of the accreditation framework.

To maintain their ISDR endorsement, jurisdictions are expected to advise the ISDR of major changes to their accreditation standards and/or dentist competencies.

If any member of the ISDR has cause for concern about an accredited jurisdiction's ability to adhere to the principles framework, this should be brought to the attention of the ISDR executive by way of a formal complaint. The complaint should detail the principle/s that it considers the jurisdiction no longer meet, and provide supporting evidence.

The complaint will be forwarded to the endorsement panel for consideration.

The jurisdiction involved will be advised by the ISDR executive of the complaint and provided with any material submitted. The jurisdiction will be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint.

If the panel determines that the jurisdiction no longer meets the accreditation framework, then the jurisdiction's endorsement will be revoked.

If endorsement is revoked, the jurisdiction has 21 days right of appeal.

The appeal will be considered by the ISDR executive.

## Relationship between ISDR membership and the proposed accreditation endorsement

It is suggested the ISDR members consider three ways of approaching the relationship between membership and endorsement.

The jurisdiction whose accreditation material formed the basis of the accreditation framework included Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, United Kingdom and the United States of America.

For all options, it is proposed the ISDR members whose accreditation material formed the basis of the accreditation framework should automatically be given endorsement. Based on current membership these include Australia, Canada, Ireland, and New Zealand.

All options put forward allow ISDR to provide leadership and support to those jurisdictions who want to establish or improve their accreditation framework.

### Option 1

ISDR endorsement is linked to membership, meaning any new applications for membership must be accompanied by an application for accreditation endorsement.

Applicants must achieve endorsement in order to become ISDR members.

Existing ISDR members who have not been granted automatic endorsement will be given a waiver period until they are ready to apply for endorsement.

Benefits:

- The ISDR brand will be synonymous with the endorsement of a member jurisdiction's accreditation standards and dentist competencies
- This will have the effect of strengthening the brand—the endorsement adds value to the brand by making it a mark of achievement.
- This will also make it easier to promote the ISDR brand without having to explain the complexities of a tiered membership system.

Negatives:

- This option will potentially discourage membership applications from jurisdictions which would like to join the ISDR but whose accreditation programmes are not yet at the point that would gain endorsement.

### Option 2

The society establishes a two-tiered membership system: full membership, for jurisdictions who have achieved accreditation endorsement; and associate membership for jurisdictions who are signed up as members of the ISDR but have not yet achieved accreditation endorsement.

Existing ISDR members who have not been granted automatic endorsement will become Associate Members until they have successfully completed the endorsement process.

Benefits:

- This allows for jurisdictions who are going through the process of bringing their accreditation standards and dentist competencies up to standard to join the ISDR and benefit from the leadership and support of the society while they work towards endorsement.

Negatives:

- Potential for confusion or weakening of the ISDR brand—if communication is not clear enough to distinguish between the two levels of membership.

### Option 3

The ISDR accreditation principles and competencies for dentists represent the ISDR's standard. ISDR members are invited to adopt these standards and align, as they see fit, their own jurisdiction's standards. The resource will be publicly available on the ISDR website.

Benefits:

- Articulates an individual members independence within their jurisdictions.
- Would not prevent or be a barrier for jurisdictions who has no formal accreditation framework or cannot comply with the accreditation principles to join ISDR. Encourage ISDR membership from new or developing regulatory jurisdictions. This option is aligned with the ISDR objectives to promote high standards of dental education and regulation in protecting the public's interest
- To facilitate international collaboration and sharing of information
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Negatives:

- Loose incentive for all ISDR members to comply with minimum accreditation principle, and set an international benchmark.

### Consultation questions

1. Do you agree that ISDR changes the terminology from "ISDR general dentist accreditation standards" to "ISDR general dentist accreditation principles"?
2. Do you support the endorsement options 1, 2 or 3 – and why?
3. Do you agree with the endorsement process set out in this paper? Specifically the proposed:
  - a. endorsement panel composition, role and terms of reference
  - b. use of ISDR accreditation endorsement specific logo
  - c. application process steps
  - d. decision outcomes
  - e. ongoing monitoring framework
  - f. endorsement revoking
  - g. appeals policy.
4. Do you agree that the ISDR member jurisdictions whose accreditation material was used to develop the accreditation framework should be automatically endorsed with ISDR accreditation?

Are there any areas not covered, or other concerns you want to raise?