



21 January 2016

## PARLIAMENTARY CONCERNS ABOUT THE GENERAL DENTAL COUNCIL

Denplan has noted the concerns raised in both Houses of Parliament this week about the performance of the General Dental Council.

Debating the introduction of new powers for the Council to introduce Case Examiners, who would be able to review complaints cases at an earlier stage than currently, members of the Lords and Commons from the two main political parties, expressed concern about the independence of Examiners (who will be Council employees), as well as the Council's past performance and culture.

Denplan shares the concerns as expressed by many of its member dentists and repeated in the debates, particularly the significant increase in complaints to the Council, the significant delays in processing those complaints, and the consequent significant rise in dentists' registration fees which pay the Council's costs.

During the course of the parliamentary debate the Council was described as being, according to dentists and its own overseer the Professional Standards Authority (PSA), 'the most expensive, least efficient and most troubled' healthcare regulator. In response to this, further comments were made that the PSA report on the GDC published in December was extremely worrying and that there were concerns about the Council's performance.

Denplan shares these concerns, and others raised in Parliament. It believes that wholesale reform of healthcare regulation, as recommended to Government by the Law Commission in 2014, is long overdue in the interests of patients and the public.

Roger Matthews, Chief Dental Officer at Denplan added: "The introduction of case examiners may help progress credible complaints more quickly, and introduce some welcome and long-overdue proportionality to the Council's processes. However there remain serious underlying concerns about their independence, about the Council's 'culture of complacency' which was referenced during the parliamentary debate and the risk that an "extra layer" of review may add to rather than reduce the Council's costs in the future."



## Notes to Editors: About Denplan

Denplan Limited is the UK's leading dental payment plan specialist owned by Simplyhealth; with more than 6,500 member dentists nationwide caring for approximately 1.7 million Denplan registered patients. Established in 1986 by two dentists who pioneered the concept of dental payment plans, Denplan has been at the heart of dental care for nearly 30 years. Today, Denplan has a wide range of dental plans for adults and children, enabling patients to spread the cost of their private dental care through a fixed monthly fee. Denplan supports regular attendance and preventive care, reducing the need for clinical intervention and helping patients to maintain healthy teeth and gums for life. Patient enquiries telephone: 0800 401 402 Dentist enquiries telephone: 0800 328 3223

[www.denplan.co.uk](http://www.denplan.co.uk)

- Denplan Care: all routine and restorative care + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Denplan Essentials: routine care only + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Plans for Children: routine and other agreed care + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Membership Plan: registered with the dentist + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Denplan Emergency: worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover only
- Corporate Dental Plans: company funded, voluntary and flexible benefit schemes

Denplan also provides a range of professional services for its member dentists and their practice teams, including the Denplan Quality Programme, Denplan Excel Certification Programme and Denplan Training. Plus regulatory advice, business and marketing consultancy services and networking opportunities.

For more information about Denplan:

Rebecca Hutton

Denplan Press Office

Tel: 01962 829 179

[Pressoffice@denplan.co.uk](mailto:Pressoffice@denplan.co.uk)

## About Simplyhealth

We have been helping people with their health for over 140 years. Our roots are in the hospital funds set up during the Victorian era to help working people save for their medical care, and we still follow mutual values today. With no shareholders, our profits go back into supporting our customers and healthcare charitable causes, donating over £1 million each year. Last year, we donated £1.4 million.

In 2011, we acquired Denplan Limited, the UK's leading dental payment plan specialist. Simplyhealth has 1,391 employees based across our offices in Andover, Manchester, Leeds and Denplan in Winchester. We serve our 3.5 million customers through cash plans, dental plans, Denplan and pet health plans. Simplyhealth has Independent Living Centres which provide daily living and mobility products, including powerchairs, mobility scooters and wheelchairs, in Andover, Bristol, Burnham, Droitwich, Kenilworth, Leeds, Northfield, Norwich, Sutton Coldfield, Telford, Willenhall and Wolverhampton.

Simplyhealth is a trading name of Simplyhealth Access, which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority.

## For further information:

<http://newsroom.simplyhealth.co.uk/>

Caroline Newton, Public Relations and Social Media Manager 0344 579 2274

Laura Miller, Media Relations Officer 0344 579 2266

Or [pr@simplyhealth.co.uk](mailto:pr@simplyhealth.co.uk)

Follow us on Twitter @SimplyhealthUK and at Facebook.com/SimplyhealthUK