

Mr M Mew  
16A Pampisford Road  
Purley  
Surrey  
CR8 2NE

20<sup>th</sup> January 2011

Dear Mr Mew,

**Your concerns about the General Dental Council (GDC)**

Thank you for your letter in which you raise your concerns that the GDC has failed to act as an independent regulator and has dismissed your concerns around orthodontic treatment in the UK without listening to your evidence. It has informed you that *'...it is not the place of a regulator to become involved in a disagreement between you and the orthodontic profession as to the scientific basis of their practice'*.

We have previously corresponded with the GDC about this matter and have been informed that the GDC do not consider that it has ignored or sidelined views about the effectiveness of different forms of orthodontic treatment. The GDC said that they had been discussed in a Council meeting and in the course of the work of the Standards Committee. In particular, the GDC said that they were taken into account in the course of discussions leading to the approval of the Council's guidance document *Principles of Patient Consent* (GDC, May 2005). This guidance specifically refers practitioners to the need to inform patients not only of the risks and benefits of proposed treatment but also the risks and benefits of other forms of treatment which are not proposed.

The GDC also informed us that there are numerous issues in healthcare for which there are different schools of thought and emphasis and that it reminds dentists that they have a professional duty, to *'provide a good standard of care based on available up-to-date evidence and reliable guidance'*. The GDC has previously stated to CHRE that it considers it would be inappropriate for the professional regulatory body to take sides on legitimate scientific debate within the profession.

Due to our previous involvement with the GDC on this matter and because we agree with the GDC that this is not a regulatory issue, we do not consider that it would be appropriate for CHRE to become involved in this matter again.

We have done all we can within our statutory remit for complaints in sharing concerns that were previously raised with the GDC, asking for its comments and sharing these with you

and others. We consider that the matter you have raised relates to a professional dispute regarding the effectiveness of different forms of treatment. We do not consider that it is a regulatory issue.

Whilst we are unable to help you and you have stated that the British Orthodontic Society has refused to enter into debate on this issue, you could approach the Chief Dental Officer for England, [REDACTED] His office may be able to advise you further on this matter.

We are grateful for you taking the time to bring this matter to our attention.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Good Practice Officer