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STATEMENT ON SDC CIRCULAR 02/2019

With reference to the circular by Singapore Dental Council (SDC) on 25th May 2019 entitled 'Better Competency Development for Safe and Quality Dental Care for Patients', the Singapore Dental Association Standing Committee (SDA-SC), following further clarification with SDC, would like to make the following statement with respect to SDC's preliminary recommendations:

1. Skill enhancement and development

We note that the practice of Dentistry includes procedures that require skills beyond what is taught under existing undergraduate dental training programmes, but do not require specialist training. We concur that there is a need for Continuing Professional Education (CPE) and adherence to good Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPG). For a few specific procedures identified to be of higher risk, additional training in the form of relevant courses leading to Certificates of Competency (CoCs) is advisable but not mandatory and does not preclude dentists from undertaking such procedures.

2. Accreditation of CoC courses and the existing CPE Programme

We are supportive of proposals that courses leading to CoCs will be recognised under the existing SDC Continuing Professional Education (SDC CPE) programme and that participation in CoC courses will count towards dentists' CPE requirements. Likewise, previous relevant CPE hours will be counted towards dentists' CPE requirements for attainment of such CoCs.

Dentists who possess the knowledge and skills for the identified high-risk procedures, and who have acquired competencies through past training courses and/or relevant working experience can also apply and be issued with relevant CoCs without undergoing further courses.

3. Feedback from the Dental Community

We note that these are preliminary recommendations and that any decision will be made only after the dental community has been engaged. SDA will seek the views of our members to provide active feedback and contribute constructively to the shaping of the final guidelines.

Our initial recommendations include renaming ‘competencies for specialist dental care’ to ‘competencies for complex dental care’. This will better reflect the level of dental work that general dentists are already performing or referring to specialists for co-management.

We are confident that these measures will ensure that the reputation of Singapore’s healthcare system be maintained and even enhanced, and will continue to meet the present and future needs of the public.

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By The Standing Committee for Dental Classification and Dental Procedures Accreditation