

PRESS RELEASE



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DENTISTS MUST CHECK OUT THE REGULATIONS ON THERAPISTS.

Dentists are being advised to check that they fully understand the role of dental therapists so they don't fall foul of General Dental Council.

The UK-wide dental defence organisation MDDUS has issued the reminder after receiving a growing number of queries from both dentists and therapists about their proper roles in the dental team.

The GDC guidelines make it very clear that dental therapists must not carry out any initial diagnosis or take overall responsibility for planning a patient's treatment.

However MDDUS highlights that some therapists have reported that emergency patients and those getting cosmetic treatments, such as tooth whitening, are being slotted into their appointment books without having seen a dentist first for a prescription to be written.

Rachael Bell, dental adviser, warns: "Asking therapists to see emergency patients in pain is inappropriate as it would involve making an initial diagnosis and treatment plan.

"It is tempting in a busy practice to see dental therapists as a useful spare set of hands, and they are - but only working under prescription. They must not be used to cover for an absent dentist, or to compensate for an over busy appointment book."

Bell adds: "The GDC document Dental Team Working and Scope of Practice should keep all of the dental team clear about their roles and help them avoid a summons to the GDC for a disciplinary hearing."

Ends

For further information contact Colin Calder on 0141 616 2677 or 07850 510881.

Note to editors

MDDUS (The Medical and Dental Defence Union of Scotland) is a medical and dental defence organisation providing access to professional indemnity and expert medico- and dento-legal advice for doctors, dentists and other healthcare professionals throughout the UK.

For further information on MDDUS go to www.mddus.com.