

DENTASA : UPDATE for MEMBERS

As we say goodbye to a 2007 filled with turmoil, uncertainty, extreme highs and lows and indecisions, we can now look forward to a 2008 filled with positive changes, challenges and restructuring. Now more than ever all technicians need to stand together to ensure that the profession of Dental Technology receives it 's rightful place in the genre of Oral Health and give positive and workable input into all decisions made.

There are a lot of speculation and rumours going around and a non-functioning Council does not help. From DENTASA's side we would like to clarify some issues as best we can, but we must stress that everything is in a state of flux and this is the way we THINK the issues will be dealt with:

The new Tariff structure

The Government Gazette is a relic of the past. The present tariff structure will be replaced with the National Reference Price List (NRPL), which will be a price list depicting the cost only of producing a specific procedure. T-codes will become obsolete and illegal. The NRPL will only be a guide as to the cost procured in making the item and not binding for technicians to charge the costs as published in the NRPL. The NRPL will not be mailed to all technicians as the Government Gazette has been in the past, but it will be available on the Website of the Department of Health.

For 2008 we will use the 2007 9-code prices plus a percentage increase yet to be determined by the Department of Health. This will be a recommended price only. Members will be notified immediately.

Please be careful, as there is a very fine line between a perverse incentive and discount. The problem lies in that the Doctor is still the person that is invoiced the lesser amount and this can be seen as a perverse incentive.

In 2009 our proper NRPL will be ready. The reference price list is NOT a set of tariffs that must be applied by medical schemes and/or providers. It is rather intended to serve as a baseline against which medical schemes can individually determine benefit levels and health service providers can individually determine fees charged to patients. Medical schemes may, for example, determine in their rules that their benefit in respect of a particular health service is equivalent to a specified percentage of the national health reference price list. It is especially intended to serve as a basis for negotiation between individual funders and individual health care providers with a view to facilitating agreements which will minimise balance billing against members of medical schemes. Should individual medical schemes wish to determine benefit structures, and individual providers determine fee structures, on some other basis without reference to this list, they may do so as well.

DENTASA cannot publish a recommended price list, as the Competition Commission will see it as price collusion. **You will be able to charge what you think your work is worth.**

Officially the Dental Technicians Act has not been changed yet to cater for the new developments.

Resignations

Advocate Kenny Lekitima has resigned as Registrar of the SADTC, effective from 31 October 2007. Mr. Tloubatla has also resigned as Assistant Registrar of the SADTC effective from 30 November 2007. These two positions will only be filled in 2008.

The future of the SADTC

The Minister of Health is reshuffling all medical Councils. The SADTC as we know it will probably no longer exist and the profession of Dental Technology will fall under the Oral Health Council, which will represent and govern all oral health professions. If all goes according to the planned frameworks, 2009 will start the new era of the Oral Health Council. The DoH officials are going to have a meeting with the SADTC on 30 November and we hope to clear up some of the questions we have.

Direct payments

The period for comments to the direct payment regulation closed in the middle of October 2007. These comments went to the Legal Department of health and we are awaiting the outcome.

National Credit Act

Our President Axel Grabowski will meet with a SADA delegation on Wednesday 28 November to thrash out the details of the letter of intent between DENTASA and SADA.

2008 DENTASA AGM

In the spirit of change, DENTASA has decided to upgrade the AGM and move to a different venue in 2008. The Castle Kyalami Hotel will play host to a better-than-ever event with more to see, more to learn and more to experience. Bookmark the 30th and 31st of May 2008 and be a part of the highlight of the year for all Dental Technicians!

Change is inevitable. Let us all embrace the changes in future and breed a positive attitude and culture towards input into what is new and acceptance of what will happen. Disregard all new things and be left behind.

**The Dental Technology Association of South Africa
(Association Incorporated under Section 21) Reg No: 2005/035340/08**

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