



We welcome the [GDC's announcement](#) of its intention to put more trust in dental teams and build effective strategies for protecting the public. The damage that has occurred over the last few years will take some time to put right, but steps in the right direction are needed and we hope it will be clear in the [GDC strategic plan](#) what these steps are likely to be.

We are however extremely disappointed that the annual retention fee has been earmarked for a 7% and 5% increase respectively for dentists and DCP's. This comes at a time when the increased pressure on the profession from the cost of living affecting everyone is particularly biting. Our NHS colleagues have had no such uplift of the NHS fees with which to pay for the ever increasing burden of running a dental practice, and whilst we appreciate it also costs money to run the GDC effectively, we feel that this increase (even though relatively small) will not help the already strained relationship the profession has with its regulator. By making an increase of this nature, the GDC is simply adding to the issue of inflation. Many dental practices will now see this as yet another reason to raise their private fees to take such increases into account.

The ongoing high cost of PPE is still creating problems within the profession. At a time of highly problematic staff recruitment, especially of DCP's, even a £5 increase in their registration fee will be seen as a lack of understanding of the pressures facing these members of the profession. Staff salaries are on a steep upward trend in order to remain an attractive profession to work in, and an increased ARF simply adds to this burden.

We would have hoped that an increase could have been avoided by savings to be made from a more efficient Fitness to Practice process that now seems to be coming on stream, and would urge the GDC to consider the effect any increase in the ARF will have on the dental team at this difficult time. It is our opinion that there would be far less resistance to a reasonable increase in the ARF if the GDC was able to show that it is making tangible progress in dealing with the legacy it finds itself with, before actioning any increase.