

## PUBLIC HEARING

### Registration Appeals Committee

8 January 2025

**Name:** SURISETTY, Girisha

**Case number:** CAS-208582-L0Y1H4

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**General Dental Council:** Sharmistha Michaels, Counsel  
Instructed by Georgina Mayles, IHLAS

**Registrant:** Present  
Represented by Deacon Joice James Pallickamyilil

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**Outcome:** Appeal accepted

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**Committee Members:** Gaon Hart (Lay) (Chair)  
Rebecca Northover (Dentist)  
Helen Woodall (Dental Care Professional)

**Legal Adviser:** Megan Ashworth

**Professional Adviser:** John Darby

**Committee Secretary:** Paul Carson

Mrs Surisetty,

1. This is an appeal against the registrar's decision not to grant you registration on the DCP register under the titles of Orthodontic Therapist and/or Dental Therapist. The issue on appeal is whether you demonstrate the requisite knowledge and skill to practise as a member of the profession under either or both titles in accordance with the requirements of section 36C(4)(b) of the Dentists Act 1984 (the "Act").

*Background*

2. You graduated in 2015 from SRM University, India with the degree of Bachelor of Dental Surgery. You practised full time as a dental surgeon in India until the end of 2019. In early 2020, you moved to the United Kingdom, but returned to India to work regularly as an Associate Dentist, and worked as a Practice Manager and trainee Dental Nurse in the UK from April 2023 until May 2024. You provided a clinical reference for the following periods of practice as an Associate Dentist in India: 19 July 2022 to 20 August 2022, 10 July 2023 to 07 September 2023 and 13 May 2024 to 31 November 2024.
3. On 01 December 2022, you submitted applications to the General Dental Council (GDC) for registration under the titles of Orthodontic Therapist and Dental Therapist, relying on your Bachelor of Dental Surgery degree and the provisions of section 36C of the Act, which require you to satisfy the registrar of a number of matters, including, so far as is relevant to this appeal, "Matter C".
4. Section 36C(4) provides that:

*"Matter C is that the person—*

*(a) holds a qualification or qualifications granted by an institution or institutions outside the United Kingdom relevant to the profession complementary to dentistry, or class of members of such a profession, to which the title applies (in this section referred to as "relevant qualifications"); and*

*(b) has satisfied the Council that he has the requisite knowledge and skill to practise as a member of the profession or class to which the title applies."*

5. It was not in dispute on appeal that your Bachelor of Dental Surgery degree is a "relevant qualification" for the purposes of section 36C(4)(a). The issue was whether you demonstrate that you have the requisite knowledge and skill to practise under the titles of Orthodontic Therapist and/or Dental Therapist in accordance with section 36C(4)(b). When determining whether an applicant has the requisite knowledge and skill, section 36C(5)(a) of the Act requires the Council to take into account all the applicant's relevant qualifications, and all relevant knowledge or experience, wherever acquired.
6. Your applications for registration were considered on paper by panels convened by the registrar to assess your qualification, training and experience against the Learning Outcomes which are required for Orthodontic Therapists and Dental Therapists. The panels met in April 2024 and again in June 2024, following receipt of further information and evidence in the intervening period. The eventual result of this assessment process

was a decision that a number of the Learning Outcomes do not appear to have been covered as part of your training or professional experience.

7. Accordingly, the GDC wrote to you on 20 August 2024 refusing your applications for registration as a Orthodontic Therapist and a Dental Therapist. In its correspondence, the GDC particularised each of the Learning Outcomes in which the panels had assessed your applications as being deficient, with the issue in relation to each being communicated as: *“you were requested to provide a recent clinical professional reference to demonstrate this learning outcome. The evidence of clinical experience you have provided is insufficient to satisfy the Registrar that you have the requisite knowledge and skill to practise using the title that you have applied for”*

8. It is against this decision which you appeal to the Committee in respect of both titles.

*The appeal hearing 08 January 2024*

9. The Committee met today to hear your appeal. The hearing was conducted remotely using Microsoft Teams. The Committee had regard to all the documents which had been put before it by you and by the registrar. This included further information and evidence provided by you which was not before the registrar’s assessment panels, including your updated Continuing Professional Development (CPD) record, self-reflection and updated references.

10. The Committee also had the benefit of hearing oral evidence from you.

11. In oral evidence, you discussed the structure and content of your undergraduate training, clinical practising experience and work history. You answered questions on your knowledge in respect of each of the Learning Outcomes which were assessed as being deficient. You also discussed your understanding of GDC Standards and the Scope of Practice of an Orthodontic Therapist and a Dental Therapist.

12. The Committee had regard to the submissions made on behalf of the registrar by Ms Michaels, and to those made on your behalf by the Reverend Joice James Pallickamyilil.

13. Ms Micheals submitted that the assessments of the registrar’s panel in June 2024 were correct and that your appeal should be dismissed on that basis, albeit noting that the Committee now has the benefit of further information and evidence than was before those panels.

14. If the Committee were minded to allow your appeal, Ms Micheals submitted that it should exercise its power to remit the case to the registrar so that the remaining requirements of registration under section 36C(1)(b) of the Act (“Matter D”) can be assessed. Those matters relate to your identity, character, knowledge of English and health and might not yet have been fully assessed by the registrar pending the outcome of this appeal.

15. Reverend Pallickamyilil submitted that the evidence before the Committee shows that you do demonstrate the requisite knowledge and skill for registration under both titles and that your appeal should therefore be allowed.

*Decision*

16. The Committee accepted the advice of the Professional Adviser.
17. The Committee accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser.
18. The Committee found your oral evidence to be clear and persuasive. You were able to give well-articulated answers to the questions put to you in a way which conveyed genuine knowledge and understanding in relation to each of the outstanding Learning Outcomes and in relation to GDC Standards and the Scope of Practice of Orthodontic Therapist and a Dental Therapist. Your applications were assessed by the registrar's panels without the benefit of oral evidence from you, including oral evidence of reflective practice and detailed evidence of your clinical practising experience. The panels also did not have the benefit of your most recent detailed clinical reference covering six months of practising as an Associate Dentist in India between May and November 2024. The Committee was satisfied that you demonstrate a sufficient academic and clinical background for the purposes of registration as an Orthodontic Therapist and a Dental Therapist.
19. Having regard to the entirety of the evidence now available on appeal, the Committee determined that you demonstrate the requisite knowledge and skill for registration as an Orthodontic Therapist and a Dental Therapist and that you therefore satisfy the registrar of "Matter C" in respect of both titles.
20. Accordingly, the Committee allows your appeal in respect of "Matter C". In accordance with the normal registration process of the GDC, "Matter D", which relates to your identity, character, knowledge of English and health, potentially remains outstanding pending the outcome of this appeal. The Committee therefore remits the case to the registrar with a direction that you meet the requirements of "Matter C" in respect of both titles and that your corresponding applications for registration shall therefore be granted subject to your satisfying the registrar of "Matter D".
21. That concludes this determination.