



COPDEND Newsletter

November 2023

Introduction

This is the first COPDEND newsletter to stakeholders. We would like to take this opportunity to welcome Ben Wild, the new dental postgraduate Dean for the North East, who took up post in October 2023 and is taking over from Malcolm Smith. Many of you will know Malcolm, as he also held the role of chair of the Dental Education Reform Programme (DERP). DERP activity will continue however this will be embedded in business as usual through English Dental Deans and the Long Term Workforce Plan.

Dental Foundation Training (DFT)

Progression of 22/23 Cohort

Trainee progression has returned to pre-pandemic levels with a small number of extensions or those leaving programme

	Satisfactory completion	Extension	Left programme/not assessed
HEIW	65	1	0
NES	146	1	1
NHSE	639	11	5
NIMTDA	28	2	0

Recruitment of 23/24 Cohort

2023/24 Cohort 99% fill rate 7 vacant posts (3 South West, 2 KSS and 3 East of England)

Recruitment to 24/25 DFT Cohort

Applications for DFT recruitment (England, Wales and N. Ireland) for 23/24 closed on 14th September 2023. The situational judgement test being undertaken in November 2023.

NHS Education for Scotland operates a separate exercise for recruitment to posts in Scotland. Full details can be accessed via <https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/lphcwyo1/dvt-booklet-2023.pdf>

Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) offers a limited number of incentivised local recruitment DFT posts through the Welsh Enhanced Recruitment Offer (WERO) further details

available here: [Dental foundation training Welsh enhanced recruitment offer \(DFT WERO\) - HEIW \(nhs.wales\)](#)

Preferencing for schemes opens on 24th April and closes on 19th May 2023. Initial offers will be earlier this year 1st June 2023 to allow applicants more time to make arrangements for their new post. As usual the start date will be 1st September 2023. Dental Schools Council will confirm graduate names for DFT schemes on 9th June allowing offers to be finalised on 13th June. Therefore, regions will have the details of the vast majority of trainees confirmed by 13th June.

It has been agreed that Preference Informed Allocation is unlikely to be introduced before 2025. Engagement will begin in Spring 2024 when recruitment team capacity allows.

It is anticipated that there will be an increased number of dental graduates in 2025 and 2026 due to COVID impact on A level results. Work is ongoing to ensure there will be sufficient foundation training posts.

The COPDEND Dental Foundation Training Advisory Group (DFTAG) have released the Education Transition Survey for Educational Supervisors complete. The survey provides an opportunity to capture and understand the trainer view on the readiness for practice for UK dental graduates. This is the 3rd year the survey will be running nationally. All results are confidential, overall results are anonymized and shared with both the Dental School Council and the General Dental Council.

DFTAG are currently undertaking a 'deep dive' into foundation training, focusing on the following areas:

- How dental foundation can provide specific support for non-UK graduates.
- Value for money.
- Value of foundation training in terms of patient safety.
- How training maybe provided differently.

Dental Core Training (DCT)

The COPDEND Dental Core Training Advisory Group (DCTAG) has a new Chair Mike Foster, Postgraduate Dental Dean for the Midlands. The Chair of DCTAG was handed over from Kirstie Moons (Wales)/David Felix (Scotland) on the 3rd of July 2023. Many thanks to Kirstie and David for their sterling work over the last 12 months. DCTAG continues to meet on a quarterly basis with the last meeting being on the 3rd of October 2023.

Progression

	Satisfactory completion	Extension	Left programme/not assessed
HEIW	48	0	1
NES	60	0	2
NHSE	484	4	8
NIMTDA	12	0	2

Recruitment

Recruitment rates for DCT posts for the 23/24 have fallen. Of the 693 posts in recruitment 79% were filled and in some regions the fill rate was only 50%, although in London KSS it was 100%. There was subsequently a higher number of temporary GDC registrants appointed this year.

1049 applicants sat the SJT, 986 attended the interview and 944 were deemed appointable for 693 posts.

Fill Rates	DCT 1	DCT 2	DCT 3
	80%	78%	78%

The Dental Core Training Advisory Group will be reviewing the current DCT posts across the UK considering the reduced fill rates across the UK. Trainee feedback shows a wide variety of posts with some of them not reflecting the needs of the host unit or the clinical opportunities sought by prospective trainees. Informal feedback to COPDEND from Dental Core Trainees indicates the reason for this may relate to;

- Overnight on call can be disincentive and this is especially the case after DCT 1
- Geography is important to the applicants.
- Posts in OMFS are less likely to fill compared to other specialties. The low fill rate leads to gaps in the on-call rota and this impacts on the experience of the DCT's in post.

Thus, a full review is being carried out to look at all post descriptors across the UK to determine if they reflect the actual components of the post and what opportunities there might be add in other specialties or rotations to increase the appeal of a post.

COPDEND recognise there is an increasing need to consider alternative ways of supporting OMFS units to cover on call, including models such as working alongside Foundation Medical trainees. Trusts continue to be engaged and asked to consider ways of reducing overnight on call for DCT.

The requirements and locations of DCT posts are changing both from a unit and applicant perspective which means that posts will need to continue to adapt to the modern iGen trainee who wants different outcomes compared to trainees of only a few years ago. DCTAG's mission is to strive to make DCT relevant and desirable to new dentists who want to enhance their capabilities to benefit their future careers.

Promotion of DCT posts

It is widely recognised that many undergraduates and foundation dentists have a limited understanding of what DCT is, the opportunities it offers and how to apply for a post. A series of career days are being planned across all dental schools plus the opportunity for undergraduates and foundation dentists to shadow a DCT trainee for a day to enable them to gain an insight into these rewarding posts.

Dental Specialty Training (ST)Progression

	Satisfactory progress	Extension/Targeted training	Satisfactory completion	Left programme/not assessed
HEIW	15	0	4	0
NES	41	2	3	2
NHSE	267	35	52	19
NIMTDA	3	0	2	0

NHSE Recruitment 2023

Specialty	Level	Posts	Full Accepts	Fill Rate %
Dental and Maxillofacial Radiology	ST1	2	1	50.00
Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology	ST1	1	0	0.00
Oral Medicine	ST1	5	5	100.00
Oral Surgery	ST1	12	12	100.00
Orthodontics	ST1	30	30	100.00
Orthodontics	ST4	25	7	28.00
Paediatric Dentistry	ST1	19	19	100.00
Paediatric Dentistry	ST4	6	4	66.67
Public Health Dental	ST1	3	1	33.33
Restorative Dentistry	ST1	12	10	83.33
Special Care Dentistry	ST1	11	9	81.82
		126	98	

Continued poor fill rate at ST4 level in orthodontics (especially poor this year) and paediatric dentistry. Run through posts will be encouraged by COPDEND as recent analysis has showed they are successful in keeping trainees in training through ST4 posts.

Recognised that issue with pipeline for Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology and Dental and Maxillofacial Radiology. This is being discussed by DCTAG and DSTAG to find potential solutions.

Unusually there were unfilled posts in Restorative Dentistry (posts in London – 1 Restorative Dentistry and 1 Endodontics) and Special Care Dentistry (1 in East of England and 1 in South West)

There were an additional 19 Dental Specialty posts in England for a Sept 2023 start (2 were not filled)

Region	Number additional of posts	Dental Specialty
North East	3	Paediatric Special Care Oral Surgery
Yorkshire & Humber	0	
North West	3	Special Care

		Paediatric Endodontics
London	0	
KSS	2	Oral Surgery Endodontics - did not fill
Midlands	3	Special Care 2 Oral Surgery
East of England	3	2 Special care - 1 did not fill Oral Surgery
South West	4	Paediatric Special Care Oral Surgery Prosthodontics)
Thames Valley Wessex	1	Oral Surgery

HEIW DST local recruitment

- 3 Special Care Dentistry
- 2 Oral Surgery (currently being recruited into)
- 4 Cardiff University (academic posts x 4: DPH, Oral Med, Ortho & Oral Microbiology will be recruited in January 2024)

NES

- 1 Oral Surgery - West (Academic)
- 3 Orthodontics -1 East, 1 SE and 1 West
- 3 Paediatric Dentistry - 1 South East, 2 West
- 2 Restorative Dentistry - 1 East (Academic) and 1 West
- 1 Special Care Dentistry
- 2 Orthodontics Post CCST - posts not recruited to

NIMDTA

- ST4 orthodontics - 2 posts to be recruited later this year.

Dental Specialty Training Advisory Group update

DSTAG's priorities focus around.

- Introduction of new curricula
- Transition arrangements
- Delivery and assessment of generic component (section C) of the new curricula
- Developing SOP for National/Standardised RCP process

National Certificate of Dental Core Training by Equivalence

This process opens to applicants once a year and concludes in advance of the opening of recruitment into specialty training posts. In the most recent round concluding in October 23 there were 44 applications submitted. Four of these were reapplications. On completion of the appeal process 36 applicants were awarded a Certificate for Dental Core Training equivalence. Two of the 36 successful were re-applicants.

Dental Workforce Development Advisory Group (DWD)

This national advisory group has been chaired by John Darby for the past few years and has recently been handed over to Malcolm Brady. The advisory group thanked John for his hard work and leadership throughout his tenure, especially guiding DWD through the Covid years when workforce development was completely reorganised almost overnight.

DWD has always been focussed on the dental team and offering opportunities to all registrants and practice members. The advisory group has members representing most registrant groups. Sharing best practice and successful regional pilots in a national forum has been a very productive way to improve the range and quality of workforce upskilling.

The group is working on some national educational offers that can make the delivery of certain topics more efficient and cost effective. There are national agreements in place around speaker fees and delegate costs.

The group is working to clarify what NHS online education is available and to provide easier access for dental registrants to those courses and resources.

Other recent subjects include level 2 training and review of commissioning, the possibility of a National Dental Course Booking System, procurement of speakers and training to support new models for commissioning.

The DWDAG is also closely involved in a blended approach to national course delivery which will provide innovative and flexible ways of learning for post-Covid dental workforce transformation.

Update on Dental Team Advisory Group

A new advisory group is being established to advise COPDEND on the strategic and operational aspects of Dental Team training matters (across all GDC registrant roles of the team) and to support the work of COPDEND. It will be called the Dental Team Advisory Group (DTAG) and will be jointly chaired by Kirstie Moons and John Darby.

Representatives across all DCP groups will be invited to join, initially each deanery will be invited to nominate two colleagues, one of which should be a Dental Therapy Foundation Training representative.

It will provide a forum for Dental Therapy Foundation Training TPDs and Dental Team Educators/Regional Advisors (or equivalent) to share ideas, discuss innovation and best practice, and develop proposals for new ways of working in the interests of training and improved patient care and development of a multi-professional workforce. In conjunction with Postgraduate Dental Deans and Directors, it will contribute to discussions regarding education and training issues relevant to the transition from undergraduate to postgraduate training for dental team members. It will also help develop mechanisms and contribute to effective communication within Dental Team Training programmes locally and nationally and consider mechanisms for improving communication with the wide range of dental team stakeholders.

Dental Apprenticeship Update

The increased interest in apprenticeships is now putting them at the heart of growing the knowledge and skills for all members of the dental team.

The level 3 dental nurse apprenticeship is moving forward as the qualification of choice for most employers. Sadly, there has been a reduction in the number of apprentices undertaking this apprenticeship which is due to low levels of recruitment into the dental nurse profession.

To give better defined routes of progression for dental nurses, three level 4 apprenticeships are now in delivery with growing interest and providers.

- Oral health practitioner – designed to give a better trained workforce to meet the needs of “flexible commissioning” in being able to give both oral and systemic health messages to a wide range of audiences and carry out practice based oral health preventive measures; it is also designed to widen access to dental hygienist training (see below)
- Orthodontic therapist – carry out some direct orthodontic procedures working to the direction of a dentist, normally an orthodontic specialist.
- Dental Practice Manager – as the legislative and management aspects of running a dental practice grow this apprenticeship is designed to meet that need for a better trained workforce in this area.

For dental technicians, the level 3 laboratory technician apprenticeship has just been introduced, as a way of widening participation into the dental technician profession. This allows them to gain both practical skills and widening their scientific knowledge to go onto the level 5 dental technician apprenticeship, which on completion, they can enter the General Dental Council Register as a dental technician. In addition, an apprenticeship for Clinical Dental Technicians has been approved, but is not yet in delivery.

In the final stages of development is a level 5 dental hygienist apprenticeship. This will be designed to widen the scope of individuals accepted into training, much broader than the current UCAS system permits. This helps to widen participation, by not insisting on A level entry, rather a range of modern qualifications, such as the Oral Health Practitioner apprenticeship. It is envisaged that this apprenticeship will be delivered by a blended approach making the best use technology for the delivery of the theoretical components, i.e. central delivery the program, with apprentices at a range of sites across England, at which they carry out the clinical patient activity. This has the benefit of helping to support local dental access, and help retain individuals in their local area, aiding recruitment, and retention.

The level 6 Enhanced Clinical Practitioner, which is a generic apprenticeship, will be used as a framework for dental technicians to acquire skills in digital dentistry and for dental hygienists to undertake the skills of a dental therapist.

Modern Apprenticeship in Dental Nursing

A new interactive e-learning module has been developed for apprentices and their workplace supervisors:

[Module - Introduction to Modern Apprenticeship in Dental Nursing | Turas | Learn \(nhs.scot\).](#)

The module aims to inform and guide the essential preparation for the modern apprenticeship programme towards ensuring a positive and successful learning experience.

Scottish Dental Clinical Effectiveness Programme

Updating of Prevention and Treatment of Periodontal Diseases in Primary Care guidance is ongoing. Consultation and peer review took place during the summer. The feedback was generally positive and constructive, with suggestions, mainly to improve clarity. The guidance development group have since met and agreed amendments required prior to publication. The guidance includes a number of supporting tools.

Dental Education Reform Programme (England Only)

Early Years

The Early Years programme encompasses undertaking post-graduate Dental Training via a two-year longitudinal programme across Dental Foundation Training and Dental Core Training Year 1. A variety of different models of Early Years programme are now currently in place across England. They aim to provide broad-based training in secondary settings and primary Dental Care Services, enabling wider experience of managing complex care for more trainees and development of relevant transferable skills for their future career. This training pathway intends to broaden the experience of postgraduate dentists in training and support their career progression.

Work is in progress on development of an Early Years training curriculum which aims to provide a flexible curriculum that can incorporate both the competencies required for a 'standalone' 12-month foundation training programme as well as a 24-month programme. The curriculum will need to consider the competencies that can be met in different settings and contexts, as well as the different models of Early Years programmes currently running across the country.

A stocktake survey of community dental service providers has been completed which has allowed a better understanding of the landscape and potential future training opportunities.

Middle Years

With the early years programme now up and running in all regions, the next element of the Dental Education Reform Programme – Middle Years – is now being developed. Middle Years is a run through programme based on DCT years 2 and 3. The aim is to broaden postgraduate training by providing the opportunity for additional experience in the management and treatment of dentally and medically compromised children and adults. This is done by a flexible programme incorporating a variety of specialist rotations that can be carried out in 4, 6 or 8-month blocks but with additional time in other clinics to widen exposure to different types of patients. These types of posts will enhance the capabilities of clinicians before they return to primary care, contribute to recognition as a Level 2 practitioner or enable an individual to progress into specialist training.

Distribution of Training Posts

Four Task and Finish groups have looked at the distribution of DFT, Special Care Dentistry, Oral Surgery and Paediatric Dentistry. Their recommendations will be agreed in the near future and deaneries will work with ICBs and local providers to ensure more appropriate distribution of posts to meet population oral health need. This will include consideration of the anticipated increase in graduates following expansion of numbers due to the impact of Covid-19.

Long Term Workforce Plan (NHSE)

The LTWP was published in June 2023 providing a 15-year strategic direction for the long term, focused on three priority areas; Train, Retain and Reform. The Plan demonstrates a significant increase in education and training through both traditional routes and alternative routes such as apprenticeships, to continue to make progress on widening access to health careers. It considers how people can be better supported throughout their careers with greater flexibility and improving NHS culture and has a focus on reforming education and training to support building teams with a greater flexibility of skills, utilising technology and providing effective patient care.

The specific dental actions include:

- Increase training places for dental therapy and hygiene professionals to more than 500 by 2031/32
- Increase training places for dentists by 40% to more than 1,100 by 2031/32 Consulting on a tie-in or retention initiatives for new graduates to NHS practice
- Work with dental practices and other stakeholders to support the wider dental workforce
- Opportunities to support the professional development of dentists and dental care professional
- Development of a return to therapy programme for dental therapists

We await the publication on the Dental Recovery Plan to inform the broader dental landscape.

List of Postgraduate Dental Deans

Region/ Nation	Name	e-mail
Northern Ireland	Brid Hendron (COPDEND Vice Chair)	brid.hendron@hscni.net
Scotland	David Felix	david.felix@nhs.scot
Wales	Kirstie Moons	kirstie.moons@wales.nhs.uk
Defence	Neil MacBeth	neil.macbeth935@mod.gov.uk
East of England	Malcolm Brady	malcolm.brady1@nhs.net
London & Kent, Surry, Sussex	Sana Movahedi	s.movahedi@nhs.net
Midlands	Mike Foster	mike.foster5@nhs.net
North East	Ben Wild	benjamin.wild@nhs.net
North West	Donna Holden	donna.holden3@nhs.net
South West	Jane Luker (COPDEND Chair)	jane.luker@nhs.net
Thames Valley & Wessex	John Darby	john.darby7@nhs.net
Yorkshire & Humber	James Spencer (COPDEND Vice Chair)	james.spencer11@nhs.net

Lead Deans for workstreams

Responsibilities	COPDEND Representative/Lead Dean
SAC Lead Dean - Additional Dental Specialties	Brid Hendron
SAC Lead Dean - Dental Public Health	Kirstie Moons
SAC Lead Dean - Oral Surgery	Mike Foster
SAC Lead Dean - Orthodontics	David Felix
SAC Lead Dean - Paediatric Dentistry	Donna Holden
SAC Lead Dean - Restorative Specialties	David Felix
SAC Lead Dean - Special Care Dentistry	James Spencer
Lead Dean Dental Team Advisory Group	Kirstie Moons and John Darby
Lead Dean - Dental Foundation Training	Sana Movahedi
Lead Dean - Dental Core Training	Mike Foster
Lead Dean - Dental Specialty Training	James Spencer
Lead Dean - Academic Training	Jane Luker
Lead Dean - Workforce Development	Malcolm Brady
National Certificate of Dental Core Equivalence (NCDCE)	Brid Hendron