



COPDEND Newsletter Autumn 2024

Welcome to our Autumn newsletter for stakeholders. I am pleased to announce that following COPDEND elections, James Spencer, Dental Dean NHSE WT&E Yorkshire & Humber will be taking over as Chair of COPDEND from January 2025, with Kirstie Moons, Postgraduate Dental Dean for Wales, joining Brid Hendron, Postgraduate Dental Dean for Northern Ireland, as vice chairs. We will update you as to any changes in lead dean roles in our Spring newsletter.

Dental Foundation Training (DFT) & Dental Vocational Training (DVT)

Of the 915 posts in National Recruitment 914 have been accepted, All UK graduates who applied for Dental Foundation Training who preferenced schemes were offered posts. 5 UK graduates either preferenced themselves out of recruitment or did not preference, some of these were medical graduates taking up core surgical training posts.

Progression of DFT / VT 23/24 cohort

Outcome		1	3	4	6
HEIW	DFT	0	0	0	66
NES	VT	0	2	0	146
NHSE	DFT	0	18	9	739
	JDFCT	36	0	1	39
NIMDTA	DFT	0	1	0	28

Recruitment for DFT 25/26

Applications opened on 6th August 2024 and closed on 3rd September 2024. The recruitment process will be the same as 23/24 with applicants sitting a Situational Judgment Test (SJT) only, which will be held between 7th and 19th of November. Link to webinar can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uR2NZnIX8Dk>

September 2024 has also seen the launch of the Early Years Curriculum and accompanying portfolio which is being piloted in 5 regions (South West England, Yorkshire & the Humber, North East and North West England as well as London & KSS). A full evaluation of the pilot will be undertaken over the next 12 months with the aim of rolling out the new curriculum to all regions for September 2025 start.

The recruitment timeline and applicant guide for the September 2025 intake of Dental Foundation can be found here: <https://dental.hee.nhs.uk/dental-trainee-recruitment/dental-foundation-training/applicant-guide/recruitment-timeline>

The Dental Foundation Training Advisory Group (DFTAG) are currently working on a number of key areas. This includes planning for an increased number of training posts for September 2025 and 2026, review of educational supervisor and training site criteria and processes, remediation processes, as well as analysis of a comprehensive survey of educational supervisor and trainee feedback. DFTAG have also worked closely with British Endodontic Society members and specifically undergraduate dental school endodontic leads to produce a comprehensive programme of free webinars on endodontic updates for all dental foundation educational supervisors.

DFTAG now also includes leads who oversee dental foundation therapy, with regular updates from foundation therapy. A total of 97 foundation therapy posts were recruited to and started training in September 2024 across the UK.

Dental Core Training (DCT)

Recruitment to Dental Core Training - 24/25 Cohort

Level	2023	2024
DCT 1	86.2%	87.6%
DCT 2	78%	78.9 %
DCT 3	74.7%	79.5%

DCT Recruitment for 2024 was buoyant with an overall above average rate of applications for posts across the UK. The application numbers were particularly high from overseas dentists with an increase of over 1000 additional applications for DCT 1 posts. These applications came from many countries but particularly from the Sudan where numbers increased from 8 in 2023 to 848 in 2024. It is testament to the hard work of the recruiting team that the majority of applicants were assessed via the situational judgement test and progressed through to interview with over 1500 applicants being interviewed by dental educators from across the UK. The application pathway is currently being reviewed to enable the national recruitment office to be able to deal with such high numbers of applicants.

The DCT Advisory Group has undertaken a ground-up review of all DCT training posts to tackle the issues of job descriptions and post fill rates vs trainee satisfaction. It is clear that the reasons behind fill rates and trainee satisfaction are multi factorial with factors such as locations, out of hours duties, specialty rotations and run through programmes all playing their part but the relevance of each varies across all regions. All NHSE regions are now rolling out versions of early and middle years programmes to incorporate run through 2-year versions of DFT and DCT training. Much work has also been undertaken with the GDC in connection with the initial application and supervision requirements for temporary registrants undertaking local service duties in place of DCT posts. The standardisation and improved processing of applications has increased the speed of processing and enabled overseas dentists to start in posts much earlier than in previous years. It is hoped that more trusts will now be able to offer flexibility in their DCT posts allowing more posts to be considered for overseas dentists in the future.

Progression data for 23/24 DCT Cohort

Outcome	1	3	4
HEIW	44	2	1
NES	71	1	1
NHSE	425	5	3
NIMDTA	15	0	0

Dental Specialty Training (DST)

2024 Dental recruitment update

National Recruitment: All ST1 specialty recruitment continue to use the generic self-assessment. Most specialties have seen an increase in applications this year apart from Dental Public Health, Paediatric Dentistry ST1, Special Care Dentistry ST1 and Orthodontics ST4.

DST Recruitment Numbers 2024 as at 30/7/24

NR fill rates

Specialty/ Programme	Level	Apps submitted 2021	Apps submitted 2022	Apps submitted 2023	Apps submitted 2024	Difference (23/24)	Posts (max)
Dental Public Health	ST1	31	17	12	10	↓ 17%	2
Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology	ST1	8	12	11	13	↑ 18%	1
Oral Medicine	ST1	24	28	25	40	↑ 60%	3
Oral Surgery	ST1	150	124	108	115	↑ 6%	19
Orthodontics	ST1	143	126	118	126	↑ 7%	48
Orthodontics	ST4	30	26	22	21	↓ -5%	26
Paediatric Dentistry	ST1	79	60	64	56	↓ -13%	11
Paediatric Dentistry	ST4	9	13	7	12	↑ 71%	8
Restorative Dentistry	ST1	80	58	48	49	↑ 2%	12
Special Care Dentistry	ST1	43	29	30	27	↓ -10%	18
Dental Maxillofacial Radiology	ST1	18	16	9	24	↑ 266%	1

DST Recruitment Numbers 2024 as at 30/7/24

Specialty	Level	HEIW	NHSE	NIMDTA	NES	Total
Dental and Maxillo-facial Radiology	ST1	0	2	0	0	2
Dental Public Health	ST1	0	2	0	0	2
Oral Medicine	ST1	1	2	0	1	4
Oral Surgery	ST1	0	16	1	0	17
Orthodontics	ST1	4	37	0	2	43
Orthodontics	ST4	1	11	0	0	12
Paediatric Dentistry	ST1	3	15	0	1	19
Paediatric Dentistry	ST4	0	7	0	1	8
Restorative Dentistry	ST1	1	11	1	2	15
Special Care Dentistry	ST1	1	8	0	1	10
Total		11	113	2	6	132 (112 ST1)

Local recruitment for:

NES – RD, SCD. Paeds ST1 and 4, and OM inc academic posts
HEIW – OM, Ortho ST4, Paeds, SCD, RD and ortho Academic

NR fill rates

Specialty	Level	Posts	Accepted	Fill Rate
Dental and Maxillo-facial Radiology	ST1	2	2	100.00
Dental Public Health	ST1	2	2	100.00
Oral Medicine	ST1	3	2	66.67
Oral Surgery	ST1	17	17	100.00
Orthodontics	ST1	42	42	100.00
Orthodontics	ST4	21	11	52.38
Paediatric Dentistry	ST1	15	15	100.00
Paediatric Dentistry	ST4	9	7	77.78
Restorative Dentistry	ST1	12	12	100.00
Special Care Dentistry	ST1	15	8	53.33

Numbers of posts in National recruitment 2020-2024

Expansion of ST posts through NHSE's Dental Education Reform Programme (DERP) has progressed well, with the focus on Paediatric dentistry, Special Care Oral Surgery and Restorative dentistry, as can be seen in the table below with 66 posts recruited in 2020 compared to 112 in 2024.

Specialty	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Dental and Maxillo-facial Radiology	1	1	1	2	2
Dental Public Health	1	4	3	3	2
Oral Medicine	1	2	1	5	4

Oral Surgery	9	13	14	12	17
Orthodontics	31	16	33	30	43
Paediatric Dentistry	10	14	11	9	19
Restorative Dentistry	8	4	4	12	15
Special Care Dentistry	3	15	8	11	10
Total	66	70	79	95	112

DST Curriculum Update

The 3 Faculties of Dental Surgery (RCS England, Edinburgh and RCSP Glasgow) have agreed to run tripartite examinations for all dental specialties from 2026, FDS RCS of Ireland will also be involved. This is a big step forward resulting in one standard for summative assessment. The colleges will also be considering open access to examinations which would be welcome would support applications from SAS dentists wishing to apply to the GDC for specialist list applications by assessment.

IDT process

With a steady increase in IDT applications, it has been decided that COPDEND will introduce a national IDT process. Applications will be considered in three windows throughout the year with a panel comprising of 3 postgraduate dental deans and the chair of COPDEND Business Managers group with the aim of bringing greater consistency to the decision-making process. The categories of those eligible will remain unchanged.

RCP process

Following the piloting of national and supra-regional RCP panels in NHSE there has been an increase in these arrangements across the deaneries and the different dental specialties. This is a reflection of their utility, allowing greater consistency and efficiency in faculty/administration burden. An SOP has been developed to ensure that processes and responsibilities across deaneries are consistently applied.

National Certificate of Dental Core Training by Equivalence

In 2024, 71 number of applications were received for DCT2 equivalence. These will be reviewed by Panels convened for this purpose in September 24. Appeals are scheduled for October and will complete in time for specialty recruitment applications.

Introduction of an additional equivalence route for DCT1

It has been agreed that the same NCDCE model will be used to facilitate an equivalence route for DCT1. Applications for this DCT1 equivalence will be accepted for the first time in August 2025.

Please note that from 2025 onwards, the NCDCE DCT1 equivalence certificate will be essential for applications to DCT2 posts for those who have not completed a DCT1 post.

COPDEND values your efforts to ensure that individuals intending to apply for DCT2 (who have not completed a DCT1 post), are aware they will need to apply for equivalence in the stand-alone application timeframe period in August 2025. Applications can only be accepted once a year within this timeframe.

Additional Information will be available on both processes (DCT1 and DCT2 equivalence) on the NHS Scotland website: [Dental DCT Equivalence \(NCDCE\) | NHS Education for Scotland](#), which will outline a detailed timeline of information

In 2023 NCDCE certificates were awarded to thirty-five applications.

- Ten of those awarded progressed successfully through the interview process for specialty or academic posts.
- Four of these ultimately received offers for specialty or academic posts.
- There have been no significant issues with the process to date.

Dental Workforce Development Advisory Group (DWDAG)

DWDAG is a national group with representatives from all nations and regions. It includes representatives from most GDC register groups. The advisory group meets on a monthly basis to discuss workforce issues and share best practice and regional priorities. There are also task and finish sub-groups focussing on the following objectives:

COPDEND Educators Conference

A national conference is planned to take place on 17th October for all COPDEND Educators. The morning will be focussed on non-technical aspects of dental training, introducing a new taxonomy for non-technical skills and how that can be used for appraising and rating non-technical skills, also explaining its relevance to the new generic specialty curriculum and the GDC safe beginner.

The afternoon will comprise of workshops on the new Early Years curriculum, the generic aspects of the new specialty curricula, and a primary care workshop for the dental team.

Speaker Fee review (England only)

The recommended speaker fee guidance has been reviewed and aligned with the travel and subsistence policy for NHSE and BDA Guild Rate. This guidance allows some flexibility for individual projects using the discretion of the regional Dean.

Course booking system (England only)

The NHSE discovery and tender process has suggested that a purpose-built Course Management System that meets the particular needs of dental education is the most appropriate answer. The procurement process will continue with the detailed knowledge gained through this discovery process.

e-Learning for Health

Work continues to catalogue the dental resources available on this platform and to improve the certification mapping to comply with GDC CPD requirements.

Dental Team Advisory Group

On behalf of COPDEND the Dental Team Advisory Group (DTAG) endeavors to develop consistent standards of practice and procedures across Dental Team Training programmes, recognising that overall accountability for the quality of many Dental Team programmes may rest with HEIs and awarding bodies with differing levels of regulatory oversight.

The second meeting of the Dental Team Advisory group took place in June 2024 and was well attended with representatives from all regions in the UK. The group discussed key challenges

and priorities and finalised the Terms of Reference. The group recognised the different challenges across all the training routes for the wider dental team roles and the complexity of these.

Some of the key areas that DTAG discussed were:

- **Overseas dentists** working as dental hygienists and therapists requiring additional support. Some deaneries are running courses similar to the DTFT schemes to support the overseas graduates who have been admitted to the register. This is recognised as an important activity as 1,542 overseas dentists are registered as Dental Hygienists or Dental Therapists.
- **Dental Nurse Training.** This continues to be recognised as a significant problem and many regions hold forums with a view to supporting dental nurses and ensuring that they are aware of the various career opportunities, and how they may access these opportunities. The apprenticeship pathways are seen as key to this. Some areas are reporting new training providers are becoming involved in delivering the apprenticeship.
- **Apprenticeships.** The Dental Hygienist apprenticeship has now been agreed to by IFATE and discussions are now taking place with potential providers. The ongoing funding sources will have to be secured to ensure progress. The dental Trailblazer group has been meeting to discuss the changes that may be needed to accommodate the revised GDC learning outcomes. It is important not to forget the availability of the Dental Practice Manager apprenticeship which often provides valuable career progression opportunities to dental nurses, as does the newly created Oral Health Practitioner. A presentation is scheduled to be made at the Dental Educators Conference in October.
- **DT & CDT roles and career pathways** – A CDT preceptorship has been discussed at English Dental Deans. It is anticipated that access to this will be made at a national level as each region is unlikely to have sufficient applicants for a local scheme. There is interest in Dental Technician training, possibly through apprenticeship pathways. Interest in the more technical nature of technician skillset using digital skills is hoped to attract a younger generation to the profession.

Changes to Human Medicines Regulations: Exemptions

Following the passing of the amendment to the Human Medicines Regulations (HMR) by Parliament in June 2024, Dental Therapists and Dental Hygienists will be able to supply and administer a limited number of medicines commensurate with their scope of practice. A task and finish group involving broad representation the DHSC, NHSE, OCDO, regulators and professional organisations agreed a curriculum which supplements the existing GDC undergraduate learning outcomes to cover the obligations and responsibilities specific to HMR Exemptions.

COPDEND have been actively involved in the process of agreeing the curriculum and subsequent oversight of national training webinars for those working within the NHS across the four nations.

NHSE WTE have commissioned an e-learning module which, currently in development and planned to go live in November. This will be free to access for those working in the NHS across the 4 nations and is designed to provide the knowledge and skills required to implement HMR Exemptions in practice, both as a clinician and as a practice owner.

An NHSE webinar to explain HMR Exemptions is planned in the near future with further details of how to register for the e-learning module due to be released as soon as they are finalised. Details of both will be released via NHS communication channels.

Wales has developed an e-learning package to support the HMR implications for the complimentary training to support Dental Therapists entering their full scope of practice (see below under HEIW update). A similar package has been commissioned in England.

Individual nation updates

Scotland

- David Felix Postgraduate Dental Dean/Director of Dentistry in NHS Education for Scotland (NES) will retire at the end of the current financial year. Lee Savarrio has been appointed as his successor. He is currently the Chief of Dentistry for NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde as well as a Consultant in Restorative Dentistry at Glasgow Dental Hospital and School. It is anticipated that he will join NES in early 2025.
- Following a consultation exercise with key stakeholders NHS Education for Scotland (NES) plans to move the start date for Dental Vocational Training programmes to the beginning of September. It is anticipated that this change will be implemented in 2025.
- Plans to re-introduce two-year longitudinal programmes encompassing Dental Vocational Training and year one of Dental Core Training
- NES will deliver training for a further cohort of general dental practitioners to enable them to be “accredited” as enhanced skills practitioners in domiciliary care.
- NES delivers pre-registration dental nurse training using a modern apprenticeship model. Funding is available for up to 75 places. Recruitment in 2024 remains buoyant with over 120 applications submitted within four days. Responding to demand we have increased the number of places to 94.
- The Scottish Dental Clinical Effectiveness Programme (SDCEP) celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. SDCEP was established as part of Scotland’s Dental Action Plan funding within NHS Education for Scotland in 2004 under the direction of Prof. Jan Clarkson and with Dr Doug Stirling leading guidance development. It is a well-regarded source of user-friendly, evidence-based clinical guidance. Evolving a rigorous methodology has been crucial to SDCEP’s success in providing resources that are both evidence-informed and user-friendly. In 2016, SDCEP became the only dental organisation to gain National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) accreditation for its guidance development process, which signifies quality and reliability. Use of SDCEP products is not restricted to Scotland, having become recognised as a valuable resource throughout the UK and beyond and used extensively in undergraduate and postgraduate education and adopted in numerous other countries. Going forward, SDCEP has moved to delivering its guidance online, enabling users to access the most up-to-date information. With heightened concerns about the climate crisis, SDCEP now highlights how following guidance recommendations can help practices reduce the environmental impact of oral healthcare. Fundamental to achieving NICE accreditation has been the contribution of SDCEP’s partner programme Translation Research in a Dental Setting (TRiADS). Through the work of TRiADS, stakeholder views, current practice and potential barriers to implementation of guidance recommendations are identified and guidance implementation evaluated.
- SDCEP is currently working with NICE regarding implementation of oral health recommendations within their clinical guideline 64 (Prophylaxis against infective endocarditis).

Wales

- Locally recruited DFT places increased for 2024 entry via WERO campaign [Dental foundation training Welsh enhanced recruitment offer \(DFT WERO\) - HEIW \(nhs.wales\)](#)
- The Dental Train, Work, Live attraction campaign continues to be developed - [Dental | Train Work Live | Wales](#)
- The Dental Strategic Workforce Plan was launched in May alongside the Primary Care Strategic Workforce Plan. [Strategic dental workforce plan - HEIW \(nhs.wales\)](#)
- An all-Wales Dentists with Enhanced Skills accreditation scheme has been developed with partners for Oral Surgery and Paediatric Dentistry - [Dentists with enhanced skills - HEIW \(nhs.wales\)](#)
- Commissioning of Dental Therapy undergraduate places will increase in 2024 and 2025 in both Cardiff and Bangor Universities.

Northern Ireland

DCT pay scales have been reviewed by the Department of Health in NI and these roles are now aligned to StR pay scales. These changes will come into effect for the new cohort starting in 2024-2025.

England

Dental Education Reform Programme

Early Years Curriculum and Portfolio

A new curriculum has been developed incorporating DFT and Dental Core training year 1, which will be piloted in volunteer regions in England this year together with a new portfolio.

- NHS England regional teams have agreed an overarching approach for 'Return to Dental Therapy'

Long Term Workforce Plan (NHSE)

The model for allocation of additional dental places, based on the medical model, is almost complete. 41 additional places will be required for September 2026.

Dental Apprenticeships

There continues to be an increased interest in apprenticeships. In England, the Long Term Workforce Plan identifies the increased need for training provision for several of the dental skill sets.

The Dental Hygienist Apprenticeship has now been formally agreed and published by IfATE. The funding band is the highest at £27,000 for the three-year level 6 (degree) However, that will not cover the cost of training as this is in the region of £24,000 per year. The education and funding team are working up a revised model of funding for certain clinical apprenticeships; it will be through this route that the additional funding will come, to making the delivery of this

apprenticeship viable. This should also apply to the “enhanced clinical practitioner” (dental therapist) apprenticeship.

All the dental apprenticeships that lead to GDC registration: namely, Dental Nurse, Orthodontic Therapist, Dental Technician, and Clinical Dental Technician; are being reviewed so that they align to the new GDC “Safe Practitioner Standard”. The first of these to go through this process is the dental nurse, which has now been published. It resulted in funding for dental nurse apprentice training providers being increased from £6,000 to £8,000. Recruitment into the dental nurse apprenticeship is slowing down, for two reasons, lack of attainment in maths and English (although free training is available to take them to the level 2 standard) and employers being unwilling to release dental nurses to undertake the training.

UCLAN are actively reviewing the delivery of the Clinical Dental Technician apprenticeship which starts in the summer of 2025.

The steady expansion of the OHP (Oral Health Practitioner) – designed to give a better trained workforce to meet the needs of “flexible commissioning”, this is being delivered at several colleges, and the interest is growing. It is recognised in some regions that this role, when properly funded, can help address the need for a preventive focus on many of the systemic diseases associated with poor oral health.

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(Vice Chair from January 25)	kirstie.moons@wales.nhs.uk
Defence	Charlotte Winship	charlotte.winship100@mod.gov.uk
East of England	Malcolm Brady	malcolm.brady1@nhs.net
London & Kent, Surrey, 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 until January 25)	jane.luker@nhs.net
Thames Valley & Wessex	John Darby	john.darby7@nhs.net
Yorkshire & Humber	James Spencer (COPDEND Vice Chair Chair from Jan 25)	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	Malcolm Brady
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