

Dental Strategic Workforce Plan

2024/25-2029/30



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Executive Summary

The Dental Strategic Workforce Plan ([DSWP](#)) has been developed to address the significant workforce challenges within primary dental care in Wales. It sits as a companion piece to the Strategic Workforce Plan for Primary Care ([SWPPC](#)).¹ The plan has evolved following an extensive review of literature, analysing the available workforce intelligence, and consulting with key stakeholders.

As this is a companion plan, many of the actions in the [SWPPC](#) include dental services. In addition, there are 6 actions that are specific to the dental workforce.

A Healthier Wales, the current long-term plan for health and care, maps out the journey for the next 10 years in terms of system transformation, to meet the needs of the people of Wales.

The [DSWP](#) focuses on ensuring that the primary care dental workforce has the breadth of skills and competencies needed for the future delivery of oral health care.

The scope of the plan is primarily focussed on the General Dental Services ([GDS](#)). However, some of our recommendations will have an effect on all dental services across other sectors. Community Dental Services have a number of workforce commitments set out in a Welsh Health Circular² and work is in place in this respect.

The plan will be implemented over a five-year period starting in 2024/25. This will be delivered in partnership with the [SWPPC](#), working together with other organisations and Welsh Government. The work will be taken forward alongside the implementation of other workforce plans including profession-specific action plans that respond to regulatory changes and primary care contract reform.

The challenges in dentistry are multi-faceted and complex and while many relate to workforce this is not the only aspect.

This plan will aid the future planning of dental services and improve some of the existing workforce challenges while continuing to train the workforce for the future. It will require sustained work by all stakeholders across the system to improve the provision of dental services for the future.



Section 1: Purpose and Overview

1.1: Health Education and Improvement Wales

Health Education and Improvement (HEIW)³ is the strategic workforce and education body for NHS Wales. HEIW's unique contribution or "added value" is to:

- ❏ Address strategic workforce issues that require all Wales solutions, both demand and supply.
- ❏ Make Wales a great place for our health and care staff to be educated, trained and employed.
- ❏ Maximise the contribution of all professions and occupations.

1.2: Why do we need a plan?

There is significant system reform taking place in dentistry across all sectors of primary, secondary and community dental services, in parallel with work taking place in NHS dental contract reform.

Underpinning much of the reform is the need to attract, recruit, retain and remodel the workforce to support the changes. Alongside the reforms, there are reported workforce shortages impacting upon patient care. These will also need addressing to improve access for patients to timely dental care at a time of increasing demand.

The workforce challenges in dentistry have been emerging for some time, however the COVID 19 pandemic fully exposed many of these and the pressures in the system. The impact of the shortages on the remaining workforce is poor wellbeing, low morale, high stress and continued pressures.

The Dental Working Patterns (DWP) survey found that providing – performer dentists in Wales had the lowest percentage of morale⁴ compared to the rest of the UK.

This plan aligns with the Strategic Workforce Plan for Primary Care which contains actions for the whole primary care workforce that include the dental workforce. Both plans will operate synergistically to deliver the actions.

HEIW committed to develop a dental workforce plan to address some of these challenges and support the reforms and workforce pressures. This plan will aim to:

- ❏ Set out a workforce plan for the next five years up to 2030. It is a workforce plan designed to stabilise, renew and transform to build a sustainable workforce model fit for the 21st century.
- ❏ Understand current service needs together with the demand drivers to aid in identifying the factors that will shape dental services over the next 10 years.
- ❏ Identify the challenges and key supply-side issues across the range of dental professional roles and provide a framework for future supply pipelines.
- ❏ Develop clear actions to develop sustainable workforce models, to take forward the delivery of the Dental services recognising the nature of delivery across Wales that requires different solutions (for example, rural health).
- ❏ Underpin future decisions on education & training commissioning.

1.3: Development of the plan

The methodology adopted for the development of this plan aligns with the HEIW three pillar approach to the development of strategic workforce plans, based on the Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care.⁵



1.4: Governance

This plan has been developed by HEIW, in partnership with a project steering group consisting of representatives from HEIW, British Dental Association, NHS Dental Directors and Heads of Primary Care for Local Health Boards. The steering group members report back to their respective peer and network groups.

Welsh Government have provided direction and feedback through the Chief Dental Officer and the Dental Strategic Oversight Group.

1.5: Plan Scope

The strategic workforce plan has been developed in partnership with our stakeholders. As dental services are in all sectors with a range of professional roles it is impossible to address every aspect. There are clear system inter-dependencies and addressing workforce factors will have an effect across all sectors.

The plan is focussed on General Dental Services in Primary Care and the following roles:

- ❏ Dentist
- ❏ Dental Nurse
- ❏ Dental Hygienist
- ❏ Dental Therapist

1.6: Strategic and policy context

The General Dental Service (GDS) provides NHS general dentistry. These services are mainly provided by general dental practitioners (dentists) with support from other members of the dental team.

Practices are commissioned and contracted by Local Health Boards to provide NHS general dental care and treatment to patients. Practices often provide a mix of NHS and private treatment.

While COVID-19 had a severe impact on access to NHS dentistry, the Welsh Parliament Health and Social Care Committee acknowledge that there are long standing issues that existed prior to the pandemic.⁶

The dental workforce plan will need to:

- ❑ Support transformation, innovation, and promotion of a preventive focus in needs-led service delivery.
- ❑ Address inequality.
- ❑ Meet identified need and improve oral health.

There are also other areas that impact on the delivery of care, including the ongoing reform of the NHS dental contract. A complex set of challenges exist in dentistry. Oral health inequalities, in disease experience and in access to services exists across all age groups.

Common diseases of the mouth are almost entirely preventable and are unfairly impacting more on the lives of those in vulnerable groups and in communities with material deprivation.



Section 2: Key Findings

2.1: Horizon Scanning

As part of the development of this plan, we have used evidence-based material. These include:

- ❑ Published reviews, articles and reports
- ❑ Government enquiries
- ❑ Research
- ❑ Other material produced by a wide range of bodies (e.g. Professional bodies, think tanks, policy documents and academia)

These documents have been summarised and can be accessed here:

heiw.nhs.wales/workforce/strategic-dental-workforce-plan

2.2: Workforce Intelligence and Data

Workforce data is a huge challenge with very little data presently available on the dental workforce employed by independent contractors or the self-employed workforce.

The Senedd Health and Social Care Committee acknowledged there is no clear picture on the number of people currently waiting to see a dentist, which makes creating workforce models based on patient needs challenging.

There are limited sources of data and intelligence available, some elements of recent Quality Assurance System (QAS) survey can be found here (heiw.nhs.wales/workforce/strategic-dental-workforce-plan). However, this has limitations as it is self-reported only on an annual basis.

The Wales National Workforce Reporting System (WNWRS) for dental practices was launched in September, which will improve insight into the dental NHS workforce profile.

The General Dental Council have also committed to utilise the data they have on the dental profession more effectively to inform workforce planning.

2.3: Key Workforce Challenges

Recruitment and retention in General Dental Services is challenging. Responses from the QAS 2022 analysis indicates that almost a third of NHS practices had dentist vacancies, while over a quarter of practices had dental nurse vacancies.

Wales is a net importer of dentists and is therefore reliant on other dental schools both nationally and internationally in producing sufficient dentists for recruiting into the workforce.⁷

Consistent workforce shortages impact upon patient access, patient care and availability of services. The impact of the shortages on the remaining workforce is poor wellbeing, low morale, high stress and continued pressures limiting the ability to develop further.

A survey carried out by the British Dental Association, found that almost half of the respondents indicated that stress is exceeding their ability to cope. Almost a fifth also admitted to experiencing suicidal feelings.⁸

Contractual changes combined with wider economic pressures means that the delivery of NHS services is vulnerable in a mixed economy of provision, where there is an alternative option for practices to choose to focus on private practice.

In our engagement survey with the dental workforce, many commented on the NHS contract being a key factor in driving changes to the workforce.

2.4: Engagement and Consultation

The engagement phase on the development of this plan included:

- Formal meetings
- Presenting at key national events⁹
- Launch of the online campaign highlighting the development of the plan and inviting feedback on proposals¹⁰
- Following this, key actions were developed and tested with stakeholders via a survey that ran for one month between September and October 2023.

Stakeholder engagement and consultation survey

National and local events



Key messages from engagement survey

- GDS contract was a consistent theme in the engagement, with comments indicating the GDS contract is the key factor in driving workforce and system change.
- The lack of access to NHS benefits (non-Agenda for Change salary, pension scheme, Blue Light Card etc.) for staff employed by independent contractors is a challenge.
- Utilisation of effective skill mix across roles in the dental team is still inhibited through the employment models and remuneration systems in place.
- The largest negative response related to a proposal of the development of wider apprenticeships for all dental professionals.



Section 3: Vision and Key Actions

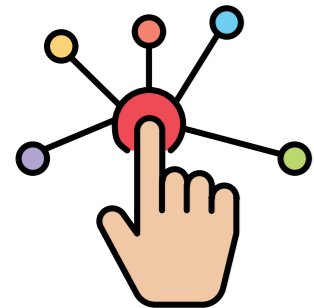
This section sets out the vision for the dental workforce of Wales over the lifespan of the plan. These are presented under the themes of the overarching Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care published in October 2020



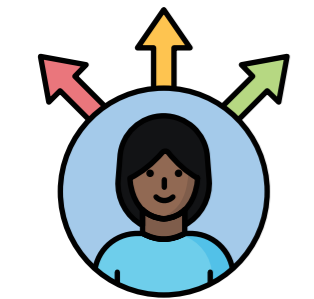
Dental teams that are optimised to work effectively together to address the needs of their local populations



People will be attracted to work in dental team roles and will have choice and flexibility to develop along their career pathway with access to high quality education and training



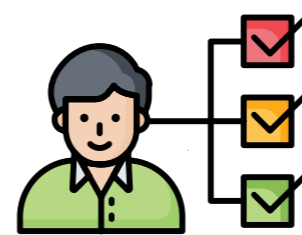
Digital and technological capabilities will be developed and in widespread use to optimise the way dental teams work, to help deliver the best possible care for people



The dental workforce will work inter-professionally with colleagues in wider Primary Care to meet the needs of the communities they serve



The workforce will be supported to work to the top of their skill set, scope of practice and deploy appropriate extended skills across a range of settings, blending work and lifestyle choices to improve retention



Further develop and offer broader leadership opportunities and support for dental professionals



Technologies and the use of data to aid in building a sustainable workforce in sufficient numbers to meet the health, and social care needs of our population

3.1: An Engaged, Motivated and Healthy Workforce

Our Ambition: By 2030, the workforce will feel valued, fairly rewarded and supported wherever they work.

Historical and current surveys have indicated that morale in dentistry is low. The Dentists' Working Patterns, Motivation and Morale survey⁴ indicates that two-thirds of Providing-Performers stated their morale was low, while almost 45% of Associates responded the same way.

In January 2022, the British Dental Association ([BDA](#)) published the results of a study on the impact the pandemic had on the mental health of dentists working in Wales.⁸

The results found that there were high levels of stress reported, with 82% of respondents saying stress levels in the dental team have increased noticeably. Three-quarters of respondents have gone to work despite not feeling mentally well enough. Working conditions and financial pressures caused by the pandemic have directly impacted the mental health of many dentists.

As a result, they have been using both adaptive and maladaptive coping methods to cope with the stress of the pandemic. Over one-third of respondents admitted drinking alcohol more frequently than before the pandemic.

The evidence centres on dentists' wellbeing and morale however the authors also make clear that this extends to the wider dental team and impacts patient care.

Key Actions

As this is a companion plan, all the actions within this theme are included as part of the Strategic Workforce Plan for Primary Care.

Primary Care Actions

- Working with independent contractors and their representatives, develop a bespoke scheme to measure staff experience, engagement & wellbeing in primary care (all contractors, all settings) (Lead: [HEIW](#))
- Deliver an effective programme of support for staff who are new to primary care including those who are newly qualified. Early priorities will include improving the transition from training into the workforce for all dental roles through mentorship training schemes. (Lead: [HEIW](#))
- Produce supervision guidance to support high-quality supervision within multi-professional teams, and develop a programme to upskill the workforce in supervision practice mindful of regulatory, [HEI](#) and [WG](#) requirements. (Lead: [HEIW](#))
- Working with NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership, review and expand staff benefits that are currently not available to primary care staff, and to explore potential to expand access. (Lead: [NWSSP/HEIW](#))

Benefits

This action will:

- Support staff engagement.
- Ensure that the right modes and levels of support are identified and available to the workforce.
- Help to embed new people and new roles within dental to focus on retaining staff.
- Ensure the dental workforce is treated equitably with the rest of the NHS supporting recruitment and retention.
- Ensure staff who are in training, or the early years of their career (safe/capable stage) have access to mentoring resources, and support through dental educators who have completed the mentoring module in the Developing Dental Educators ([DDE](#)) training programme.

3.2: Attraction and Recruitment

Our Ambition: By 2030, health and social care will be well established as a strong and recognisable brand and the sector of choice for our future

During the Health and Social Care Committee inquiry into dentistry, several testimonies highlighted the issues with attraction and recruitment into dentistry.⁶

According to [BDA Cymru](#), practices offering [GDS](#) compete increasingly with practices that focus on private dental provision, where generally the working conditions in private practice are less stressful.⁶

The North Wales and Powys Orthodontic Managed Clinical Network reports that recruitment and retention of the dental workforce is recognised to be more challenging in rural regions. This needs to be taken into consideration when it comes to strategy development, and possibly providing incentives to address a recruitment shortfall. Bro Taf Local Dental Committee reports that the dental workforce crisis is no longer an issue only in rural areas.⁶

The National Audit Office reported that the UK has the lowest number of dentists per person than other large European G7 members.¹¹

Dental staff working across independent practitioners may be self-employed or employed. However, they are not employed on Terms and Conditions that are aligned with Agenda for Change ([AfC](#)), though some employers may offer equivalent conditions. This can mean differences in pay but also in accessing other benefits such as parental and sick leave.

There is also evidence that the number of registered dental nurses has reduced.¹⁰ The 2020 Annual Salary Survey by the British Association of Dental Nurses ([BADN](#)) highlighted some of the reasons behind this.

- Many Dental Nurse jobs pay less than some retail jobs, with most respondents earning between £10,000 and £20,000.¹²
- 16% of respondents reported that they have a second job. Almost half of these state that it is necessary to meet their basic living cost.

In the most recent [QAS](#) submission, over a quarter of dental practices (25.7%) reported they had dental nurse vacancies. Anecdotally stakeholders and employers report significant dental nurse workforce shortages which impact upon the delivery of care. This reflects the transferrable skill set and low value placed upon the profession which needs addressing.

Key Actions

Dental Actions

- Review and scope the Dental Nurse training offer in Wales, and make recommendations to Welsh Government regarding the apprenticeship training provision, in collaboration with [HEIW](#)'s partner organisations. (Lead: [HEIW](#))

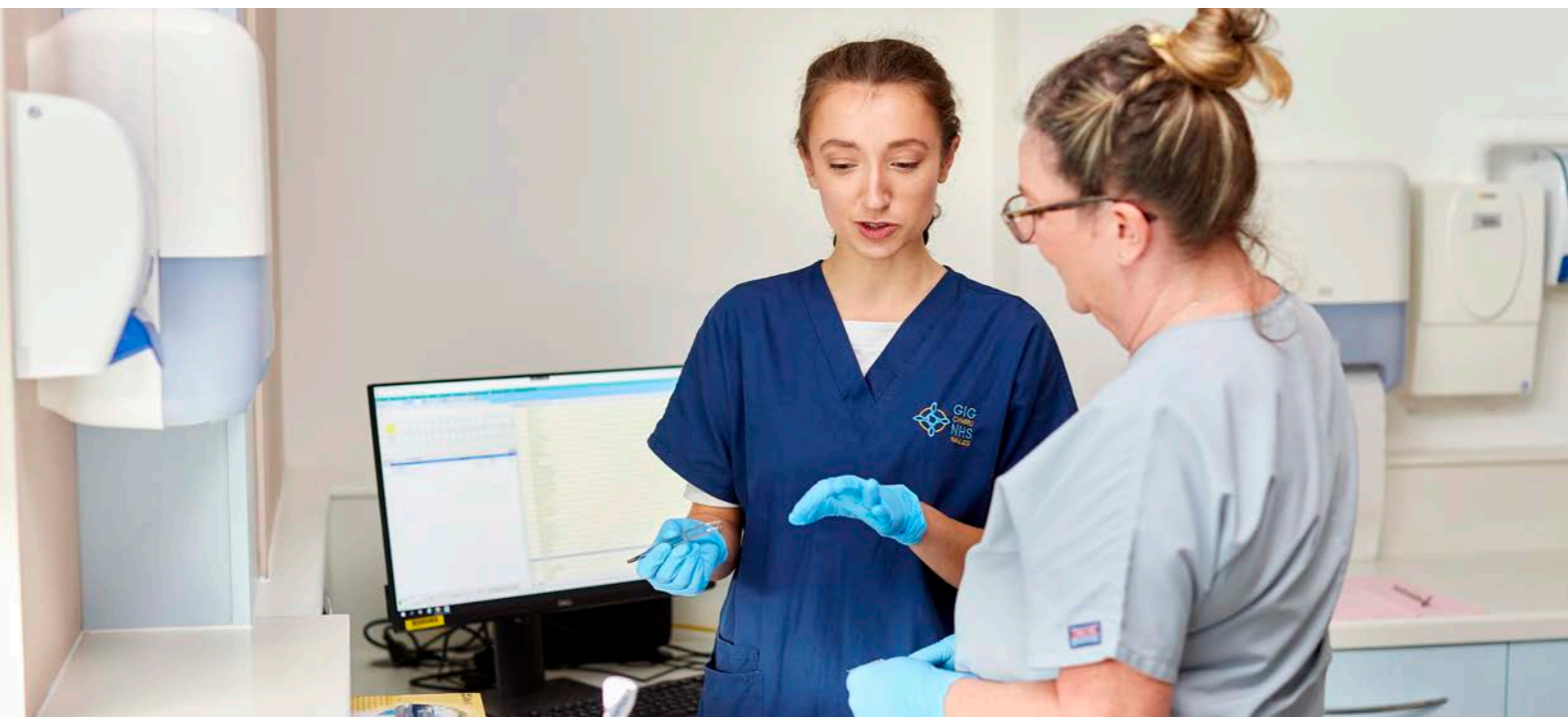
Primary Care Actions

- Develop primary care specific guidance to increase opportunities for different models such as rotational roles, career portfolio models and flexible working across the multi-professional workforce to improve choice, flexibility and career development. (Lead: [HEIW](#) / [SPPC](#))
- Actively promote careers in primary care to attract our future workforce through the continued development of Careersville and ensure primary care is considered within the development of an all-age Careers Strategy by [HEIW](#), ensuring services in more deprived areas are positively represented. (Lead: [HEIW](#))

Benefits

These actions will:

- Develop a sustainable dental nursing training offer and workforce for Wales.
- Aid in the recruitment and retention on the dental workforce in Wales



3.3: Building a Digitally Ready Workforce

Our Ambition: By 2030, the digital and technological capabilities of the workforce will be well developed and in widespread use to optimise the way we work, to help us deliver the best possible care for people

The Topol review in 2019¹³ proposed three principles to support the deployment of digital healthcare technologies throughout the NHS:

- Patients need to be included as partners and informed about health technologies, with a particular focus on vulnerable/marginalised groups to ensure equitable access.
- The healthcare workforce needs expertise and guidance to evaluate new technologies, using processes grounded in real-world evidence.
- The gift of time: wherever possible the adoption of new technologies should enable staff to gain more time to care, promoting deeper interaction with patients.

"A Healthier Wales"¹⁴ recognised that new technologies will aid our future health and social care services by enabling us to:

- predict poor health
- detect early deterioration and illness sooner
- diagnose more precisely
- make better choices about which treatment is right for the individual.

Digital services are rapidly advancing and artificial intelligence and the use of generative artificial intelligence tools that have emerged since 2022 offer potential benefits to the NHS.

Key Actions

As this is a companion plan, all the actions in this theme are within the Strategic Workforce Plan for Primary Care.

Primary Care Actions

- Working with [DHCW](#) Digital Futures Team, improve access to immersive technologies for the workforce during their healthcare education and development in Wales. (Lead: [DHCW](#))

Benefits

This action will:

- Ensure that the workforce is equipped with the right skills and able to adapt to the digital and technological transformations

3.4: Seamless Workforce Models

Our Ambition: By 2030, multi-professional and multi-agency workforce models will be the norm.

In line with the changing needs of the population, the oral health and dental services response to “A Healthier Wales”¹⁵ outlines how oral health and dental services in Wales will continue to develop. Evidence suggests that optimising and using effective skill-mix leads to a more cohesive team and better role satisfaction.¹⁶ A case study on the use of skill mix reported a reduction in patient waiting time for filling and periodontal treatment from months to weeks.¹⁷

Renumerating to deliver preventive care through NHS dental contracts is a substantial driver for changing approaches to care and treatment. Current contract arrangements with dental practices do not overtly incentivise personalised prevention or the effective use of skill-mix. There are examples of innovative practice where dental teams and services have harnessed skill-mix to increase delivery of prevention-led care and contribute to population oral health. Welsh Government aspire to make this a universal characteristic of primary dental services in Wales.

At the Health and Social Care Committee inquiry, a recommendation was proposed that Welsh Government ensure that the dental workforce strategy reflects changing aspirations, and the need for a wider skill-mix in the workforce.⁶

Key Actions

As this is a companion plan, all the actions in this theme are within the Strategic Workforce Plan for Primary Care.

Primary Care Actions

- Working with Llais, develop and launch a national communication campaign for citizens on the Primary Care Model for Wales to aid understanding of the multi-professional workforce working within and across primary and community settings including the role of other prescribers, using multiple methods to reach all population groups, including those seldom heard (Lead: [SPPC/WG](#))
- Working with Primary Care academies, develop a toolkit that supports primary care employers in understanding individual professionals' scopes of practice, regulatory and supervisory requirements to support multi-professional team development. (Lead: [HEIW](#))

Benefits

These actions will:

- Aid in identifying levers for workforce incentives in future NHS contract offers to develop the dental team and improve services for patients.
- Help teams work together effectively, maximising the use of the different skillsets available.
- Support the delivery of care that meets the quality standards for Wales (Safe, Timely, Effective, Efficient, Equitable and Person-Centred).

3.5: Excellent Education and Learning

Our Ambition: By 2030, the investment in education and learning for health and social care professionals will deliver the skills and capabilities needed to meet the future needs of people in Wales.

During our engagements, feedback from stakeholders expressed concerns regarding the lack of provision and the challenges of education and training. Measures have recently been taken to attract people into areas that have struggled historically to recruit a skilled workforce. Currently in its second year, the Dental Foundation Training Welsh Enhanced Recruitment Offer ([WERO](#)), offers enhanced financial, academic and wellbeing support packages for trainees who complete dental foundation training in specific rural dental practices in West, North and Central Wales.¹⁸

Discussions are ongoing with Dental Leads in Local Health Boards to develop in partnership innovative and flexible opportunities for early careers dentists. [Train, Work, Live](#) have an active dental campaign to increase interest and attract trainees to Wales.¹⁹

Excellent education and learning are the bedrock of a stable workforce and key to ensuring sustainable recruitment and retention. The plan lends towards this ambition, while commitments to develop broader opportunities for post-qualification provision for the existing dental workforce also contribute to aspirations for [GDS](#) system reform.

Key actions

Dental Actions

- Develop innovative training offers to retain dental trainees in the workforce in Wales (e.g. targeted and incentivised early career training offers, longitudinal schemes, fellowships and potential tie-ins). (Lead: [HEIW](#))

Primary Care Actions

- Develop our future workforce by expanding education and training provision in primary care:
- Develop an educator development plan to drive quality and consistency in standards, recognise and value the educator workforce, and enable the development of a multi-professional, cross sector approach to ensuring the deliverability and quality of the future workforce supply. (Lead: [HEIW](#))



Key actions

Dental Actions

- ❏ Develop sharing of anonymised workforce and student data to identify employment destinations and retention of graduates in Wales. (Lead: [HEIW](#))
- ❏ Develop needs-based dental workforce models and scenario planning to inform workforce size and shape, and the future commissioning of education and training. (Lead: [HEIW](#) / [DPHW](#))
- ❏ Increase the number of BSc Dental Therapy course placements by 60% from its current contract. (Lead: [HEIW](#))
- ❏ Commission a one year top-up conversion programme for Level 5 Higher Education Diploma Dental Hygienists to study and qualify as a Level 6 BSc in Dental Therapy. (Lead: [HEIW](#))

Primary Care Actions

- ❏ Aligned with the national retention programme and specific actions identified within the Pharmacy and Dental Workforce Plan, establish a task and finish group to explore retention issues:
- ❏ Explore options for improving understanding about why people stay in or leave their roles in primary care (including urgent primary care settings) focussing initially on professionals who are on the Performer's List. (Lead: [HEIW](#))
- ❏ Support Health Boards to consider local action on primary care retention as part of the local retention plans and national community of practice (facilitated by [HEIW](#)). (Lead: [HEIW](#))
- ❏ Promote good practice in retention through the adaptation of tools and guidance appropriate for primary care settings. (Lead: [HEIW](#))
- ❏ Create a national role to increase the number of apprenticeships in primary care covering both clinical and non-clinical roles, considering any policy changes. (Lead: [HEIW](#))

Benefits

These actions will:

- ❏ Inform the shape and skills required of the future workforce.
- ❏ Identify and anticipate changes in the future workforce.
- ❏ Improve workforce planning resulting in a better level of forecasting of needs-based models.
- ❏ Inform education commissioning in the future.

3.8: Cross cutting actions

As this is a companion plan, all the actions within this theme are included as part of the Strategic Workforce Plan for Primary Care.

This workforce plan will include the fundamental principles of wellbeing, Welsh Language and inclusion across all actions.

Welsh Language

Building on the foundations of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015²² and Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh Speakers²³, create an engaged, healthy, flexible, responsive and sustainable workforce for the future. The actions in this plan aim to support our workforce to deliver care using the Welsh language where needed across Primary Care.

Inclusion

There is clear evidence of deepening poverty, growing gaps in experience and opportunities for people born into different socio-economic backgrounds and protected characteristic.¹⁴ Creating a culture of true inclusion, fairness and equity across our workforce will be at the heart of this plan, and reflective of the Welsh Governments Strategic Equality Objectives²⁴.

Key Actions

- ❏ Promote the availability of Welsh language training to all staff within primary care in line with the "More than just Words" action plan and existing statutory duties. (Lead: [HEIW](#))
- ❏ Supporting under-represented and socially disadvantaged groups in accessing primary care careers through [HEIW](#) widening access program. (Lead: [HEIW](#))

Benefits

These actions will:

- ❏ Ensure that the primary care workforce is equipped with the right skills to deliver care using the Welsh Language
- ❏ Ensure there are opportunities for under-represented groups to access careers within primary care

Section 4: Benefits

This section sets out the benefits that we aim to deliver through the approach set out in this plan.

4.1: Benefits to citizens

- ❏ To be treated compassionately by professionals who are culturally competent and responsive to the language needs of individuals.
- ❏ Improve population oral health and well-being through the provision of quality education, training and care.
- ❏ Our workforce will have a greater range of skills available and will be supported to develop their skills to meet the patient needs.
- ❏ Greater awareness of the multi-professional workforce.

4.2: Benefits to workforce

- ❏ Increased health and well-being, and ability to access wider staff benefits.
- ❏ Provide support and mentoring to aid in the transition from training for all dental roles coming into the workforce.
- ❏ Expanded teams that are trained, supported and able to deliver to full scope of practice as part of an effective multi-disciplinary team
- ❏ Ensuring access to technological changes by improving access to immersive technology.

4.3: Benefits to Health Boards and Employers

- ❏ Improved recruitment and retention across the [GDS](#).
- ❏ Meeting the four goals defined in “A Healthier Wales: The oral and dental services response”.
- ❏ Improving access
- ❏ Improving population health, oral health, and well-being
- ❏ Enriching the workforce
- ❏ Increase the value achieved from funding dental services.

Section 5: Implementation

The section sets out the proposed arrangements for implementing the plan. An implementation plan will be developed during 2023/24 in preparation for the action being taken forward from April 2024. This will be subject to resource assessment.

5.1: Prioritisation

The actions identified in this plan will be delivered over a three-to-five-year period recognising the need for capacity and resources to support. A prioritisation exercise will be undertaken before April 2024 and actions will be costed.

Prioritisation will need to take account of:

- ❏ actions that contribute significantly to workforce sustainability in the short-medium term
- ❏ where they contribute towards the delivery of policy goals, and support the delivery of statutory requirements or address quality and safety issues
- ❏ actions that are likely to have a high impact across the multi-professional workforce
- ❏ where actions can be taken forward within existing resources or with minimal investment, these will be progressed without delay

Other actions may require the development of business cases.

5.2: Governance and accountability

This plan has been developed by [HEIW](#) in collaboration with key stakeholders and partners. The governance and accountability arrangements will continue into the implementation phase. [HEIW](#) will continue to be accountable for actions that fall within its sphere of statutory functions to Welsh Government.



5.3: Summary of actions

Key	An engaged, healthy and motivated workforce	Seamless workforce models	Workforce supply and shape	Excellent education and learning
	Attraction and recruitment	Leadership and succession	Building a digitally ready workforce	Additional actions

Dental Specific Actions

Theme	Action
Workforce Supply and Shape	Develop sharing of anonymised workforce and student data to identify employment destinations and retention of graduates in Wales.
	Develop needs-based dental workforce models and scenario planning to inform workforce size and shape, and the future commissioning of education and training.
	Increase the number of BSc Dental Therapy course placements by 60% from its current contract.
	Commission a one year top-up conversion programme for Level 5 Higher Education Diploma Dental Hygienists to study and qualify as a Level 6 BSc in Dental Therapy.
Excellent Education and Learning	Develop innovative training offers to retain dental trainees in the workforce in Wales (e.g. targeted and incentivised early career training offers, longitudinal schemes, fellowships and potential tie-ins).
Attraction and Recruitment	Review and scope the Dental Nurse training offer in Wales, and make recommendations to Welsh Government regarding the apprenticeship training provision, in collaboration with HEIW 's partner organisations.

Actions Aligned with Primary Care

Action Number in Primary Care Plan	Action
1	Working with independent contractors and their representatives, develop a bespoke scheme to measure staff experience, engagement and wellbeing in primary care (all contractors, all settings).
2	Deliver an effective programme of support for staff who are new to primary care including those who are newly qualified. Early priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the transition from training into the workplace for all dental roles through mentorship training schemes

Key	An engaged, healthy and motivated workforce	Seamless workforce models	Workforce supply and shape	Excellent education and learning
	Attraction and recruitment	Leadership and succession	Building a digitally ready workforce	Additional actions
Action Number in Primary Care Plan	Action			
3	Produce supervision guidance to support high-quality supervision within multi-professional teams and develop a programme to upskill the workforce in supervision practice being mindful of regulatory, Higher Education Institutions (HEI) and WG requirements.			
4	Working with NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP), review and expand staff benefits that are currently not available to primary care staff and to explore potential to expand access.			
5	Working with Llais , develop and launch a national communication campaign for citizens on the Primary Care Model for Wales to aid understanding of the multi-professional workforce working within and across primary and community settings including the role of other prescribers, using multiple methods to reach all population groups, including those seldom heard.			
6	Working with primary care academies, develop a toolkit that supports primary care employers in understanding individual professionals scopes of practice, regulatory and supervisory requirements to support multi-professional team development.			
9	<p>Aligned with the national retention programme and specific actions identified within the Pharmacy and Dental Workforce Plan, establish a task and finish group to focus on primary care retention issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore options for improving understanding about why people stay in or leave their roles in primary care (including urgent primary care settings) focussing initially on professionals who are on the Performer's List Support health boards to consider local action on primary care retention as part of the local retention plans and national community of practice (facilitated by HEIW) Promote good practice in retention through the adaptation of tools and guidance appropriate for primary care settings. 			
10	Create a national role to increase the number of apprenticeships in primary care covering both clinical and non-clinical roles, considering any policy changes.			

Key	An engaged, healthy and motivated workforce	Seamless workforce models	Workforce supply and shape	Excellent education and learning
	Attraction and recruitment	Leadership and succession	Building a digitally ready workforce	Additional actions
Action Number in Primary Care Plan	Action			
14	Develop our future workforce by expanding education and training provision in primary care Develop an educator development plan to drive quality and consistency in standards, recognise and value the educator workforce, and enable the development of a multi-professional, cross sector approach to ensuring the deliverability and quality of the future workforce supply.			
15	Develop primary care specific guidance to increase opportunities for different models such as rotational roles, career portfolio models and flexible working across the multi-professional workforce to improve choice, flexibility and career development.			
17	Actively promote careers in primary care to attract our future workforce through the continued development of Careersville and ensure primary care is considered within the development of an all-age Careers Strategy by HEIW ensuring services in more deprived areas are positively represented.			
18	Provide equitable access to national leadership programmes for our senior primary care workforce (for example, Advanced Clinical Leadership Programme) to embed a compassionate and collective leadership model and continue to develop self-directed learning and professional development opportunities through the Gwella leadership portal.			
19	Evaluate and further develop existing bespoke leadership programmes and support for cluster and collaborative leads and those aspiring to these roles.			
21	Develop and deliver professional management and leadership solutions for primary care that align with the leadership strategy for health and care in Wales.			
24	Working with DHCW Digital Futures Team, improve access to immersive technologies for the workforce during their healthcare education and development in Wales.			
25	Promote the availability of Welsh language training to all staff within primary care in line with the “More Than Just Words” action plan and existing statutory duties.			
26	Support under-represented and socially disadvantaged groups in accessing primary care careers through HEIW widening access programme.			

Glossary of Terms

AfC	Agenda for Change
BADN	British Association of Dental Nurses
BDA	British Dental Association
BDS	British Dental Society
CQI	Continuous Quality Improvement
DCP	Dental Care Professionals
DDE	Developing Dental Educators
DHCW	Digital Health and Care Wales
DPHW	Dental Public Health Wales
DSWP	Dental Strategic Workforce Plan
DWP	Dental Working Patterns
EIA	Equality Impact Assessments
GDC	General Dental Council
GDS	NHS General Dental Service
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEIW	Health Education and Improvement Wales
IMTP	Integrated Medium Term Plan
LHB	Local Health Board
MSCW	Must have; Should have; Could have; Will Not have
NWSSP	NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership
QAS	Quality Assurance System
SPPC	Strategic Programme for Primary Care
SWFP	Strategic Workforce Plan
SWPPC	Strategic Workforce Plan for Primary Care
WERO	Welsh Enhanced Recruitment Offer
WG	Welsh Government
WNWRS	Wales National Workforce Reporting System

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