

# Dental Vocational Training, Dental Core & Specialty Trainees – Proposed changes to employment

## Response to Feedback

### Background

NHS Education for Scotland (NES) has a pivotal role in the attraction and retention of dentists in training in Scotland, it is important to always consider how the training and employment journey can be improved. NES has identified that streamlining the employment arrangements may improve the consistency of employment experience for dentists in training. Following successful implementation of the lead employer model for doctors in training in 2018 it was agreed that dentists in training may also benefit from the change to employment arrangements, for example:

- less employment related administration and duplication of information provided;
- a single contract of employment for the duration of a programme;
- reduced tax issues;
- continuous service with one employer making it easier for dentists in training to access employee benefits, and
- clearer employment arrangements for money lenders (e.g. mortgages/ cars/ credit rating).

From February 2020, NES will be the lead employer for all national programme and cross regional doctors in training. Given the cross regional nature of many core and specialty dental training posts, if the employment arrangements for dentists in training were to change to the lead employer model, it was proposed that NES be the lead employer for dentists in training, including during the training spent as a vocational dental practitioner in general dental practice.

Consultation was therefore progressed with stakeholders on the principle of extending the lead employer arrangements to dentists in training, with NES as the employer, in order to ensure opportunities to improve the employment journey during postgraduate dental training are maximised, and thus have a positive impact on the attraction and retention of dentists in training to Scotland

The consultation period commenced on 28<sup>th</sup> August and ran for a period of 17 days until 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019. Please see the following consultation documents:



Dental VDP  
Consultation Comms



Dental Comms Core  
and Specialty for wide

The Consultation was circulated to the British Dental Association, Indemnifiers, Directors of Dentistry, universities, hospital contacts, medical staffing, Dental Vocational Trainers, Vocational Dental Practitioners and Hospital Dental Service trainees.

## Summary of feedback received

Ten responses were received from a variety of individuals and groups, the main themes are summarised below.

A Dental short life working group (SLWG) has been established with representation from BDA, NES (Deanery and HR representatives), and NHS Scotland Boards. The group have reviewed the feedback provided through the consultation and are able to provide some additional clarity in response to some of the concerns raised.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Consultation feedback</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>Consultation Document</b>	The consultation documentation presented only the benefits of the proposals and did not reflect any benefits of maintaining the status quo.	This feedback is noted and will be useful in informing any future communications.
<b>Dental Core Training Trainee Survey</b>	Multiple references to inconvenience of repetition of pre-employment checks. Particularly repetition of occupational health checks and not being cleared in time for starting in post.	The proposal would eradicate the need for repetition of pre-employment checks in each rotation or change of post. There were no major issues noted from the feedback.
<b>Change of Contracts for VDP's</b>	Presented with mixed feedback from Trainers and VT Advisors. Majority view was that a change in employment would be a positive step and would remove any areas of dubiety when in employment. Clarification requested around who would manage the Trainees day to day i.e. annual leave.	The detail of the day to day arrangements will be worked through by the Short Life Working Group. The consultation sought to outline the principles of any change to employment arrangements.
<b>Impact on Recruitment and Selection of VDPs</b>	A number of respondents expressed concerns that a change in employment may be linked to Trainers being allocated a VDP without having an input into selection. This could have a knock on effect on the involvement of practices in vocational training.	The lead employer arrangements involve a change in how doctors and dentists in training are employed, recruitment to training is not in scope. Any changes to recruitment would require separate consultation.
<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>	Clarification was also required on who would be responsible should there be an incident in a Training Practice, where the Trainee was injured	This question has been highlighted to the Central Legal Office for advice/clarification. However, experience from doctors in training is that this will be

		covered in the agreement between NES and the training practice.
<b>Indemnity Cover</b>	Agrees with the proposal but requires further clarity on indemnity cover and whether NES will continue to rely on the current Combined Practice Inspection, or will NES adopt another method for governance over these practices.	NES is currently liaising with the Central Legal Office to gain clarity on this topic.
<b>NES HR Capacity to support the model</b>	Members suggested that it would be favourable for NES to have the responsibility of dealing with any HR related issues.	NES HR works closely with placement Boards and practices to support the employment of doctors in training. There is expertise in NES HR to provide support to an extension of the model to dentists in training.

### **Next steps**

NES will continue working with key stakeholders through the SLWG to further develop the detail required for extension of the lead employer arrangements to dentists in training.