

**DENTISTS/DENTAL BODIES CORPORATE
NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE
GENERAL DENTAL SERVICES**

SUPPORT FOR DENTISTS IN OPENING A DENTAL PRACTICE

1. The purpose of this Memorandum is to summarise the range of key allowances aimed at supporting dentists in opening a dental practice or joining a dental practice in areas across Scotland. We would like to remind dentists that the financial grants available include the Scottish Dental Access Initiative, the Recruitment and Retention Allowance and the Remote Areas Allowance.

Scottish Dental Access Initiative (SDAI)

2. The SDAI offers financial assistance to establish a new, or expand or purchase an existing, NHS dental practice in areas where access to GDS availability is poor, i.e. unmet patient demand. We have recently reviewed with NHS Boards the areas which should be included as part of the SDAI grant, and from 23 January 2023, the areas where the grant is eligible are:

- Dalmellington and Patna within NHS Ayrshire and Arran;
- Hawick, Galashiels, Kelso and Berwickshire (exc. Eyemouth) within NHS Borders;
- NHS Dumfries and Galloway;
- Auchtermuchty within NHS Fife;
- Callander within NHS Forth Valley;
- Banff, Fraserburgh, Huntly and Moray within NHS Grampian;
- Inverclyde within NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde;
- NHS Highland;
- NHS Orkney;
- NHS Shetland;
- NHS Western Isles.

3. Financial assistance will be offered in the form of a grant as follows:

- (a) a grant of up to £50,000 towards the costs of extending an existing NHS dental practice in a designated area. Where it is intended that a practice be extended by 2 or more surgeries at the same time then the offer of grant will be £50,000 for each of the first 2 surgeries and £25,000 per additional surgery over and above the first 2; or
- (b) a grant of up to £100,000, depending on the scale of the GDS access problem towards the costs of establishing a new NHS dental practice, including purchasing and equipping the premises, in a designated area. Where it is intended that the new practice has more than 1 surgery then the offer of grant can be increased by an additional £25,000 per additional surgery over and above the first; or
- (c) a grant of up to £100,000 towards the costs of purchasing an existing NHS dental practice in a designated area. Where the practice being purchased has more than 1 existing surgery then the offer of grant can be increased by an additional £25,000 per additional existing surgery over and above the first.

4. For further information on the terms and conditions of the SDAI, please refer to [PCA\(D\)\(2021\)08 - General Dental Services: revised Scottish Dental Access Initiative](#). If you are interested in applying for this grant, please contact your NHS Board for further information.

Recruitment and Retention Allowance

5. The Scottish Government is committed to continuing to invest in NHS dentistry in rural areas, which is why we have in place the Recruitment and Retention Allowance to reflect the particular challenges in attracting dentists to work in more remote areas. We have reviewed and updated the areas which qualify for this allowance and have removed reference to Classification 1 and Classification 2 areas.

6. From 23 January 2023, all applicants who meet the conditions of entitlement and work in an eligible areas will be able to receive:

- £25,000 paid over two years, at £12,500 per annum, for dentists in sub-part A of the first part of a dental list;
- £12,500 paid over one year for dentists undertaking VT.

7. The eligible areas as part of the SDAI are mirrored for the Recruitment and Retention Allowance and include:

- Dalmellington and Patna within Ayrshire and Arran Health Board;
- Hawick, Galashiels, Kelso and Berwickshire (excluding Eyemouth) within Borders Health Board;
- Dumfries and Galloway Health Board;
- Auchtermuchty within Fife Health Board;
- Callendar within Forth Valley Health Board;
- Banff, Fraserburgh, Huntly and Moray within Grampian Health Board;
- Inverclyde within Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board;
- Highland Health Board;
- Shetland Health Board;
- Orkney Health Board; and
- Western Isles Health Board.

8. For dentists who receive an allowance as a VT, you are still eligible for the full Recruitment and Retention Allowance if you work in one of the above areas after your graduation.

9. The changes to the Recruitment and Retention Allowance are set out in the Statement of Dental Remuneration (SDR), Amendment No. 159, which takes effect from 23 January. The full Amendment No. 159 will be available to view or download at <http://www.scottishdental.org/>.

Remote Areas Allowance

10. With the exception of island areas, eligibility for the Remote Areas Allowance is not specifically linked to entire geographic areas. Instead, it is available to dentists who provide GDS on an island in Scotland or in an area which has less than 0.5 persons per hectare (excluding those areas that are predominantly non-residential).

11. Dentists working in an eligible area must have their name included on sub part A of the first part of the dental list. The Remote Areas Allowance is set at £9,000 less any abatement based on the proportion of their NHS earnings.
12. Before 1 April 2006 Remote Areas eligibility was determined on the basis that the address of the practice must be 90 minutes or more travel time by car from the local postgraduate education resource centre. Areas that previously qualified under pre-2006 arrangements, but not the current scheme, continue to receive this payment under a 'no detriment' provision.
13. This means that some areas that would not qualify for the current scheme continue to receive the remote areas allowance payment.
14. We would recommend in the first instance to contact your NHS Board for the eligible areas included in this allowance if you are interested in further information.

Enquiries

Any enquiries arising from this Memorandum should be taken up with your NHS Board.

Scottish Government Directorate for Primary Care
23 January 2023