

## Recovery of NHS Dentistry Services

Please find below the responses from NHS Dumfries and Galloway.

### 1. How much COVID related funding did you receive from Scottish Government to fund the following measures:

Expenditure	Funding
Ventilation	£149,599
Equipment	NIL
Variable speed drilling equipment	£224,398

### 2. What was the uptake (percentage number of practices; and amount paid out) of the above funding by General Dentist Service ( GDS) dentists?

GDS Expenditure	%age GDS Practices	Amount
Ventilation	37 (11/30)	£26,293
Equipment	27(8/30)	£37,092
Variable speed drilling equipment	20 (6/30)	£40,918

Authority was given to NHS D&G allowing the remaining £269,694 to be spent within PDS:

PDS Expenditure	Location	Amount
Refurbishment & Equipment - Two Surgeries	Salaried Service - Gardenhill	£100,000
Equipment (Various)	PDS - Dumfries	£90,000
New 2 <sup>nd</sup> Surgery	PDS - Stranraer	£80,000

### 3. How many practices in your health board area have withdrawn or reduced NHS provision for patients – for example, registering and treating only children:

NHS Provision	Number of Practices	% of Practices
Practices withdrawn completely	0	0
Practices reduced provision	4	13

It should be noted that 3 additional practices have indicated withdrawal from adult NHS provision in 2023.

There has been a significant impact on access to NHS dental services following a dental practice closure in January 2023 with another practice due to close in July 2023. All four practices affected cite inability to recruit to vacant posts as one of their main reasons for closure. The number of patients affected by these practice closures is demonstrated in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Practice Closures

Practice	Date	Number of patients
1	31/10/2021	1,500
2	31/10/2021	1,800
3	10/01/2023	4,400
4	31/07/2023	1,218
<b>TOTAL NO. OF PATIENTS AFFECTED</b>		<b>8,918</b>

Table 2: Practices taking NHS registrations

Practices taking Adult NHS registrations	Practices taking Child NHS registrations
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### **De-registrations**

Since the mobilisation of general dental services following COVID 19, a number of dental practices have changed their model of delivery. This is due to a variety of reasons including high patient list numbers, dentists leaving the region, ongoing difficulties in recruiting to vacant posts and practices moving away from NHS dental care to a private model.

In the period January 2022 to March 2023, NHS dental registration numbers reduced by a total of 18,278. During the same time period, a total of 5,369 new registrations were taken on. This gives an overall reduction in the number of registrations of 12,843.

There have also been deregistrations in 22/23 that are not yet reflected in the current data. When combined with the deregistrations pending in 23/24, this will amount to a further 12,400 deregistered patients.

Table 3 demonstrates the levels of practice registrations within Dumfries and Galloway during the period of January 2022 – April 2023.

Table 3: Difference in NHS Registrations (January 2022 – April 2023)

<b>NHS Registration January 2022</b>	<b>NHS Registration, April 2023</b>	<b>Difference</b>
132,090	120,665	12,843

*Data source: E-Schedule*

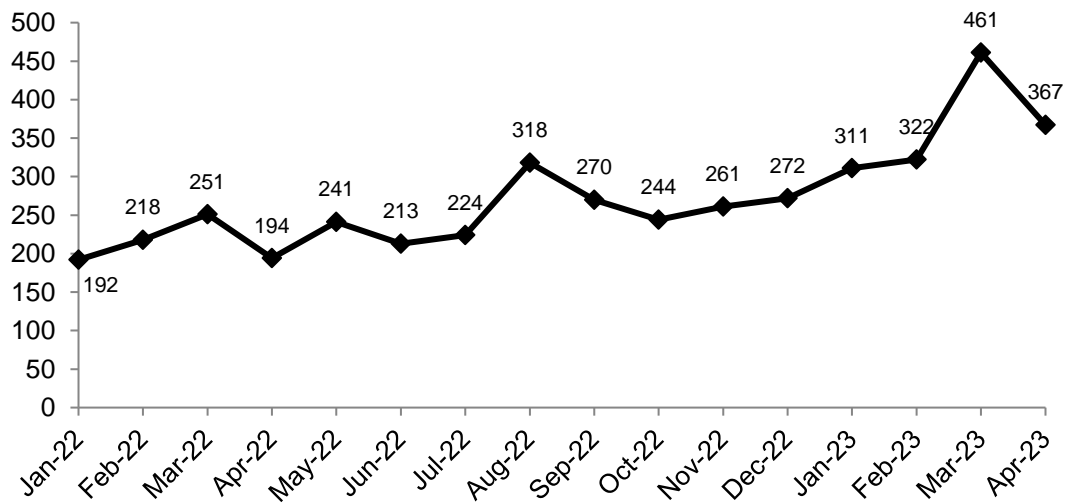
**4. What impact, if any, has the reduction in the NHS GDS provision had on the Public Dental Service?**

Of the 30 dental practices across Dumfries and Galloway, there are currently none taking new NHS registrations. With the number of deregistered patients rising and a further 12400 to follow in the coming months, the Public Dental Service (PDS) has been significantly impacted as it continues to have sole responsibility for urgent and emergency care for all unregistered and de-registered patients. This continues to affect the service's ability to provide routine dental care to registered and referred Special Care Programme patients, registered salaried patients and also impacts on the quality and range of clinical experience being provided within the Outreach dental clinics as well as staff morale and wellbeing. The PDS successfully recruited a part-time SDO in January 2023 which has helped reduce the Special Care waiting times but continues to have vacant clinician posts which it has been unable to recruit to.

## Dental Helpline

The Dental Helpline is experiencing a marked increase in the number of calls. Table 4 demonstrates the number of calls into the Dental Helpline, which operates Monday-Friday, 08:00-18:00, from January 2022 until April 2023.

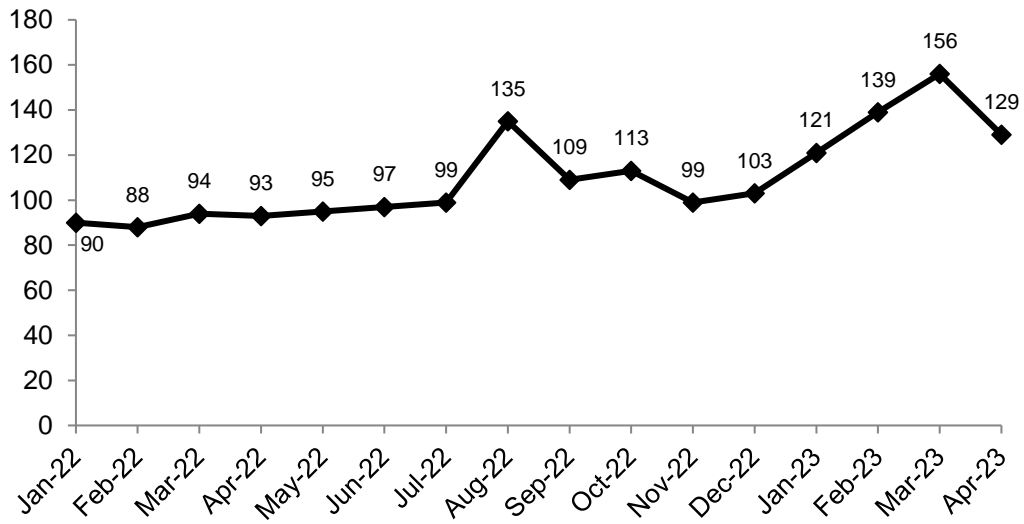
Table 4: Dental Helpline Calls



## Weekday unregistered emergencies

The number of patients appointed continues to rise and will increase in the coming months as the number of de-registered patients increases further, as demonstrated in Table 5. For comparison, in February 2020, there were only 27 unregistered emergencies, 8 of whom were treated in GDS and 19 in PDS.

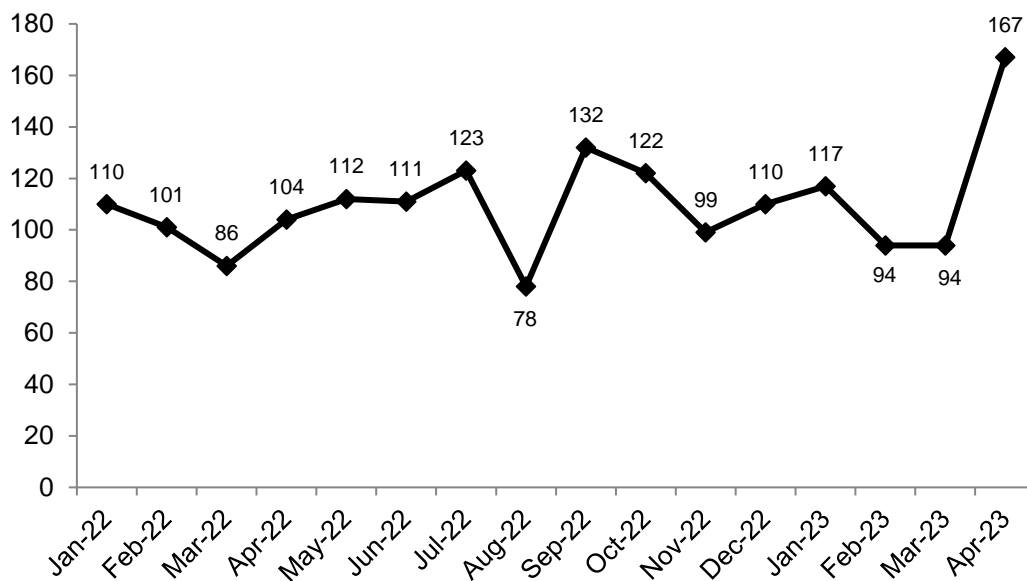
**Table 5: Weekday Unregistered Emergency Patients Booked into PDS Clinics**



**Weekend Emergency Clinics**

Although the number of patients appointed to weekend emergency clinics, has been relatively stable, there appears to be a sharp increase in numbers in April 2023 and this service is under close review.

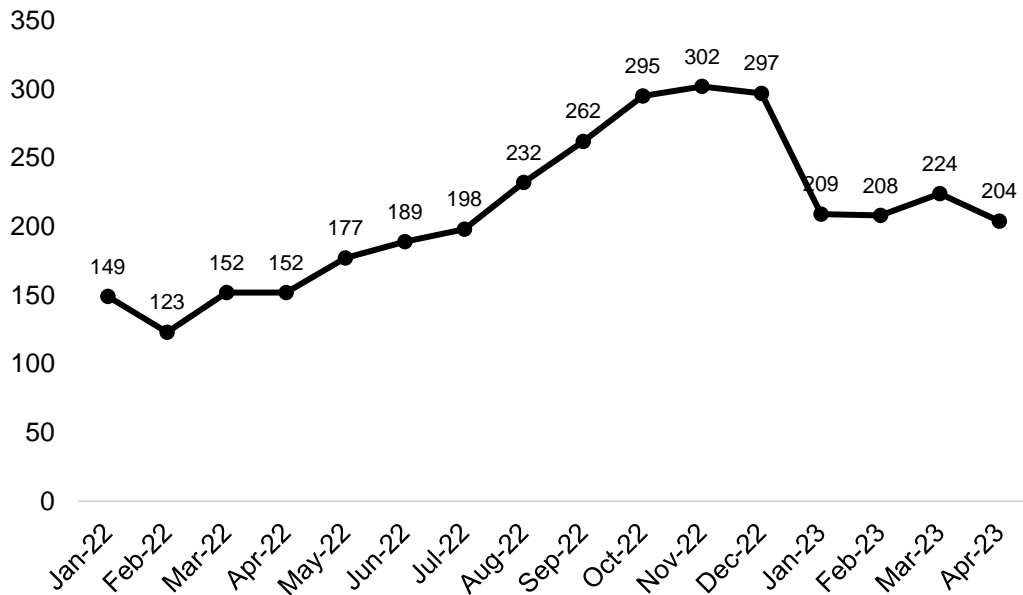
**Table 6: NHS24 Triage Patients Booked into Weekend Emergency Dental Service Clinics**



### Special Care Programme Waiting Times

There are currently 204 referred patients waiting on Special Care assessment, the longest of whom has been waiting 11 months.

Table 7: No. of patients on Special Care Waiting List



In addition, there are currently over 90 patients on theatre waiting lists, the longest of whom has been waiting 15 months.

**5. How many patients are registered with the PDS in your Health Board area? Has the number risen since 2020? If so by how much?**

There has been an insignificant increase of an additional 122 patients being registered with the PDS between March 2019 and March 2023 as demonstrated in Table 8 below:

Table 8: Number of registered PDS patients

No. of registered PDS patients	31st Mar 2019	31st Mar 2020	31st Mar 2021	31st Mar 2022	31st Mar 2023
Dumfries & Galloway	2,323	2,379	2,390	2,467	2,445

Data source: PHS, 05/23

**6. What other funding do you receive to support dentistry in your Health Board area ( for example) funding related to PDS, Childsmile, and any initiatives to improve recovery of services and access to dentistry for your population**

Table 9 below outlines the allocations received for 2022/23:

Table 9: Allocations Received 2022/23

<b>Dental Services</b>	<b>Allocation</b>
PDS (Salaried – GDS)	£1,369,426 (Recurring)
Dental Services Bundle (incl. Childsmile)	£341,755 (Recurring)
Dental Health Support Workers & Oral Health	£38,963 (Non-recurring)

Dumfries and Galloway continues to face significant challenges in relation to provision of NHS Dental services exacerbated by the inability to recruit workforce to the region and practices locally report a level of uncertainty around NHS dental reform which may have impacts on their future NHS commitment. A local Dental Task Force was established in January 2023 which the Director of Strategic Planning and Transformation, Director of Public Health and Scottish Government attend. The group continues to meet every 2 weeks to support work already being taken forward by our Primary Care Team. The Taskforce has oversight of Dental Taskforce Action plan which is regularly reviewed and new actions to mitigate impacts are added. The Dental Taskforce reports to Health and Social Care Leadership team every month with escalation to BMT as required. Even with implementation of all agreed actions of the Dental Task Force, there will remain continued challenges in access to NHS Dental Services in the short and medium term.