



The PDS in Shetland is under direct instruction from the Director of Dentistry to register only those that would fit a non-access PDS remit.

Historically, the PDS registered all patients. The opening of a new NHS SDAI supported practice in 2016/17 has not impacted the service delivery on Shetland as hoped.

Concurrently, the PDS is not funded or structured in a way that is able to cope with the registrations and the patient demographic that the service is being asked to care for. These registration figures merely disguises the fact that that access is an issue. On Shetland, we have a PDS that is primarily propping up a failing GDS independent sector, whilst having neither the funding nor the workforce to deliver appropriate care, this.

Recently, a new island model has been proposed to CDO/SG in order to re-focus NHS dental provision for Shetland to a comprehensive, self-determined and sustainable Health Board delivered service for the whole community

Amended Approach

It has been clearly demonstrated that the PDS/GDS model found in larger, mainland Health Board areas (80:20 patient registration split) does not work in remote and rural areas, especially Island communities, where the GDS is not established and robust. Without an established GDS, Shetland is at a significant disadvantage of being at the behest of the limited independent contractors, their business decisions and their fortunes.

For NHS Shetland, it is recommended that a return to the pre-2006, directly Board managed combined service, would provide sustainability and self-determination of the dental service for the Shetland population. It is also recommended that this approach is pursued regardless of any service provided in the GDS.

Proposed 3-Phase Approach - Summary	
Phase 1 Immediate	Return to Pre-COVID level of service from NHS Shetland PDS.
	Additional 3.3 WTE dentists in NHS Shetland PDS
	Increase in Budget - £ 306,751
Phase 2 1-3 Years	Establish the foundations of a comprehensive, self-determined and sustainable Health Board delivered service for the whole community
	Additional 6.8 WTE dentists in NHS Shetland PDS
	Increase in Budget - £ 1,006,400
Phase 3 3 Years +	To consolidate, enhance and expand NHS Shetland PDS provision for long term sustainability and resilience
	Plan to integrate the services provided in Lerwick to complement the three other NHS Shetland dental sites, to fit with Oral Health Strategy 2023-2027 and to integrate the service into the planning and development of the new hospital facilities being planned at present
	Additional 3.0 WTE dentists in NHS Shetland PDS
	Increase in Budget - £ 444,000

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)?

Reply:

The following are in regard to additional funds only. NHS Shetland received funding to support the work of the Childsmile team and for Winter Preparedness funding

However, as this funding was allocated on the basis of NRAC, insufficient amounts were received to make any meaning and long term difference. No new posts could be funded as, for example, the increased funding did not reached the threshold of an additional salary. Consequently, this funding could not be used as intended

Furthermore, due to the baseline budget issues (see reply to 5.), any increased funding received by NHS Shetland was required to off-set the overspend and did not get the opportunity to be used as intended

All of the above were, of course, welcome and gladly received. Our feedback/concerns are three-fold;

1. the one-off nature of the allocation, contrary to national long-term oral health improvement projects.
2. in times of such challenge to recruitment, vacancies supported by non-recurring funding have not proved attractive.
3. to allocate funding solely on the basis of NRAC does not allow a critical level of funding to be reached in areas of small population sizes. Therefore, the funding allocated was ineffectual for the intended purpose

Yours sincerely,

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