

Dental postgraduate training opportunities in Wales

Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) is delighted to announce a range of postgraduate dental training opportunities launching in 2026/27 - developed directly in response to feedback from current trainees.

These offers aim to strengthen clinical experience, support job security and career development across our Dental Foundation Training (DFT) and Dental Core Training (DCT) programmes.

DFT Welsh Enhanced Recruitment Offer (WERO)

DFT WERO returns for 2026/27, continuing to encourage recruitment in rural areas of West, North, and Central Wales while improving access to essential dental care for these local communities.

The scheme offers a comprehensive support package to attract and retain skilled

dental trainees in rural Wales, including:

- £3,000 rural living grant
- MFDS part 1 exam fees covered
- Study budget for exam preparation.

As part of the standard DFT offer you will also have access to:

- Weekly study day programme including hands-on clinical training
- Wellbeing support
- Weekly 1-1 tutorials.

Feedback from previous cohorts highlighted that early job security and a locally managed recruitment process were key motivators for these rural DFT posts, often more so than financial incentives.

Applications for DFT WERO open on 2 February until 27 February 2026 for new UK graduates who have trained in Wales, are



Welsh-domiciled, or have an existing link to Wales.

For more information visit <https://heiw.nhs.wales/>. Please note these posts are not eligible for temporary GDC registration.

Charity welcomes free dental care for care leavers up to 25

The Oral Health Foundation has welcomed a new government announcement confirming that young people leaving care will be entitled to free NHS dental care, prescriptions and eye tests up to their 25th birthday.

The new measures aim to reduce health inequalities faced by care leavers, who are more likely to experience poor oral health and face barriers to accessing dental services once statutory support ends at 18. The policy is part of a wider package designed to improve health outcomes and life chances for young people transitioning out of care.

Access to dental care remains a significant challenge for many care leavers, with cost, uncertainty around entitlement and difficulty registering with a dentist often leading to untreated dental problems and avoidable pain. Extending free dental care is intended to remove one of the key obstacles to early intervention.

Dr Nigel Carter, chief executive of the Oral Health Foundation, says: 'This is about



dignity as much as dentistry. Extending free dental care to 25 is a hugely positive step for young people leaving care, many of whom have grown up facing real barriers to accessing dental services at a critical time in their lives. It removes a barrier that never should have existed and recognises the

heightened risk of poor oral health among care leavers.

'The priority now is making sure this commitment translates into real access on the ground, so every eligible young person can actually secure the care they need as they build independent lives.'