

DCT1 Rotations in the Public Dental Service (PDS)

The primary focus of the PDS is to provide dental care for patients who are unable to receive treatment within the General Dental Service.

Main patient groups treated within the PDS include:

- Patients with disabilities (learning and / or physical disabilities)
- Medically complex patients
- Ageing patients
- Anxious and phobic patients
- Patients with mental health issues
- Children who are medically compromised or disabled
- Anxious children or those with extensive caries requiring additional input
- Children in difficult social circumstances (vulnerable and looked after children)
- Homeless patients
- Excluded groups (migrants, travelling people)
- Prison population

While treating these patients does present challenges, providing care for them is highly rewarding and can be very enjoyable. In addition to developing your clinical skills, working in the PDS will enable you to enhance your interpersonal skills as you interact with new patient groups, their families, carers and others involved in their care. These valuable skills will remain with you wherever your future career leads and will help you in future interactions with patients and others.

PDS services are provided from a variety of locations including health centres, hospitals (including specialised units), prisons and secure units and some special schools. Care may also be provided on a domiciliary basis, either in the patient's own home or in a care home setting. The broad range of groups treated and settings requires PDS dentists to liaise closely with other professionals within health, social care and other agencies, while working closely with both primary and secondary care dental services. Within PDS you will work in a large multidisciplinary team with a range of dentists and DCPs, including therapists and extended duties dental nurses.

In addition, the PDS is responsible for carrying out the National Dental Inspection Programme (NDIP) in schools and has an important role in implementing National Oral Health Improvement initiatives such as 'Childsmile', 'Caring for Smiles', 'Mouth Matters', 'Smile4Life' and 'Open Wide' aimed at improving the oral health of those in Priority Groups. There may be opportunities for CT1s to experience these activities.

During the PDS rotation a study day programme is arranged focusing on topics specific to PDS and providing opportunities for discussion and sharing of experiences among CT1s working across different locations. All DCT1 posts include training in the delivery of inhalation sedation with a view to independent practice of this technique by the end of the rotation.