

Dental Core Trainees: Career Motivations, Preferences and Perceptions of Training

Summary of Study and Report by HEE – Sept 2019

This study and subsequent report into the career motivations, preferences and perceptions of dental core trainees was commissioned and funded by Health Education England and undertaken by Alison Bullock, Sophie Bartlett, and Jonathan Cowpe at the Cardiff University School of Social Sciences.

It looked to understand the career motivations and preferences of the trainees who pursue one, two or three years of DCT and their perceptions and experiences of the programme in order to inform how DCT might best be developed and tailored in the future.

I think we can be reassured that DCTs value their time in OMFS training posts with some good practice going on but there are some recommendations we can all work on.

“We conclude that DCT appears to be advantageous both for those intending on careers in general dental practice and for those aiming for specialist practice, as well as those uncertain of their future trajectory. Although trainees reported on positive training experiences, particularly in terms of experiences not encountered in practice and the support of educational supervisors, there appear to be some areas for improvement. Our suggested recommendations for the future development of DCT include:

- Recruiters should be aware that geography is a key influencer when candidates preference posts and may even override other factors.*
- An option for a run-through programme could benefit those trainees with a defined career path and looking to pursue specialty training.*
- Consideration could be given to more posts in non-OMFS specialties and in community settings as well as more DCT3 posts.*
- Although trainees’ experiences of DCT were generally positive, there was much variation across units. There may be scope to standardise the quality of training across units. However, such standardisation would need to be considered in the context of training being flexible enough to accommodate the different motives and evolving career trajectories of trainees. “*

Anne Begley

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