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Charlotte Waite, Chair England Community Dental Service Committee  
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Graham Smith, Chair Scotland Public Dental Services Committee  
David Johnston, Chair Wales Committee for Community Dentistry

9 April 2020

(via email)

### **Appraisals and mandatory training for community dentists**

Dear All

Thank you for your letter. May we start by extending our thanks and thoughts to the workforce which you represent for your efforts to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic and support your communities in these extraordinary times.

With this in mind, we wanted to offer our support for the moves which some employers are already making to temporarily suspend appraisals for dentists employed on the [Salaried Primary Dental Care Services \(England\) Terms and Conditions of Service \(TCS\)](#) during the Covid-19 pandemic. We suggest this position should be temporarily put in place until the end of September 2020, after which we will review it according to the circumstances we find ourselves in then.

Where capacity allows, or there are exceptional circumstances (agreed by both the appraiser and dentists) remote appraisals can and should still be offered. The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (AoMRC) has put out some helpful [guidance](#) which defines 'special circumstances' to be where regulatory body conditions require appraisals (such as where a condition of registration is that an appraisal must be held).

Otherwise, a temporary suspension should allow managers and dentists to focus their attention on patient support through emergency hubs, redeployment and other immediate priorities.

This stance is also being taken with doctors and staff on agenda for change terms and conditions.

Managers and staff will need to decide locally whether affected appraisals are regarded as an 'approved missed appraisal' and cancelled (i.e. staff are not expected to catch up on a missed appraisal later in the appraisal year), or postponed. The AoMRC guidance linked to above also has some advice on this.

As a principle, we would strongly advise that delaying appraisal should not stop employers from acting on concerns when they arise; particularly when patient or staff safety is at stake, even during the pandemic.

You also asked about suspension to mandatory training. This relates directly to safety and quality of care, and decisions on what is necessary under the exceptional circumstances should be taken locally. National guidance has been issued on the minimum requirements for staff *returning to the NHS*, who must complete:

- Health, safety and welfare
- Fire safety
- Infection prevention and control – level 2
- Resuscitation – level 2

It has also been recommended that, *for current NHS employees who have not changed roles and who have previously undertaken training in the core subjects of statutory/mandatory training*, **refresher** training requirements should be suspended for the duration of the current crisis.

More detail on this is available through [Health Education England's e-learning portal](#)

I hope this is helpful. Please do keep us posted on how things are going for you.

Paul Wallace

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Wallace', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Director, Employment Relations and Reward  
NHS Employers