

Career Development Framework for Consultant Appointments in Special Care Dentistry

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Introduction

Special Care Dentistry is the practice of comprehensive oral health care services for people who are unable to accept routine dental care because of some physical, intellectual, medical, emotional, sensory, mental or social impairment, or a combination of these factors. Special Care Dentistry is concerned with the improvement of oral health of individuals and groups of adults in society who fall within these categories. It also includes teaching and research in Special Care Dentistry.

In the United Kingdom (UK), a Specialist List, held by the General Dental Council (GDC), enables the identification of registered dentists who have been given the right (by the GDC) to use the title ‘Specialist in Special Care Dentistry’. The award of a Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST) in Special Care Dentistry requires evidence of satisfactory completion of training as detailed in the relevant GDC-approved curriculum document.

It is recognised that CCST holders employed as substantive and honorary consultants in the NHS are required not only to practise core specialist skills but also to possess a range of extended competencies. Whilst there is no formal post CCST training pathway in Special Care Dentistry, this document aims to detail the extended competencies and associated learning outcomes that are considered a pre-requisite for appointment to a consultant position .

The prescribed length of preparation for consultant employment is flexible and dependent upon demonstration of the requisite learning outcomes. It is anticipated, however, that, taken as a whole, specialist training and preparation for consultant employment should occupy no more than 5 years WTE.

1. Role of the Consultant in Special Care Dentistry

The role of the Consultant in Special Care Dentistry is similar to that of consultants in the other medical and dental disciplines.

A Consultant in Special Care Dentistry has an all encompassing role as leader of the team providing and delivering effective, well coordinated and integrated services to patients with complex disabilities and impairments.

Whilst Special Care Dentistry is primarily a community based specialty, consultants work across primary, secondary care and tertiary care. A combined multiagency, multidisciplinary approach is vital, working closely with senior managers and clinical networks with all partner agencies to ensure effective collaboration and consistency in the development and delivery of dental services for patients with special care needs.

Like all other Consultants in the National Health Service, they are responsible for managing the care of their patients, assisted by a team of junior staff and trainees. They integrate and liaise with the other medical, surgical and anaesthetic consultants as part of a team in the overall care of the patient with special care needs.

The Consultant in Special Care Dentistry delivers teaching and training for junior staff and undergraduate dental students. In addition, there is a requirement to be involved in research, clinical governance and quality assurance and other supporting activities allied to the educational and research demands which form the foundation of today's healthcare. They also support Specialists in Special Care Dentistry and other posts e.g. Dentists with Enhanced Skills.

The Consultant in Special Care Dentistry works with senior managers to develop oral health care strategies for patients with complex disabilities and impairments at a local, regional, national and international level. They have an important advocacy role by ensuring that the oral health needs of patients are appropriately and adequately met.

2. Role of a Specialist in Special Care Dentistry

Specialists in Special Care Dentistry have specialised knowledge and experience in the oral and dental care of adults with special care needs, including those with anxiety and those with special medical or dental needs. Specialists are able to accept referrals for a variety of sources e.g. high street general dental practitioners, general medical practitioners and other health care professionals.

The Specialists generally have additional qualifications and have gained the necessary skills, experience, knowledge and expertise to enable them to be either mediated onto the Specialist list, or to become a specialist via an accredited training programme and by acquirement of the a CSST. In the UK are included in the Special Care Dentistry Specialist Register held by the General Dental Council. The current requirement for entry into this list is a minimum of 3 years of specialist level training, or evidence of equivalence. Specialists may work in a number of spheres:

- A) The Salaried Dental Services (SDS) in Scotland (Public Dental Service (Community / secondary care based)
- B) Specialist practitioner in Independent Practice,
- C) Part of a hospital based consultant-led team
- D) Dental teaching schools and hospitals

The Specialists who are working in universities and the salaried services are often involved in the teaching of undergraduates, dental foundation trainees, trainee specialists, other dental care professionals (DCPs) such as dental therapists, dental hygienists and dental nurses, medical staff and other health and social care professionals .

3. Role of Consultants and Specialists

Consultants and Specialists in Special Care Dentistry ensure that specialist advice and support is provided to primary care dental teams and other health and social care professionals, including and enabling the development of managed clinical networks. These ensure the effective, efficient and holistic provision of care for patients who need

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance only. It is a living document and is subject to periodic change.

Special Care Dentistry.

Referrals will be received from the General Dental Services, Community Dental Services, General Medical Practitioners and other members of the multi-professional team. Tertiary referrals are received from Consultant medical colleagues, Dental Consultant colleagues, Specialists in Special Care Dentistry and Community Dental partners.

Postgraduate speciality training programmes in Special Care Dentistry are broad based to reflect the community based nature of the specialty. The training programmes are delivered in university dental hospitals and other hospital units in conjunction with community services to ensure the appropriate range of experience.

4. Training of Consultants

The prescribed length of preparation for consultant employment is flexible and dependent upon the candidate demonstrating the requisite learning outcomes. However, it is anticipated that, taken as a whole, specialist training and preparation for consultant employment should occupy no more than 5 years WTE.

The Advisory Board of Specialty Training in Dentistry (ABSTD) leads on arrangements for the quality assurance of programmes of post-CCST development. The SAC in Special Care Dentistry will keep a national register of those undertaking a programme of post-CCST development.

The precise mechanism whereby preparation for employment is delivered is a matter for individual employing organisations.

Acquisition of additional competencies could have an emphasis on different areas. For example, programmes could be constructed as follows:

1.1. *A programme to train a hospital-based consultant in special care dentistry*

Would normally emphasise:-

- Development of competency in some of the extended clinical competencies for example Multi Disciplinary Team working and the management of in-patients,
- Publication of clinical papers
- Involvement in clinical audit
- Preparation of clinical guidelines

1.2. *A programme to train a community-based consultant in special care dentistry*

Would normally emphasise:-

- Development of core knowledge and understanding of the extended clinical competencies, possibly through experience, relevant to special interests and expertise

- Preparation of clinical guidelines
- Involvement in clinical audit
- Membership of committees responsible for aspects of health services leadership and management

1.3. *A programme to train an academic honorary consultant in special care dentistry*

Would normally emphasise:-

- Development of competency in extended clinical competencies relevant to special interests and expertise
- Completion of a doctorate by research (if not obtained prior to entry)
- Publication of research papers in peer reviewed journals
- Acquisition of research grant income
- Supervision of research students
- Evidence of innovations (patents/industrial awards etc)

5. Assessment of post-CCST competencies

At this stage there is no summative assessment model and the role of any future the Intercollegiate Specialty Fellowship Examination (ISFE) for Special Care Dentistry is still to be determined.

The key requirement for consultant appointment is to be on the specialist list, however it is recognised within the specialty that individuals may need guidance on the further skills and extended competencies that are required for consultant appointments.

It is now considered that it is the responsibility of employing authorities to clearly outline in the Person Specification the range of skills and competencies required to meet local service needs

It will be the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate how they meet the requirements for the post.

This could be differentiated on the basis of a candidate's CV and logbook and the skills and attributes needed for clinical leaders.

It is recommended that individuals wishing to apply for Consultant appointments in the future, maintain a portfolio of evidence that incorporates the extended competency framework as described in the accompanying appendix

6. Table of extended clinical competencies

This includes the knowledge, skills and attitude required for consultant appointment, including some of the specialty-specific post-CCST competencies, together with the teaching, learning and portfolio assessment methods.

It is assumed that these competencies are built upon the retained pre-CCST competencies, as detailed in the GDC-approved Special Care Dentistry curriculum document.

As described above, a combination of appropriate competencies would be required for a post-CCST development programme, not all of the competencies listed in the tables.

See appendix document for further information