

24th April 2024**BY EMAIL**
[REDACTED]**Our Ref: FOI 2163**

Dear [REDACTED]

Your request for information was received on 20th March 2024 and was dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please be advised that the Business Services Organisation (BSO) has now completed its search for the information you requested in relation to dental care.

1) Total number of patients registered to receive Health Service dental care for each year from 19/20 to date

Table 1 provides details on the number of patients registered with an active health service dentist. An active dentist has made an arrangement with the SPPG (previously the Health and Social Care Board) to provide health service dentistry. Patients registered with a private dentist are not included in this data. All count figures are a snapshot of registrations paid in March* of each year.

Table 1: Number of Patient Registrations by Year

Year	Patient Registrations
2020	1,219,103
2021	1,246,213
2022	1,289,110
2023	1,341,974
Dec 2023*	1,316,565

* Registrations paid in December 2023, the latest published figures, sourced from the dataset underpinning the Accredited Official Statistics release 'Dental Services for Northern Ireland, Quarterly Series to Q3 2023/24 - Provisional'.

Source: FPS Dental Payment System



Notes

- Registrations paid in March of each year.
- Due to the Covid-19 pandemic all registrations that were due to expire in 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 were extended throughout these years. The first set of patients were set to expire at the end of March 2023 at the earliest. In order to avoid the scenario where a large number of patient registrations lapse in one go, the GDS regulations have been amended to add a specific number of months on to three patient registration cohorts, so that registrations are scheduled to lapse at the same rate as they would normally.
- The quarterly updates within a year should be treated as provisional and may be revised when figures are finalised to produce the end of year annual report.

2) Total number of patients de-registered from receiving Health Service dental care (number of WCA 966 forms submitted) for each year from 19/20 to date

Table 2 provides details on the number of patients de-registered from an active health service dentist. An active dentist has made an arrangement with the SPPG (previously the Health and Social Care Board) to provide health service dentistry. Patients de-registered with a private dentist are not included in this data. All count figures represent de-registrations across the full financial year*.

Table 2: Number of Patient De-registrations by Financial Year

Financial Year	De-registrations
2019-20	852
2020-21	162
2021-22	2,946
2022-23	10,247
2023-24*	10,924

* De-registrations up to the 31st December 2023, the date of the latest published figures, sourced from the dataset underpinning the Accredited Official Statistics release 'Dental Services for Northern Ireland, Quarterly Series to Q3 2023/24 - Provisional'.

Source: FPS Dental Payment System

Notes

- De-registrations across the whole financial year (1st April to 31st March).
- Due to the Covid-19 pandemic all registrations that were due to expire in 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 were extended throughout these years. The first set of patients were set to expire at the end of March 2023 at the earliest. In order to avoid the scenario where a large number of patient registrations lapse in one go, the GDS regulations have been amended to add a specific number of months on to three patient registration cohorts, so that registrations are scheduled to lapse at the same rate as they would normally.
- The variable used to signify the submission of a WCA 966 form on the FPS Dental Payment System may also be used in other scenarios e.g. removing a registration from a dentist that should have been seen on referral rather than an

initial or re-registration. It is not possible to extract only those WCA 966 cases from the cohort, thus resulting in a possible overcount.

3) Total number of DA1 forms submitted for each year from 19/20 to date

Table 3 provides details on the total number of DA1 forms submitted for each financial year from 2019/20 to 2022/23.

Table 3: Number of active Dentists who worked a full financial year and submitted a DA1 form: 2019/20 – 2022/23

Financial Year	Dentists who submitted a DA1 form who worked a full financial year
2019/20	759
2020/21	748
2021/22	501
2022/23	168

Source: FPS Dental Payment System

Notes

- *Only includes dentists who were active on or before 1st April of that financial year and were still active up to or after 31st March in that same financial year. Each cipher is counted as a dentist, i.e. not a unique count of individuals due to some dentists having multiple ciphers.*
- *DA1 forms are provided by the dentist following the financial year to which the figures relate. Forms for 2022/23 are due to be submitted by 30th June 2024.*

4) Average (mean) % gross earnings indicated across all DA1 forms received for each year, from 19/20 to date?

Table 4 provides details on average health service percentage of work done in each financial year.

Table 4: Average percentage of health service work for those who submitted a DA1 form: 2019/20 – 2022/23

Financial Year	Average DA1 Health Service percentage
2019/20	69.8
2020/21	75.1
2021/22	72.2
2022/23	69.0

Source: FPS Dental Payment System

Notes

- *The DA1 form declares the percentage of a dentist's gross earnings that are attributable to Health Service gross earnings. It is provided by the dentist*

following the financial year to which the figures relate. Forms for 2022/23 are due to be submitted by 30th June 2024 – the percentage figure for this year is therefore based on the 168 forms received to date. Where multiple DA1s have been received for a cipher within a financial year an average was taken.

I hope that the information provided assists you. If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter, as the BSO, along with all other public authorities are not obliged to accept internal review requests after this period has lapsed.

In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to

Information Governance Manager,
2 Franklin Street,
Belfast,
BT2 8DQ

If, following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision-making panel, you remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request, you may make a complaint under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the BSO has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act.

You can contact Information Commissioner at:

Website: www.ico.org.uk
Phone: 0303 123 1113
Email: casework@ico.org.uk
Post: Information Commissioner's Office
3rd Floor, 14 Cromac Place
Belfast
BT7 2JB

In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. However, the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Yours Sincerely,



Karen Bailey
Chief Executive