

Activity Enhancement Payment (AEP) April 2026

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

This document outlines BSO payment arrangements for the agreed Activity Enhancement Payment (AEP), to be made to General Dental Practitioners in April 2026.

What is the Activity Enhancement Payment (AEP)?

The Activity Enhancement Payment (AEP) is designed to recognise and support dental activity delivered by practitioners during the 2025/26 financial year.

This payment will include treatment activity and maintenance of patient registrations, as well as taking into consideration any periods of long-term absence cover.

What is the total value of the funding?

The total funding available under the AEP scheme for 2025/26 is £1.6 million, inclusive of superannuation, to be distributed across eligible contractors, in line with the agreed allocation methodology.

How will the AEP funding be allocated?

Funding will be allocated on a 60%/40% split:

- 60% based on Item of Service (IoS) treatment activity delivered during the 2025/26 year.
- 40% based on the number of registered patients during the 2025/26 year, up to 31 March 2026.

Which contracts are eligible for inclusion?

- GDS;
- Holding Numbers;
- Assistants; and
- Salaried contractors.

Are AEP payments superannuable?

Yes, all AEP are part superannuable.

Will dentists receiving long-term absence payments be included?

Yes. GDPs who have received long-term absence payments (maternity, paternity, sickness, etc.) will be included.

For allocation purposes, 60% of absence payments will be treated as IoS activity and 40% as registration-related activity.

Why is the allocation not based purely on historical payments?

The agreed approach balances:

- Recognition of actual activity delivered during 2025/26.
- Fair treatment of dentists maintaining current patient registrations.
- Inclusion of absence cover, which substitutes for multiple income streams.

Using the latest practical registration count ensures the registration element reflects current, active registrations, rather than historical activity levels earlier in the year.

Will this AEP contribute towards Practice Allowance Payments?

No, AEP will not contribute towards Practice Allowance Payments, as stipulated within the letter dated 4 March 2026 and issued to the profession, by the Head of General Dental and Ophthalmic Services. A copy of this correspondence can be accessed at: [Letter-from-GDOS-to-GDPs-Activity-Enhancement-Payment-Next-Steps-Mar26.pdf](#)

What should I do if I have a query about the AEP?

Queries should be directed in the first instance to the General Dental and Ophthalmic Services policy team at gdoscorrespondence@health-ni.gov.uk.

If you have a specific enquiry regarding the payment made to you please submit details to the BSO Dental Payment Team at DentalFinance.BSO@hscni.net and a member of the Team will contact you as soon as possible.