

**Gateway Ref: 6034**

To: Directors of Medical Education  
Postgraduate Medical Deans  
Postgraduate Dental Deans

cc: Chief Executives of NHS Trusts  
Human Resource Directors of NHS Trusts  
Chairs of Specialist Advisory Committees (OMFS and Dental Specialties)  
Professor Brian Avery –Faculty of Dental Surgery  
Dr Judy Curson – Director WRT  
Deanery Business Managers  
Dental Leads – Strategic Health Authorities

19 January 2006

Dear Colleague

### **Appointments to dental SHO posts**

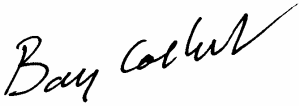
I am writing about the need to ensure adequate provision for training in the dental specialties during implementation of Modernising Medical Careers.

Although preparations for a Modernising Dental Careers initiative are underway, implementation of MMC is proceeding in advance of any changes in the training of dentists. As a result, there will continue to be SHO posts in dentistry after the medical ones have been replaced by F2 posts in medicine.

There are currently around 500 dental SHO posts in England. Most are located within oral and maxillofacial departments, but only a small minority of dentists in these posts proceed with specialist training in Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery (OMFS). Most of the posts are filled by dentists wishing to train in other dental specialties; however, many will go on to work in general practice. In this connection, dental SHO posts are increasingly included in 'General Professional Training' schemes (GPT) that provide dentists with a further year's postgraduate training after completion of vocational training in general dental practice. The object of GPT is to ensure dentists are better prepared for their future whether they decide to become specialists or generalists and, if the latter, to ensure they have a better appreciation of the role of the dental specialties in their general practice. (The VT/GPT programmes will provide the basis for development of an F1 and F2 programme for dentistry.)

It follows that the retention of these SHO posts within dentistry will be essential to the development of a Modernising Dental Careers programme and I should be grateful for your cooperation in ensuring that all current dental SHO post are retained in dentistry.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Barry Cockcroft". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

Barry Cockcroft  
Acting Chief Dental Officer (England)