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## **Announcement of methodological changes to *Dental Earnings and Expenses, Northern Ireland, 2009/10***

The NHS Information Centre GP and Dental Pay team have made some presentational changes to the publication so that population estimates are rounded to the nearest 50. This is to further clarify that the population estimates are not exact, as they are estimates based on a sample. This has not changed the underlying methodology for the calculation of the earnings results, which are all based on non-rounded population estimates.

There has also been a change in the structure of the report such that a separate methodology document has been produced to sit alongside the report. This is following on from feedback and discussions within the Dental Working Group to make the report shorter and more accessible for readers, but with additional detail available if required.

As part of our continual reviewing of the methodology and through discussion with users, from 2009/10 the classification of dentists by dental type (i.e. Principal or Associate) has been adjusted to include a reference to the size of the dental practice in which the dentist worked. If a dentist worked in 2009/10 in a single hander practice, then by definition they are a Principal dentist, regardless of their expenses to earnings ratio (which is also used to determine dental type).

These changes have been agreed by the Dental Working Group, which has representation from The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, The British Dental Association, The Secretariat for the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration, The Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Business Services Organisation, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs: Knowledge, Analysis and Intelligence Division, and The National Association of Specialist Dental Accountants and Lawyers.