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## Announcement of methodological change to Dental Working Hours

### Introduction

The Dental Working Hours series of Official Statistics provides information on the working patterns, motivation and morale of primary care dentists in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Findings are taken from the biennial Dental Working Patterns Survey; all dentists who provided some NHS/Health Service care in one or both of the two years covered by the survey are invited to participate.

The report includes information on average weekly working hours, weeks of annual leave, the division of time between NHS/Health Services dentistry and clinical and non-clinical work as well as levels of motivation and morale.

This notice describes changes agreed for the 2016/17 and 2017/18 report following consultation with stakeholder groups and a formal publication review.

### Weighting of Results

All results are estimates based on samples and are subject to sampling error which can occur because a sample may not respond or behave in the same fashion as the entire population. Results from the survey responder population are therefore weighted in order to reflect the nature of the overall dental population. Dentists are allocated to strata as follows:

	England and Wales	Scotland and Northern Ireland
<b>Dental type</b>	Providing-Performer (PP) Associate (A)	NA
<b>Contract type</b>	GDS PDS Mixed * (stratified only by dental type due to the low sample size)	NA
<b>Gender</b>	Male Female	Male Female
<b>Age (years)</b>	<35 35-44 45-54 55+	<35 35-44 45+

Because of the smaller sample sizes in Scotland and Northern Ireland, dentists are allocated to one of six strata rather than by dental and contract types as they are in England and Wales.

Information on the dental workforce is provided by the NHS Business Services Authority (NHS BSA) for England and Wales, the Northern Ireland Health and Social

Care Business Services Organisation (BSO) and the NHS National Services Information Services Division Scotland (ISD).

For previous years, this population data was taken at the end of the financial year, i.e. 31 March. However, this final year data was not available for all countries in time to be used for weighting in the 2018 publication and mid-year data, effective at 30 September was used instead. The effect of using this mid-year population data for weighting purposes was subsequently tested and the effects were found to be minimal.

Although the report contains figures for England and Wales combined, there are also some figures for dentists in Wales alone. These figures for 2016/17 and 2017/18 have been weighted to the dental workforce population in Wales rather than the combined England and Wales population which has been the case in previous years.

Details of the stratification and weighting of the population can be found in the Methodology that accompanies the publication.

### **Timing**

These changes will be implemented in the Dental Working Hours 2016/17 and 2017/18 publication of 30 August 2018.

### **Further information**

If you have any comments or questions about these changes, please contact NHS Digital on 0300 303 5678 or email [enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk)