

New Patients Guidance

Under the 2026 Regulations contractors are required to acquire all new patients through the Dental Access Portal (DAP), with a small number of exceptions.

It is recognised that a small number of new patients may have been booked in to practice diaries from patients that have contacted the practices directly prior to 11th March when the 2026 Regulations came in to force. In these cases, all appointments should be booked in prior to 15th June 2026.

Practices are reminded that they must not keep their own new NHS patient waiting lists as part of the 2024/25 Annual Uplift conditions. The DAP supports the Health Board in understanding the current demand for NHS Dental Services.

Patients who have not received a course of treatment from the practice in the previous 36 months are not considered to be active patients of the practice and should be advised to register on the Dental Access Portal for reallocation.

Exceptions

- **Children whose parents or grandparents that are active patients of the practice**

An active patient means an NHS patient of practice who has received a course of treatment from the contractor in the previous 36 months and that course of treatment was either banded under the 2006 Regulations or a care package or a new patient assessment under the 2026 Regulations.

In the above scenario, permission does not need to be sought but the contractor must notify the Local Health Board within 7 working days.

Practices should explain to these patients that their details will be shared with the Health Board as part of the notification process.

In addition, practices should enquire with the parent / grandparent if the child has registered on the DAP and, if so, either:

- ask that the person who has registered the child logs back in to the DAP to remove their application so they do not receive an offer at a later date.
- ask the person who has registered the child consents for the practice to request that the DAP team to remove their application on their behalf so they do not receive an offer at a later date.

- **Patients that present at the practice through the dental helpline for urgent treatment**
- **Children that present at the practice in pain**
- **Adults with a true dental emergency**

Once the urgent treatment has been completed, these patients can be accepted as a new active patient of the practice with permission from the Health Board.

Permission should be obtained before providing further appointments for routine care.

Practices should explain to these patients that their details will be shared with the Health Board as part of the this process and enquire whether they have registered on the DAP.

A spreadsheet has been developed to notify or request permission. This should be completed and returned to BCU.DAPEnquiries@wales.nhs.uk