

D01

Ymchwiliad i Ddeintyddiaeth yng Nghymru / Inquiry into Dentistry in Wales

Ymateb gan Unigolyn

Response from an individual

Dear Sir / Madam

Re: Consultation regarding Dentistry in Wales: Provision of Orthodontic Services.

I am the Chair of the Local Orthodontic Committee in North Wales and I am also a Consultant Orthodontist at [REDACTED], North Wales.

The Local Orthodontic Committee is a group who represent and include all orthodontic providers in North Wales both in the primary and secondary care sectors.

As a Consultant Orthodontist I work within secondary care in the hospital orthodontic service.

Based on my involvement with orthodontics in North Wales I would like to highlight to the inquiry my considerable concerns about orthodontic staff shortages at all levels within our region and also the large demand for our services. We have been understaffed for a considerable amount of time and staffing levels are set to get worse as our most senior consultant is due to retire and our newest consultant has recently resigned to take up a post in England.

The consultants in the hospital service are unendingly generous giving their own personal time to ensure we provide the best service we can for our patients. This is above and beyond anything else I have seen whilst working in other areas of the UK.

In North Wales, we have a strong Orthodontic Managed Clinical Network and an inclusive Local Orthodontic Committee which helps us communicate well and use all our resources effectively.

However, what we crucially need is support and recognition from the Welsh Government for the hard work being done and real investment into our specialty for the future.

First impressions count in every aspect of an individual's life and as basic as it sounds a simple smile has the power to make the difference. Orthodontic services deliver a chance of equality to patients with significant dental and/or facial deformity. Orthodontic treatment can take 2-3 years to complete but can contribute to a person's wellbeing on a physical and psychological level for life.

I strongly believe the population of North Wales should continue to have this service and further investment made so timely access to treatments can be made. At present we are struggling to keep waiting lists down to two years and it is likely if we can't recruit and retain staff as has happened historically waiting times will become much worse.

Realistically, our region is remote compared to other areas of the UK and we need to be able to offer incentives to recruit and retain orthodontic providers. We need help from the Welsh Government to make this happen.

Please take the contents of this email into consideration when making your decisions regarding future orthodontic services for the people of North Wales.

Kind regards