



AGENDA FOR CHANGE: GUIDANCE FOR DENTAL NURSES ON THE JOB EVALUATION PROFILES

1. INTRODUCTION

A total of seven profiles have now been published (April 2005), ranging from Bands 2 to 6, following extensive work by lay members of *amicus*. These Job Profiles are a significant improvement on the original two profiles that were published in the First Edition of the Job Evaluation Handbook (March 2003), and now, we believe, more fully reflect the differing roles and levels of practice in dental nursing. Indeed, no dental nurses from the Early Implementer sites were matched to the original Band 2 profile, underlining our belief that it did not truly reflect the role and levels of responsibility of any dental nurse.

2. PRESENT STATUS

Seven profiles have been published at the following levels:

Clinical Support Worker (Dentistry)

Band 2 = £11,879 - £14,739

This is, in effect, the former "Dental Nurse (Unqualified)" profile, although we have strong doubts that such a role actually exists, a view that the GDC have been invited to comment upon. However, we are willing for the profile to be published in order that our view outlined above can be tested in matching. We will review the need for this profile following the full roll out of Agenda for Change. The Dental Surgery Assistant qualification cited in the profile was only available until 1990.

Dental Nurse – Entry Level

Band 3 = £13,694 - £16,389

This is the profile for dental nurses new to the profession, undertaking training, and we do not view it as necessary for post-holders to progress to the top of the scale in order to progress to the Dental Nurse (Band 4) profile. We would expect post-holders to be seeking re-evaluation at 1-2 years in post, as they will be gaining practical experience alongside any study. There is no need for a Band 4 post to be created – the post-holder, after such time, should be operating at that level, and can, therefore, reasonably request that their post be re-evaluated. This profile has been allocated factor JE level 3 for the knowledge, training & experience factor. However, there is a need to be mindful that the lower level, JE level 2 is designed for knowledge that “generally takes a few weeks in the job to learn.” Consequently, level 3 is the correct JE level for this factor, which applies to new entrant dental nurses embarking upon appropriate training courses.

Dental Nurse

Band 4 - £16,004 - £19,248

In our view, this profile is intended to be the “career grade” profile. We note that there is presently no dental nursing diploma that is nationally available (with reference to JE level 4 in the knowledge, training & experience factor). However, JE level 4 does allow for “equivalent experience,” which many dental nurses will have, not least through the concept of ‘grand parenting’ as per the proposals for professional registration.

Dental Nurse Specialist

Band 5 - £18,698 – £24,198

This profile is for those dental nurses who have undergone additional post-qualification training with associated experience in order to practice in a specialism, such as orthodontics, maxillo-facial, health promotion, and other specialist dental areas. Trusts should not implement any artificial “quotas” of such profiles, and all dental nurses practising at this level should receive Band 5. However, the development of and requirement for such roles will need to reflect service needs.

Dental Nurse Team Leader

Band 5 - £18,698 - £24,198

A key aspect of matching to this profile will be the requirement of the post-holder to supervise and allocate the work of dental nurse students and junior staff. There is a need for knowledge of supervisory procedures. It is recognised that the Job Evaluation guidance notes makes no reference to what constitutes a “team.” However, if post-holders organise the work of others, then they should match to at least this profile (or higher).

These notes should be read in conjunction with those for the dental nurse manager profile in order to identify the differences between these two levels of practice (see below).

Dental Nurse Tutor

Band 6 - £22,328 - £30,247

Post-holders operating at this level will plan and co-ordinate training course programmes in liaison with the training authority to ensure compliance with national standards. They will also evaluate and assess student performance.

Dental Nurse Team Manager

Band 6 - £22,328 - £30,247

A key difference between this profile and that of the Team Leader is that there is a requirement to possess management training and experience (as opposed to merely knowledge of supervisory procedures). There is also a need to organise complex (ie. conflicting) activities, and also a requirement for proposing policy or service changes which impact beyond the post-holder's own work area. (This latter quality is not required of a dental nurse team leader). The freedom to act factor is also important in this profile, as it requires the post-holder to demonstrate significant discretion, although within a defined set of parameters. This contrasts with the team leader, who acts within established parameters, adopting clearly defined policies and procedures.

3. THE PROCESS

Existing job descriptions of Dental Nurses will be "matched" to one of these profiles. This "matching" will be undertaken by a **Matching Panel**, which will consist of trained individuals and will be equally composed of Trust management and staff side representatives.

If a match cannot be made, then that person's job will be evaluated locally to produce a profile.

If a job is matched to a nationally agreed profile, then the post-holder will either agree or disagree with that match. Should the post-holder disagree, then in order to instigate a review, they will have to demonstrate and justify where they feel the profile falls short of the factors in their actual job.

Those who feel there have been procedural flaws in the process (eg. job description not agreed, matching panel not held in partnership) will have recourse to their Trust's grievance procedure to address such matters.

4. FAQs

Where can I find these profiles?

They have been published on the Department of Health website, specifically at: <http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/10/40/81/04104081.pdf>

I have already been matched to one of the old profiles– what should I do?

You should apply for a review on the basis that the profiles have significantly changed.

My employer has stated that they cannot afford these levels of pay – is this true?

The Secretary of State for Health has stated, on numerous occasions, that Agenda for Change is fully funded. Your employer should be asked to find out what it has done with the extra finance provided by the Treasury for this purpose.

Where do I seek further information and guidance?

amicus has a growing network of lay or working representatives in workplaces, who are supported by Regional Officers, one of whom will have been allocated to your Trust or Health Board. Contact your local representative in the first instance, or your Regional Office if you are unsure of who your local representative is

(see: <http://www.amicustheunion.org/Default.aspx?page=53> for details of your nearest regional centre).

Alternatively, contact the BADN on

G. Owen, 27.6.05.