

Dental Leadership Alumni Newsletter

May 2024



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Welcome

Fleur Kellett - Associate Dental Dean for Dental Foundation Training and Fellows, NHS England – Midlands (WT&E)



A warm welcome to this latest edition of the Dental Leadership Fellow Newsletter. It has been an incredibly busy winter/spring season for the Leadership Fellow workstream who have working hard on both individual and collaborative projects.

In addition to the project work, the Leadership Fellows planned, coordinated and delivered the inaugural Regional Careers Conference for the over 150 Foundation Trainees. It was a real team effort to deliver an outstanding event – coordinating 26 speakers across a main conference room and 4 breakout areas. A special thanks must go to Sophie Wu and Harry Smith who embraced the opportunity to project manage this complex event and set the benchmark high for next year's event.

I would like to update you all about exciting developments for the expansion of the Dental Leadership Fellow opportunities in the Midlands region. From Sept 2024 we are growing our programme to offer increased opportunities for Primary Care Dentists and Dental Care Professionals. More detailed information can be found on our [website](#) – but below is a quick summary:



Regional Foundation Dentists and Dental Therapists Careers Day Conference – December 2023

Dental Care Professional Posts

3 x salaried DCP leadership posts – (2 days leadership) the remainder of the week being spent working clinically.

The posts are suitable for all:

- DCPs at various stages of their clinical career
- DCPs looking for non-clinical professional experience
- DCPs looking to enhance their professional portfolio and CVs
- DCPs starting out in their leadership journey

Dentist Posts

- **2 x 0.5WTE posts Associate GDPs** (2-day leadership component only)
- **1 x salaried GDP post at The Maltings Dental Practice**, Grantham (3 days clinical, 2 days leadership)
- **3 x salaried GDP post in Primary Care NHS Dental Practice** (3 days clinical, 2 days leadership)
 - 1 x post in Herefordshire/Worcestershire
 - 1 x post in Northamptonshire
 - 1 x post in Lincolnshire
- **1 x secondary care Dentist Leadership Fellow** (3 days clinical, 2 days leadership) – at University Hospitals Birmingham in Oral Surgery

Why the increase in DCP and Primary Care posts?

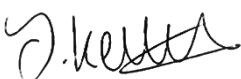
The Advancing Dental Care report made the following two key recommendations regarding dental leadership and team development:

- To promote and so improve the identification of potential leaders and ensure the accessibility and take up of leadership development opportunities provided by the NHS and Regional Leadership Academies by Dental Professionals linked to **supporting team building** and wider locality collaboration.
- **To develop system leadership from within primary care**, identifying and supporting high- calibre individuals to maximise their potential.

Increasing talk about skill mix and need for registrants to work to their full scope of practice means we need more opportunities for DCPs and GDPs to undertake leadership training.

The September 2023 cohort will be delivering end of year presentations on the afternoon of Tuesday 3rd September. The event will take place at our Stephenson Street office in Birmingham, but a virtual link will also be available for remote viewing. If you would like to be sent an invitation to join the virtual link, please register your interest via this [survey link](#).

I am excited about what the future holds for this unique programme and look forward to introducing the Sept 2024 cohort to you in the next edition of the newsletter.



Fleur Kellett

**Associate Dental Dean
NHS England – Workforce, Training and Education**

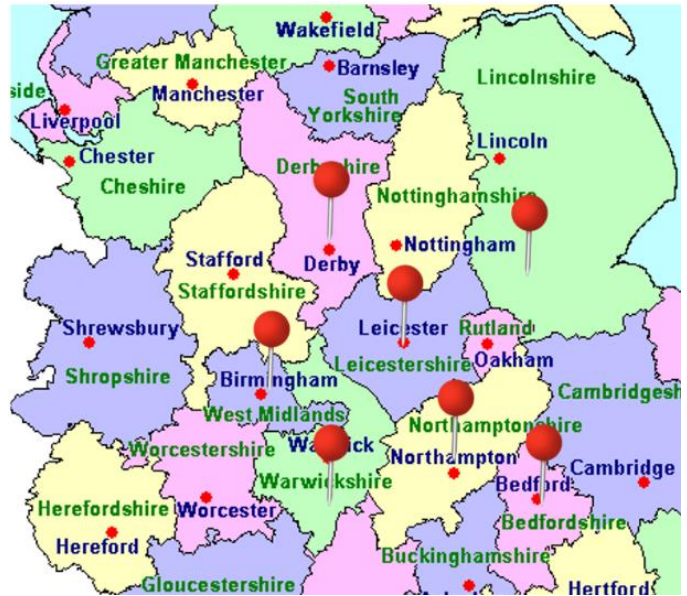
Hear from the current Dental Leadership Fellows

What were they all doing before they began their leadership fellow posts?

Some were working in primary care as associates, some were working in CDS, some were doing DCT, one was working abroad in Melbourne Dental Hospital.

Where our current Fellows are based

Within our fellowship program, diverse clinical roles exist. Some of our fellows serve in Community Dental Services across Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Leamington Spa, and Rugby. Additionally, we have fellows working in primary care, Special Care in Warwickshire, and Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (OMFS) at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.



1. What has been your favourite thing about the role so far?

All the opportunities for both personal and professional growth, and the protected time to work on projects

Time to work on all my projects and connecting with lots of different people

Learning the career progression there is for DCPs in dentistry!

Everything! It's been a really good year, I've thoroughly enjoyed networking with fellow dental professionals and it's showed me there's so much more to the dentistry than just the four walls of the surgery we work in

Freedom to work on a range of projects and collaborate with a people from different roles within dentistry

The range of opportunities and projects we can get involved in, and we can choose these projects based on our individual interests

2. What has been your least favourite thing about the role so far?

Realising that there is more bureaucracy behind the veil of leadership

Juggling 2 days fellowship and 3 days training role

Balancing the clinical work with the non clinical work!

Nothing

None

Non-clinical (or laptop-facing work as I like to call it) has its challenges. There were times where I felt a bit overwhelmed with the volume of work, but time management was key in getting through this

3. Has anything surprised you during your time as a leadership fellow?

The abundance of projects available to get involved in

The time it takes to get ideas or projects moving

The amount of work that goes on behind the scenes in managing all the different postgraduate training schemes amazed me. You just have no idea as a trainee.

In a couple of weeks I'm speaking a national conference, which I certainly could not foresee a few months ago!

The amount of opportunities we have!

I've surprised myself with how organised and decisive I can be and that it's really not as scary being in a leadership role as I originally thought

4. What did you spend your study budget on?

Postgraduate certificate in Medical Education at the Uni of Dundee

Pgcert in healthcare and education

Modules towards a PG cert in public health

PG cert in Digital Health

Medical Education PGCert

I chose to spend it on attending the FMLM conference as well as 1 to 1 coaching in emotional intelligence

5. Can you summarise one of your projects in a couple of sentences?

I am researching the feasibility of a minimally invasive oral care pathway for anxious patients in community dental care settings.

Promoting careers in dentistry - talking to school children (years 9 upwards) about the variety of careers within dentistry.

Implementing a dental pathway for looked after children to ensure that looked after children's oral health needs are incorporated into their overall health care plan, and to help with the transfer of information about these children's dental needs. I took over this project from a previous fellow.

Implementation of a dysphagia checklist for care home staff across Nottinghamshire Collaboration with speech and language therapists, general medical practitioners, nurses, and care home staff to amend the existing dysphagia checklist which is used in care home across Nottinghamshire.

Promoting Dental Careers in schools

Digital Transformation with pre-existing tools for both my department and also training for DCTs

6. What would be your top tip(s) to someone starting as a leadership fellow?

Start with the end in mind. Have specific objectives you want to achieve and use that to plan your non-clinical time. 12 months will fly by!

Eat the frog but remember to make time for yourself

Find what you enjoy and are interested in

Think about what you want to get out of the year. Get involved in projects you are interested in. Know that the year will fly by!

At the start of your fellow not down some goals you want to achieve in your year and pick projects that will help you meet your goals.

Try to find projects that you are interested in - this will keep you motivated throughout! Really make the most of the year as it goes so quickly!!

7. What are you hoping to do (job-wise) after the fellowship?

I am applying for Orthodontic Specialty Training

Embark on med school (fingers crossed)

Continue progressing in my current role, possibly with some non clinical elements

Specialty training

Stay in my current role and progress through training - potentially even hygiene!

Community Dental Officer Role and then hopefully get into speciality training for special care dentistry

Leadership Alumni Highlights

As a unique opportunity in the field of dentistry, Leadership Fellows have progressed onto a variety of clinical and non-clinical positions. We got in touch with previous fellows to find out more about their journeys.

Mo Jaffer Ismail



What are you up to now?

Following the end of my Fellowship, I commenced a role with NHS England as a Senior Policy Manager within the National Children and Young People's Transformation Programme. I lead on diabetes, epilepsy, oral health and have recently taken on the obesity portfolio. My role involves developing a clear strategy and evidence-base on priority areas, and implementing various pilot programmes to test innovation and new models of care.

What were the most important things you learnt in your fellowship year?

The Fellowship role taught me many lessons, the most important of which was the power of developing effective and trusted relationships. Implementing change in any setting or system is invariably dependent on whether you can leverage key relationships and bring people along with you – investing time in getting to know key players and what drives them and what their priorities are, and then finding avenues of aligning these with your objectives will help accelerate change. Looking to the future, I aim to continue working within healthcare policy and building on the skills and experience gained in my current role.

Priya Chohan



What are you up to now?

I am currently an Oral Surgery Specialty Trainee based at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals in the final year of my training. I have spent the last few years completing my rotational oral surgery training post where I have worked in several units across the Yorkshire and Humber region.

What was your journey from Leadership Fellowship to where you are now?

I completed a Clinical Leadership Fellowship in Oral Surgery with HEE Midlands and East from 2018-2019. I subsequently went on to complete a Locum appointment in Oral Surgery post at Birmingham Dental Hospital. I then successfully applied for oral surgery specialty training.

What were the most important things you learnt in your fellowship year?

Completing the fellowship was invaluable to me as I was able to understand the importance of managing differing perspectives, and the bigger picture when it comes to allocating resources and policy making. I completed a national research project on patient safety in dentistry and used this to implement positive cultural and policy changes within the profession. I was also able to gain a better understanding of the role of professional groups such as local dental networks and managed clinical networks. I still continue to collaborate with the same network of professionals from diverse backgrounds I was able to work with, and this has extended to working with successive fellows on further projects.

How did the fellowship help you get to where you are now?

The wide range of projects I was involved in has helped to provide me with a diverse skillset which was helpful for my specialty training application. I have also continued to work with stakeholders on my patient safety project with the Office of the Chief Dental Officer, where it has evolved into a larger national project called Project Sphere. This has strengthened my leadership and management skills, which has been important to enhance as I prepare to complete my specialty training.

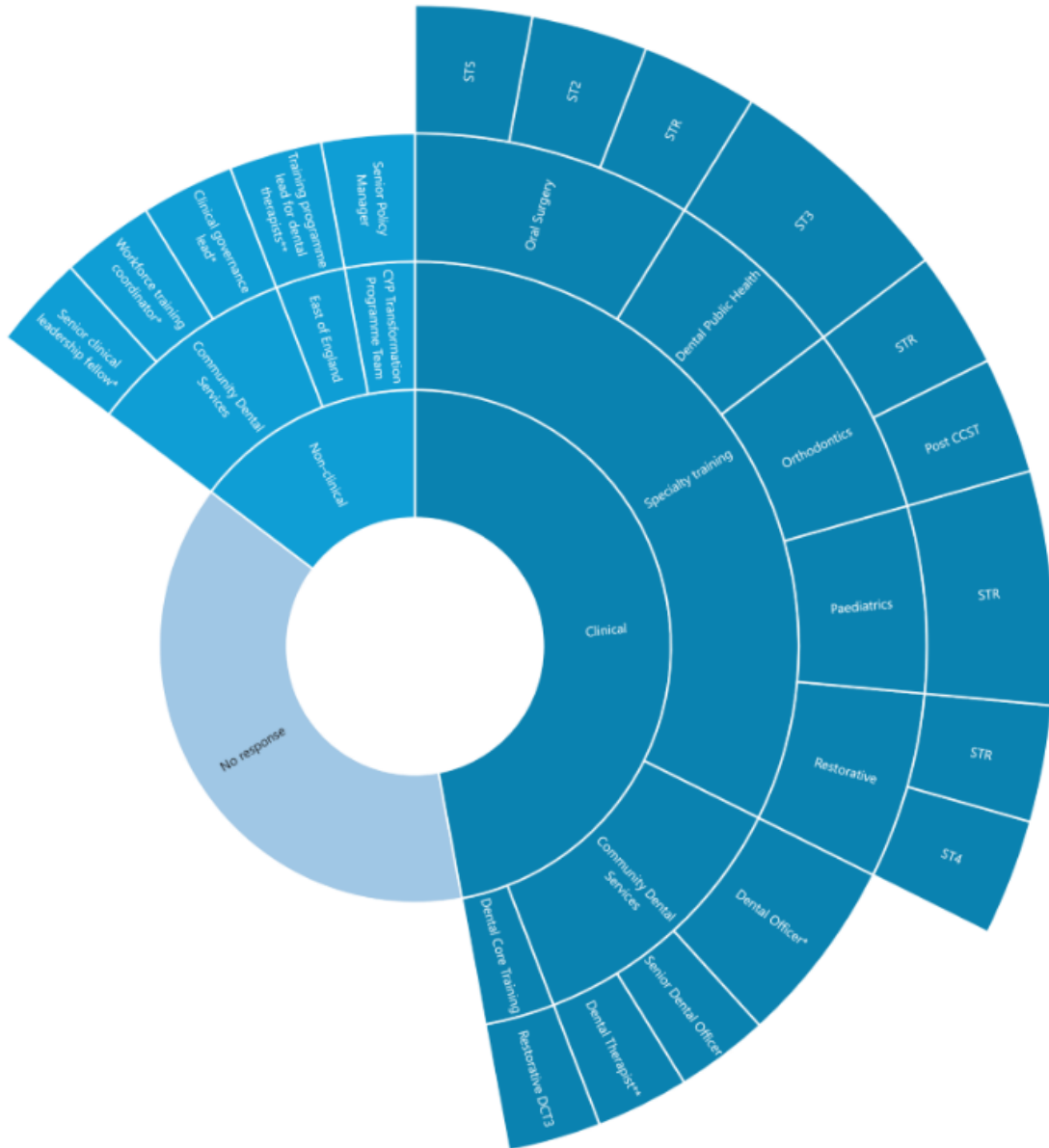
What are your planned next career steps?

I plan to enjoy the final phase of my specialty training and also continue to work on the national leadership projects I am involved in.

DLA Survey

38 Dental Leadership Fellows in total have completed the programme, but what are they all doing now? We have had responses from over half our predecessors and the chart below shows what they are currently doing. There’s a range of dental specialties they have moved onto, and some have taken up non-clinical commitments alongside their current clinical roles.

Where are the Dental Leadership Alumni at now?



*Both “Clinical Governance Lead” and “Workforce Training Coordinator” are additional non-clinical roles belonging to one of the CDS Dental Officers. “Senior Clinical Leadership Fellow” is an additional role belonging to the other CDS Dental Officer.

**Training Programme Lead for Dental Therapists is an additional non-clinical role belonging to the CDS Dental Therapist



The BDIA Dental Showcase 2024

The BDIA Showcase is an annual event organised by the British Dental Industry Association. It serves as a platform for dental professionals, industry representatives, and stakeholders to come together and discuss the latest trends, innovations, and challenges in the dental industry. The conference aims to provide attendees with valuable insights and knowledge through various presentations, workshops, and networking opportunities.



[Fleur Kellett - Associate Dental Dean for DFT and Fellows introducing the journey and impact of Midlands Regional Dental Leadership Fellows](#)

We were delighted to hear talks from some familiar faces in the CDO theatre. Jennie Ross (Associate Postgraduate Dean for Dental Workforce Development) spoke to us about the opportunities and practicalities of research in general practice. We were also given the opportunity to talk to delegates about 'Leadership Career Opportunities for the Whole Dental Team'. Following an introduction from Fleur Kellett, Jennie spoke about the need for leadership opportunities from primary care dentists and DCPs and outlined the new leadership fellow posts available for 2024-25. Our very own Conner Reynolds (Primary Care Dental Leadership Fellow) and Sophie Fletcher (DCP Leadership Fellow) spoke about the abundance of projects and leadership development opportunities they have had this year including the challenges and surprises they have faced along the way thus far.

The conference was followed by an evening social held at 'Tapa Tapa' hosted by the OCDO team and attended by honorary consultants, speakers, roundtable attendees and fellows. Attendees were treated to a buffet of delicious tapas and had the opportunity to network and catch up with colleagues.

The event was a fantastic opportunity for everyone to get together, learn new things and promote the fellowship, and was certainly a highlight of the year so far.

Following an introduction from Fleur Kellett, Jennie spoke about the need for leadership opportunities from primary care dentists and DCPs and outlined the new leadership fellow posts available for 2024-25. Our very own Conner Reynolds (Primary

Care Dental Leadership Fellow) and Sophie Fletcher (DCP Leadership Fellow) spoke about the abundance of projects and leadership development opportunities they have had this year



From left to right: [Fleur Kellett](#) (Associate Dental Dean for DFT and Fellows), [Jasraj Dhadha](#) (Leadership Fellow in Special Care), [Connor Reynolds](#) (Primary Care Dental Leadership Fellow), [Harry Smith](#) (Leadership Fellow in Special Care), [Sophie Wu](#) (Oral Surgery Leadership Fellow), [Sophie Fletcher](#) (DCP Leadership Fellow), [Jennie Ross](#) (Associate Postgraduate Dean for Dental Workforce Development)



In Sophie's own words



Sophie Fletcher - DCP Leadership Fellow, speaking on her year so far

“Being the only DCP leadership fellow at times I have definitely felt imposter syndrome creeping in. Through the coaching sessions offered through the fellowship, I have learned to focus on adopting a growth mindset, use of positive self-talk, and utilizing mindfulness. Using these tools six months on after starting my fellowship... I recognise that I deserve to be here and, I know I have a lot to contribute.”

This is the first time I have stood up in front of an audience and talked about something which isn't workforce development related. It is something I never imagined I would have the confidence to do. With public speaking coaching from Pavni Lakhani and support from Fleur Kellett, Jennie Ross and my cohort of fellows I had the confidence to stand on the podium and deliver my talk. I would go as far as saying it has been one of my career highlights so far!

The Leadership Fellowship is a great opportunity and I can't wait to see what the future DCP's do.

In Conner's own words

“I have found the year immensely rewarding, the shift from working full-time in a clinical setting to the leadership fellow post allows you to take a small step away from the clinical aspect to immerse yourself in a new environment involving leadership and management within the NHS, whilst also maintaining clinical duties.

The year has made me realise there is so much more to dentistry than just the four walls of the surgery. The post allows you to network with your fellow peers, be active in Local Dental Councils, Local Dental Networks and I was very fortunate to work closely with the Chief Dental Officer.



Conner Reynolds - Primary Care Dental Leadership Fellow, speaking on his year so far