

Wales recruitment initiative re-launched



The recruitment initiative aimed at encouraging future dental trainees to take up opportunities across rural Wales has been re-launched by Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) with an increased offer.

Most new dental graduates choose to complete their Dental Foundation Training (DFT) year in a general dental practice. However, many dental graduates prefer to complete their DFT year in more urban areas, leaving some practices in rural parts of Wales under resourced with empty training positions.

In 2021/22, 6% of vacancies were left unfilled. This meant that support packages had to be rapidly put in place for these practices, and unfortunately access to NHS care for the local population in that area reduced.

As a solution, HEIW launched DFT WERO (Welsh Enhanced Recruitment Offer) in 2022, a new initiative to encourage trainees

to complete their training in a rural practice and increase dental services for people in the area. The initiative offers an enhanced support package for trainees who carry out their DFT year in specific rural dental practices in West, North and Central Wales. This offer has returned this year with an increased rural living grant.

In 2023, ten out of 12 dental foundation training posts were successfully filled through DFT WERO.

This enhanced package includes benefits such as:

- £7,000 rural living grant
- Weekly study day programme
- Royal College membership exam fees covered by HEIW
- £600 study budget towards exam preparation
- Access to free online learning resources
- Wellbeing support.

William Howell, practice owner at Cardigan Dental Practice which offers a dental training place, said: 'Cardigan offers so much from a thriving town centre to its beautiful beaches and countryside. Our new dental practice has state-of-the-art facilities, experienced staff who are passionate about teaching and potential employment opportunities once the training has been completed. We will do everything to make trainees feel welcome and I'm sure they'll end up falling in love with the area just like we have.'

The initiative will open to new and upcoming graduates from Cardiff University Dental School, and graduates of other schools who have an existing link to Wales in February 2024.

To find out more, visit <https://heiw.nhs.wales/education-and-training/dental/training-programmes/dental-foundation-training/rural-training-wero/>.

Maya Desai Scholarship goes to Farhat Sawhney

In December, Farhat Sawhney, who is undertaking specialist training in endodontics at the Eastman, became the first recipient of the Maya Desai Postgraduate Dental Scholarship.

The aim of the scholarship is to assist students pursuing advanced dental training at UCL Eastman Dental Institute who intend to base their long-term practice in Norfolk or Suffolk.

Maya Desai was a dentist who graduated from the University of Birmingham in 1983 and spent all of her practising career in Norfolk. She undertook the MSc training programme at UCL Eastman Dental Institute in 2002 and then established a successful endodontic referral practice.

Applications for the next academic year are now open. Although primarily aimed at increasing the presence of specialist practitioners in Norfolk and Suffolk, consideration would be given to other applicants aiming to introduce such practice to areas of England currently lacking these services.

Information about the scholarship can be found at <https://www.mayadesaischolarship.com>.

Farhat is pictured (left) with Maya Desai's husband.

