

Oral Surgery within Primary Care Settings; The Trainee Experience

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Objectives:

The demand for enhanced Oral Surgery services within primary care settings has risen due to the need to improve patient accessibility and alleviate strain on secondary/tertiary centres.

This study aims to explore Oral Surgery trainees' experiences, knowledge, and career aspirations related to primary care based Oral Surgery with the aim of informing future training curricula.

Methods:

Oral Surgery trainees were invited via the BAOS to participate in an online survey open from September 2024 - January 2025. The survey addressed trainees' experience in delivering Oral Surgery services in primary care prior to, alongside and as part of their Specialty Training, as well as their career aspirations.

Results:

Provisional results indicate that while the majority of trainees aspire to Consultant roles post training completion, approximately three-quarters also aim to work within primary care based Oral Surgery.

A significant proportion support the expansion of Oral Surgery services within primary care, with many advocating for these to be specialist led. Fewer than half of these trainees currently gain clinical experience of Oral Surgery within primary care as part of their training, and around a quarter have sought this exposure independently to gain additional experience.

Less than 60% feel their Specialty Training adequately prepares them for primary care Oral Surgery roles, and while approximately half feel aware of NHS Oral Surgery contracts, only a third feel confident in managing them.

Conclusion:

This survey highlights an interest among Oral Surgery trainees to incorporate primary care based Oral Surgery roles within their future careers. Provisional results suggest a perceived need for enhanced training in these settings and management of contracts, ensuring trainees are better prepared to guide future service development within diverse career pathways.

Further responses will be gathered as the survey remains open following distribution by COPDEND to UK deaneries in January 2025.