



Dental student involvement in national vaccination programmes

The Dental Schools Council (DSC) and dental schools across the UK would support any proposal that dental students be involved in the delivery of national vaccination programmes. Intramuscular and other injections are part of routine dental training and taking part in any national vaccination programme would give students the opportunity to broaden their healthcare exposure, communicate with a large number of patients and further their experiences of working in a multidisciplinary team. All of this would be valuable to their learning.

Whilst injections are a routine part of dental practice and all Schools would welcome dentistry further integrating itself into more routine healthcare and health screening, it must be emphasised that at present vaccination is not a core requirement of the skills required on graduation of a dentist. Dental students' learning and participation on the dental course must therefore come first and appropriate training, support and supervision must be available for them to participate in any national vaccination programme. Any participation in vaccination programmes must be undertaken in time that would not otherwise be used in students' degree programmes, as they lost valuable learning opportunities during the national lockdowns and they must now focus on achieving the learning outcomes that will allow them to graduate on time.

DSC believes that student involvement in any vaccination programme should be optional at the level of the individual student and several prerequisites must be guaranteed before their participation:

- Appropriate training to carry out vaccination
- Appropriate close supervision
- Provision of appropriate and adequate PPE
- NHS/Crown indemnification