

**Quality Improvement (Research) Hours – Information for Dentists**

**What are QI (Research) hours?**

Dentists on an NHS Health Board ‘dental list’ are required to undertake at least 15 hours of quality improvement (QI) activities during each ‘relevant’ three-year QI period[[1]](#footnote-1)[[2]](#footnote-2). Participation in eligible practice-based research that explores the quality of dental care can count towards dentists’ QI activity requirements. Within each three-year QI period, participation in approved QI (Research) activities will be eligible for up to **seven** hours QI credit[[3]](#footnote-3). General Dental Practitioners can claim QI Allowance in respect of their QI (Research) hours.

**What type of research can count towards my QI activities requirement?**

Four main categories of research projects are potentially eligible for QI (Research). These are:

**Category A** Rapid Evaluation Practitioner practice-based dental research projects conducted by the Scottish Dental Practice Based Research Network (SDPBRN).

**Category B** Practice-based dental research projects conducted by Higher Education Institutions or NHS Health Boards.

**Category C** Practice-based dental research projects that were awarded research funding through a process of open competition including high quality peer review.

**Category D** National, practice-based, dental quality improvement initiatives that include a reflective research component.

Within these categories eligible projects must investigate the quality of dental care and include a component to enable dentists to: 1) reflect on the quality of the care they provide; and 2) develop and take forward action plans as required.

**How do I know if the research I have been invited to take part in can count towards my QI hours?**

If the research you have been invited to take part in can count towards your QI hours, the research team will inform you of this and will let you know how many hours can be claimed as a result of your participation.

You will also receive details of the reflective activities that must be completed before QI hours can be claimed. At a minimum, these activities will require you to write a reflective report at the end of your involvement in the research project. Templates will be provided to help you do this.

**How do I claim QI (Research) hours?**

When you have completed your participation in a research project that has been awarded QI (Research) hours, the research team will send your details (name and GDC number) to [SDPBRN](http://www.sdpbrn.org.uk/). On receipt of your details, SDPBRN will add you to the relevant QI (Research) project on the [NES Portal](https://portal.scot.nhs.uk/). You will receive an email via Portal to confirm this has been done.

Once you have been added to the QI project you will be able to access the project’s documentation and templates in the ‘Your QI Projects’ area of iBooklet. For information only, the project’s QI documentation and templates will also be publicly available via the SDPBRN website.

On completion, your reflective report and any other required reflective activities (e.g. action plans) should be uploaded for review via the project’s ‘Supporting Documentation’ tab. This should be done no more than one month after you have been added to the project on Portal. Full instructions will be provided on the project’s guidance documentation.

Following review and approval of your submitted reflective activities, SDPBRN will certify your successful completion of the QI (Research) activity. You will receive email confirmation that this has been done and you can then claim the QI hours that have been awarded.

**Can I take part in a research project without claiming the QI (Research) hours available?**

It is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to claim the QI (Research) hours that have been awarded to a project. **If you decide not to claim the QI (Research) hours you can still take part in the research project**. The only difference is that you do not need to complete and submit the project’s reflective activities.

**Who can I contact for more information?**

If you would like more information please contact:

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1. See the NHS (General Dental Services) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2017 available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/289/made> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See NHS (General Dental Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2010 Part IV 40 (5) for proportionate arrangements when a dentist joins a Health Board list after the first day of a ‘relevant’ period. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Vocational Dental Practitioners (VDPs) are required to participate in a QI project which their VT Adviser will review, approve, sign off and certify. This is the only QI activity VDPs can be credited with during their VT year, and it is not possible to award VDPs QI (Research) hours. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)