

**General
Dental
Council**

Costed Corporate Plan 2025 – 2027



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1. Foreword from Chief Executive and Registrar

Our primary role is to protect the public by setting the framework for professional regulation and ensuring patient safety.

Since I joined the GDC in June 2024, I have remained committed to engaging, listening and understanding the issues that dental professionals face. I understand the pressure they are under and thank them for their hard work.

As well as listening, I also want to help you to understand our priorities, so that you can see what we are doing to ensure that the public remains confident in the dental professionals that we regulate.

Our Costed Corporate Plan (CCP) sets out our workplan for the next three years, the fees that we charge, our forecast income and expenditure for 2025, as well as reporting on our progress and achievements in 2024. I share it with you as an opportunity for you to find out more about who we are and what we do.

Later in 2025 we will be consulting on our new Corporate Strategy for 2026 – 2028, and I would encourage you to respond to this consultation.

Throughout 2024 we continued to engage with dental professionals and stakeholders, convening three Dental Leadership Network events, and attending key industry events and conferences across the four nations of the UK. It is clear that the dental system continued to be overstretched. We have seen evidence of a shift in dental professionals moving away from NHS dental services to the private sector, further impacting the significant access issues to NHS services that patients continue to face.

Restrictive legislation can be a barrier for regulation and dental professionals. While we will continue to press for legislative reform, we recognise that there is little prospect of this in the next few years. Even then, it will not resolve all of the issues faced by the professions. Therefore, in our plans we are driving improvements where we can within our current legislation and constraints. At the same time, we will continue to support and empower the dental team to deliver safe and effective dental care to high standards of professionalism.

Notable achievements last year included publishing data that provided new information on the working patterns of dental professionals, substantial improvements in the timeliness of our regulatory operations across both Registration and Fitness to Practise (FtP), our convening role to bring the sector together to highlight the challenges facing patients and the profession, through the Dental Leadership Network, and the launch of our new values in late 2024.

In our plans for 2025 you will see updated guidance on the Standards for Education and Scope of Practice, which are both possible as a result of extensive and invaluable stakeholder engagement. We will continue to improve Fitness to Practise by improving our signposting to help, improving our guidance on decision-making to ensure fairness and consistency, and by looking to address and reduce fear of us.

We also want to improve our digital capability and modernise our processes, to improve the experience for dental professionals accessing online services, such as registration and renewal. We have work underway this year to do this to build the experience of us in line with the needs of our users.

During 2025 we will continue to invest in our staff and our culture – as we build a values-led organisation. Like everyone, we need to attract and retain the right staff and support them in our work as effectively as we can.

We know that new priorities, not on our initial plan, will require significant work, and we must be mindful of these. However, I remain confident in our Costed Corporate Plan and how it will enable us to play our part in working with the whole dental sector to deliver the government's plans for the recovery of NHS dentistry, which includes more legislative change regarding how we register overseas dental professionals.

Later in 2025 we will consult on our Corporate Strategy from 2026 to 2028. We look forward to hearing views on what we need to deliver to be a trusted and effective regulator, and to continue to support and work with dental professionals who deliver safe and effective care to their patients.



Tom Whiting | Chief Executive and Registrar

2. Corporate Strategy 2023 – 2025

Our Corporate Strategy for 2023 – 2025 forms part of our long-term ambition to move dental professional regulation toward preventing harm to patients and the public, rather than responding to the consequences of it.

Our Corporate Strategy sets out our further steps to continue to move the balance of our effort towards prevention in a different context of public protection, dental care and regulation. This strategy is set against the backdrop of a number of challenges including the delays and uncertainty over the plans to reform the health professional regulators, which is an essential component in the achievement of our ambition. In addition, the ongoing economic uncertainty continues to affect patient choice, dental businesses, individual dental professionals and the GDC.

Throughout 2024, the dental sector continued to face different pressures and challenges. Our research pointed to the system continuing to be overstretched. This included increased patient demand and more evidence of a shift in dental professionals moving away from NHS dental services to the private sector, creating significant issues for patients looking to access NHS dental services.

Flexibility and adaptability remain essential for us to respond to the challenges the sector faces, and we have built in agility to allow the strategic plan to be able to respond to a changing set of circumstances.

At the same time, we will continue to press for the opportunities that legislative reform may bring, but it cannot be guaranteed and will not resolve all existing issues. Therefore, we will continue to drive improvements within our current constraints while supporting and empowering the dental team to deliver safe and effective dental care.

Whatever context we face, **our purpose remains constant: to protect the public.**

Ensuring that the register is maintained so that the public only receives dental care from safe and effective dental professionals is at the core of what we do. Following on from this are our functions and processes, which we perform on behalf of the public and in co-operation with the professions, the sector, and other regulators. We will continue to perform these functions and processes and make them more efficient and effective.

Key to the achievement of our current strategy are our four strategic aims, and all our activity is aligned with one or more of these aims:

Strategic aim	Description
1	Dental professionals reach and maintain high standards of safe and effective dental care
2	Concerns are addressed effectively and proportionately to protect the public and support professional learning
3	Risks affecting the public’s safety and wellbeing are dealt with by the right organisations
4	Dental professional regulation is efficient and effective, and adapts to the changing external environment



3. Review of the 2024 plan

There were 32 projects on our workplan for 2024.

Of these 32 projects:

- Six were completed.
- 19 are in progress and remain on track for delivery in 2025 or 2026. Of these 19, 12 had their end dates changed, due to changes in resource availability, scope and schedule.
- Six were removed from the plan. Five were combined with the Manage GDC Registration project, and one was moved into core activities.
- One is on hold awaiting decisions that may change the current project scope and start dates.

Projects successfully completed in 2024

- Complaints resolution
- Digital communication improvements
- Expectations of a safe practitioner
- Indemnity models
- IT hardware, infrastructure and peripherals upgrade
- Strengthen the separation of the adjudication function.

Status	Strategic aim 1	Strategic aim 2	Strategic aim 3	Strategic aim 4	Total
On track or completed	5	1	1	6	13
End date moved	3	1		8	12
On hold		1			1
Combined with existing project				5	5
Moved into core activities				1	1
Total	8	3	1	20	32

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

EDI is central to everything we do as a regulator and a responsible employer. We aim to be an inclusive regulator; to promote inclusion and demonstrate our commitment to equality and diversity in everything we do.

Our EDI Strategy for 2024–2025, published in late 2024, builds on the ambitions of our previous strategy. We are committed to working with the wider profession to embed EDI across all our work and around how dental professionals work with patients and each other. This includes encouraging others to put EDI at the forefront of their working practices.

To fulfil these objectives, we outlined a series of priorities and the actions we will take that will show we have achieved what we set out to do. These included ensuring that, where appropriate, Equality Impact Assessments were completed for CC projects. More information on our EDI Action Plan for 2024–2025 can be found on the [EDI strategy pages](#) of our website.



Achievements and progress in 2024

In 2024, we delivered activity that added to the dental sector's understanding of the workforce, improved the timeliness of registration applications against the highest number of annual applications we have ever seen and shed new light on the impact of Fitness to Practise on dental professionals' wellbeing and perceptions of the GDC.

We undertook further research into stakeholders' perceptions of the GDC, which confirmed that negative perceptions are driven to a large degree by fear of the FtP processes. Fear creates a lack of trust which limits our ability to reach dental professionals because fear reduces their tendency to engage, listen or believe. Over the last three years, we have adopted a more strategic and focused approach to tackling perceptions, and there are promising signs that it is having an impact, but it is also clear that there is much more to be done to address fear and its causes.

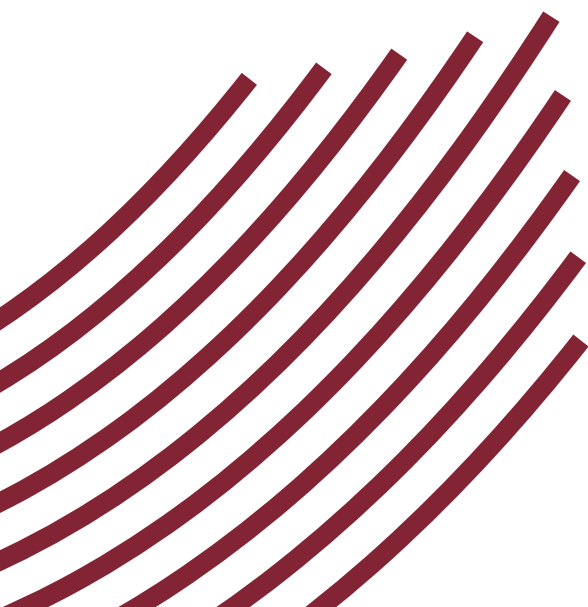
Informing the debate about the dental workforce

Findings from our research programme provided additional evidence that the dental sector remains under pressure and the public continue to find it difficult to access NHS dentistry. Against this backdrop, we committed to playing our part in supporting the sector to better understand its workforce challenges. In March, we published new comprehensive data about the working patterns of dentists, followed by data about DCPs in October. Over 24,000 dentists (55%) and almost 44,000 (58%) DCPs completed the voluntary survey, and we were grateful to all the dental professionals who provided this data, and for the support from the professional associations who encouraged their members to provide their data.

We now know more about dental professionals' working patterns than ever before. For the first time, there is a rich picture of where they work, the balance between private and NHS practice, and the balance between clinical and non-clinical roles and activities, across the four nations of the UK. We are confident that these insights will support strategic planning and decision-making by health services, governments and dental providers, ultimately helping patients receive the care they need.

We collected the second year of dentist data as part of their annual renewal in December 2024 and will report on this in 2025. We will do the same for DCPs later in 2025 as part of their annual renewal. In addition, we published further inferential analysis of the dentist data in December and plan to do the same for DCPs later in 2025.

More information, including a summary of the key findings can be found on the working [patterns section of our website](#).



Managing increasing numbers of registration applications

We know that joining the register is a significant moment in a dental professional's career. Any delays and problems can be difficult for the individual and their employer.

We processed **12,978** applications, an increase from our 2023 record high of **11,476**. This included new applications, additional titles and additions to our specialist lists, and resulted in **2,167** new dentists and **9,728** new DCPs being registered in 2024.

Making registration faster remains important, but we also want to modernise by significantly reducing the reliance on paper during this process. After a procurement exercise, we appointed PwC last year as our partner to improve our registration processes, with the aim of making it easier for people to provide the required evidence and documentation to ensure we maintain high registration standards.

After reviewing the current and required future processes, we identified potential improvements and operational changes for both the GDC and applicants, such as moving from a paper-based to a digital, online application process. We plan to progress this work later in 2025, after completing a full evaluation of the costs and benefits, and gaining formal approval from the Council to proceed.



Improving access to the overseas registration exam (ORE)

Demand for places on the ORE continued to outstrip supply, despite the increases in exam capacity that we put in place compared to the previous year. Applications increased by 53% in 2024, with 3,628 applications received (2023: 2,366). We held two Part One sittings, with a total capacity of 1,200, up 50% from the 800 held in 2023, and four Part Two sittings with a capacity of 576, an increase of 33% from the 432 held in 2023.

Managing ORE demand remains a challenge due to the growing volume of applications. To address this, we completed an early market engagement exercise to identify potential new suppliers and capacity and then started the procurement process for a new contract in late 2024. This process will conclude later in 2025, and we aim to have increased capacity by the start of 2026.

We made new improvements to the ORE in 2024, including developing a new Refugee Policy which gives priority access to the ORE to qualified dental professionals with refugee status. This policy, recognising the particular challenges of dentists with refugee status who cannot return to their home country, was implemented in early 2025.

Improving the specialist list application process

By the end of 2024, there were 4,457 professionals across the 13 specialty disciplines on the registers.

In 2023, we took responsibility for the specialist list assessed application (SLAA) process, which had previously been delivered by an external provider, and had been paused for almost a year. After recruiting and training assessors and improving the application processes, we cleared the application backlog by March 2024.

Further work to embed this service continued throughout 2024 when we consulted on and made new regulations governing the routes of entry to the specialist lists, particularly relating to the assessed application route. These changes were designed to ensure clarity for applicants and consistency between different applicant groups.

Updating education standards and information

Since 2018, we have seen a 16% year-on-year growth in new programmes and a further increase in interest in new schools and programmes in 2024. Recognising this growth, we worked with the Department of Health and Social Care, the Office for Students and the Privy Council to develop guidance for those wanting to achieve dental authority status, which we published in early 2025.

After updating the Safe Practitioner Framework in 2023, we continued to work closely with stakeholders from across dental education in 2024 to revise the Standards for Education. Positive discussions and collaborations indicate that the changes in dental education and the wider healthcare ecosystem since the current standards were published have been recognised. We consulted on proposals to revise the standards in November 2024. Once the consultation responses have been analysed, the revised Standards for Education will be approved by the Council, before being published later in 2025.

In addition, the revised dental specialty curricula were published, coming into effect from September 2024.

Improving timeliness in FtP

We delivered substantial improvements in FtP timeliness in 2024. We reduced casework queues to a sustainable level within the assessment stage, and our investigative casework teams cleared the backlog from 2023.

Significantly, we adopted a new way of investigating single-patient clinical concerns, halving the average time to assess the concern from 30 weeks to 15 weeks. This change was made permanent after a pilot and is receiving positive stakeholder feedback, which demonstrates our ability to streamline certain investigations while upholding our commitment to public protection.

Reviewing and updating our standards and guidance

One of our statutory responsibilities is to set standards for the dental team, and we have an extensive framework of standards and guidance available to help dental professionals understand their professional responsibilities. Managing and updating this framework is a significant task, and in 2024, we set about this in stages in consultation with stakeholders as part of our broader programme of work on professionalism.

After detailed and welcome feedback, we consulted on and agreed on proposals to bring together reporting requirements for health, criminal and regulatory matters into improved guidance about Reporting Matters to the GDC. This guidance came into effect in February 2025.

We engaged extensively with stakeholders across the year on our professionalism framework and used their feedback to inform policy development and our overall approach. This included an extensive programme of stakeholder engagement sessions on our proposals to update our Scope of Practice Guidance following our consultation in 2023. Our policy development will continue in both these areas in 2025, including the publication of our updated Scope of Practice Guidance and the development of a comprehensive set of supporting materials to help professionals make effective decisions in line with our professionalism framework.

In 2024, we completed an analysis of the operational practices and requirements of the rules for our continuous professional development (CPD) scheme to identify what changes we could make to minimise the administrative burden on registrants. Through this review, we identified several changes that could be made to the current scheme, within our current legislation. Approved by the Council in December, these changes were rolled out early in 2025.

Using our convening role to bring the sector together to highlight the challenges facing patients and the profession

We convened three Dental Leadership Network (DLN) events in 2024, bringing together leaders from across the four nations, including representatives from education, professional associations, employers, defence unions, patient representative groups, the Government and the NHS. Its objectives are to share information and build relationships, create a better understanding of everyone's remit, priorities and shared challenges and to encourage collaboration and ownership to resolve shared challenges.

Having held its first event in November 2022, the DLN is unique as it brings together leaders from the entire dental sector, with over 120 senior dental leaders attending each event. In 2024, the three events focused on:

- Maintaining an effective workforce, fit for the future
- Health and wellbeing leadership in the dental team
- Workforce: How many dental professionals are enough?



The DLN has planned events in March, June and November 2025.

We also had a presence at six key external industry events, including the BDIA Dental Showcase and the Dentistry Shows in London and Birmingham, which allowed us to increase our reach and engage with hundreds of dental professionals at each event.

A key priority for our CEO, who joined in June 2024, is to engage, listen, and understand the profession's issues and challenges.

Therefore, in addition to our existing engagement programme, we developed a new programme to enable our CEO to meet with all key stakeholders and to visit dental settings. He completed nine visits in 2024, getting positive feedback from dental professionals and stakeholders involved. In addition, he spoke at several high-profile events throughout the year, building on the existing programme of engagement of over 400 stakeholder meetings, presentations and events in 2024.

Learning from the findings of our Perceptions Research

Research into stakeholder perceptions was published in December 2024 and shows statistically significant improvements in perceptions of the GDC since 2020. Positive views among dental professionals increased from 16% in 2020 to 20% in 2023, with negative perceptions dropping from 65% to 56%. This improvement is valuable and important, but it is also clear that we have much further to go.

Students generally held more favourable opinions, with 26% expressing a positive view. However, most survey respondents, particularly dental professionals, still held negative perceptions of the GDC.

There was strong awareness among stakeholders of our core functions, such as maintaining the dental register (87%), investigating fitness to practise concerns (78%) and setting and promoting professional standards (72%). However, the most common misconception remains – that the GDC sets clinical standards (48%, no change from 2020) – followed by representing the interests of dental professionals (30%).

Dental professionals registered with us within the past five years felt more positively towards us compared to those registered six years or longer. This suggests there could be a 'tipping point' when opinions become more negative, which could be driven by past experiences or legacy decisions.

The stakeholder perceptions research makes it clear that the key driver of perceptions of the GDC is fear – that we are punitive, out of touch and disproportionate. Fear matters because it gets in the way of effective regulation. When dental professionals practise in fear of arbitrary and disproportionate regulatory intervention, they tend to practise defensively, spend time on excessive record keeping and may even limit their scope of practice. This is not in patients' interests. On the contrary, it is likely to reduce both the quantity and quality of dental care.

We will use these insights to develop our future external communications and engagement strategy in 2025. Addressing the fear and countering negative perceptions of the GDC is not a matter of reputation management, it is fundamental to our core objective of public protection. It matters that we are trusted by those we regulate, and we can't be trusted if perceptions are dominated by fear.



Increasing our engagement with early career and overseas qualified dental professionals

Every year around 7,000 students take up places in the UK to train to become dental professionals. In 2024, 7,000 UK qualified, and 2,000 overseas qualified dental professionals joined our register. Engaging with these important groups early in their career helps them understand what it means to work in a regulated profession, the role of the regulator, how we support dental professionals and help address some of their misconceptions or perceptions early in their careers.

The programme, now in its sixth year, delivered 58 student and new registrant sessions (2023:42), engaging with over 3,700 people, up 16% on the previous year.

Supporting our staff

We progressed several projects to support the development and retention of our staff. This included work to develop a 'total reward' programme, improving workforce development processes, launching a new dress code and updating and launching internally our new GDC values. These changes were instigated following significant internal engagement activity, including 17 staff sessions involving over 200 colleagues.

We developed and launched a new personal development review process and new learning platform for our staff. To help communicate these changes, we strengthened our internal communications team, leading to positive improvements to our internal communication channels, including providing regular updates from the CEO and executive directors and dedicated communications for people managers.

4. Work programme for 2025 – 2027

Over the last few years, we have changed our approach to initiating and managing projects, to better manage the programme in the CCP.

We reviewed our approach to project management and moved from a larger number of smaller, fragmented projects to fewer, larger more significant projects. This included moving some of the smaller projects into our core activities.

As this CCP also represents the final year of our current corporate strategy, we anticipate additional projects to be agreed as part of the work programme to deliver the new corporate strategy, that we will publish in early 2026. This may mean an increase in the CCP projects from 2026.

There are **29 projects** in the 2025 – 2027 work programme.

A target year is provided for each project, indicating when it is scheduled to be completed. These timings are based on the information available during the planning period (Q4 2024) and are subject to a changing external environment and organisational priorities.

Of the 29 projects in the 2025 – 2027 work programme, 24 projects are on the workplan for 2025. Of these, 19 are 'flow through' projects that started in previous years, and five are new projects that will start in 2025.

Of these projects, 18 are due to complete in 2025, four in 2026 and two in 2027. Five do not have a defined end date at this time.

We continue to focus on ensuring that dental regulation is efficient and effective and adapts to the changing external environment.

This includes how we perform, and ensuring we have the right systems, processes, and technology in place. Improved effectiveness and efficiency should free capacity and enable us to further shift more of our resources towards preventative regulatory activities which anticipate and address potential public protection issues before they become problems.

It should be noted that the CCP only details the project work we plan to complete and does not include all our normal core activity that we undertake to ensure we are able to deliver against our regulatory remit of ensuring public safety and public confidence in dental services. However, the cost of this core activity is included in the financial information, detailed in section 5.

These core activities include our Registration, Fitness to Practise, Customer Service and Education Quality Assurance functions, our policy and communications work, and some of our wider support functions. The costs for these core activities have been allocated to the relevant strategic aim, to provide a total cost breakdown, by strategic aim, for all the planned work and activities over the next three years.

Details of the forecast expenditure by strategic aim can be found in section 5.



2025 – 2027 workplan, by strategic aim and year of completion

Strategic aim 1

Dental professionals reach and maintain high standards of safe and effective dental care

#	Strategic aim 1 projects due to complete in 2025
1.1	Revise the standards for education
1.2	Revised international registration processes
1.3	Outcome-focused model for lifelong learning
1.4	Specialist list assessed application
1.5	ORE Part 1 and Part 2 tender and mobilisation
#	Strategic aim 1 projects due to complete in 2026
1.6	Principles of professionalism
#	Strategic aim 1 projects due to complete in 2027
1.7	FtP data classification and capture improvements
#	Strategic aim 1 projects end date not yet specified
1.8	Provisional registration*
1.9	Addressing sexual misconduct in the context of professionalism**

*Awaiting a decision from Government to confirm if they plan to go ahead with provisional registration

**Although this has gone through a scoping phase, we have yet to identify the resources required to start this work and confirm how long it will take to complete

Strategic aim 2

Concerns are addressed effectively and proportionately to protect the public and support professional learning

#	Strategic aim 2 projects due to complete in 2025
2.1	FtP decision making guidance

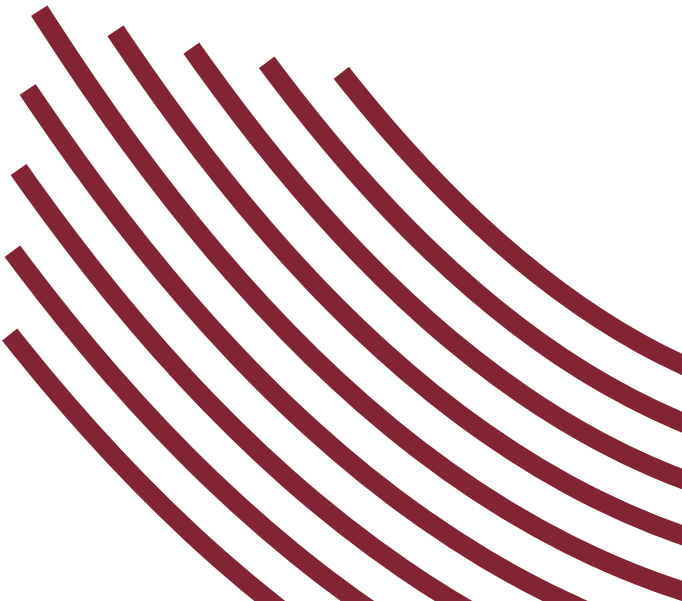
Strategic aim 3

Risks affecting the public’s safety and wellbeing are dealt with by the right organisations

All our work against strategic aim three sits within our core activities, including some projects that were brought into core activities. Although there are no CCP projects aligned to this aim, there are significant core activities required to be delivered in this area.

These activities include completing our data maturity assessment, some of the work to capture EDI data for informants and our extensive engagement activity. This included the convening of the Dental Leadership Network, the Chief Executive stakeholder engagement programme and visits to dental settings, and our student

and new registrant engagement programme, now in its sixth year. In addition, our research programme has helped ensure that our policy development and operational improvements have been evidence based, and the working patterns data that we published for dentists in April and dental care professionals in October has proved invaluable to help inform workforce planning discussions across the four nations of the UK.



Strategic aim 4

Dental professional regulation is efficient and effective, and adapts to the changing external environment

#	Strategic aim 4 projects due to complete in 2025
4.1	Implement new procurement and contract management process
4.2	Informant EDI data capture
4.3	Manage GDC registration
4.4	Optimisation of GDC estate
4.5	Improving communications and support in FtP
4.6	Total reward
4.7	Implementing new Welsh language standards
4.8	Replace credit card processing systems
4.9	Improve planning and delivery of the CCP portfolio
4.10	Workforce development
4.11	Case management and operational improvements in Dental Hearings
4.12	Applications fees review for strategy cycle
4.13	Associates' development
#	Strategic aim 4 projects due to complete in 2026
4.14	Organisational cultural change of GDC
4.15	Review and improve the intranet
#	Strategic aim 4 projects due to complete in 2027
4.16	Replace the GDC's websites
#	Strategic aim 4 projects end date not yet specified
4.17	Optimisation of GDC estate*
4.18	Software for empanelment and Hearings procedure**
4.19	Improving information and document management***

*Detailed proposals and timeline are subject to Council review, which is planned for later in 2025

**Project will commence late 2025, but until the scoping is complete the end is yet to be confirmed

***Project is due to commence in 2026, but until scoping is complete the end date is yet to be confirmed.

5. Forecast expenditure and income

Forecast expenditure by strategic aim

The total forecast expenditure for the three-year period from 2025 to 2027 is £141.4m, compared with the agreed budget for 2025 of £140.2m, which is an increase of 0.9%.

This increase is due to the changes in National Insurance's threshold and rates announced after the CCP was agreed in October 2024.

The total 2024 provisional expenditure outturn is £43.9m, which is an underspend of £0.2m against the budget. The main reasons for the increase are:

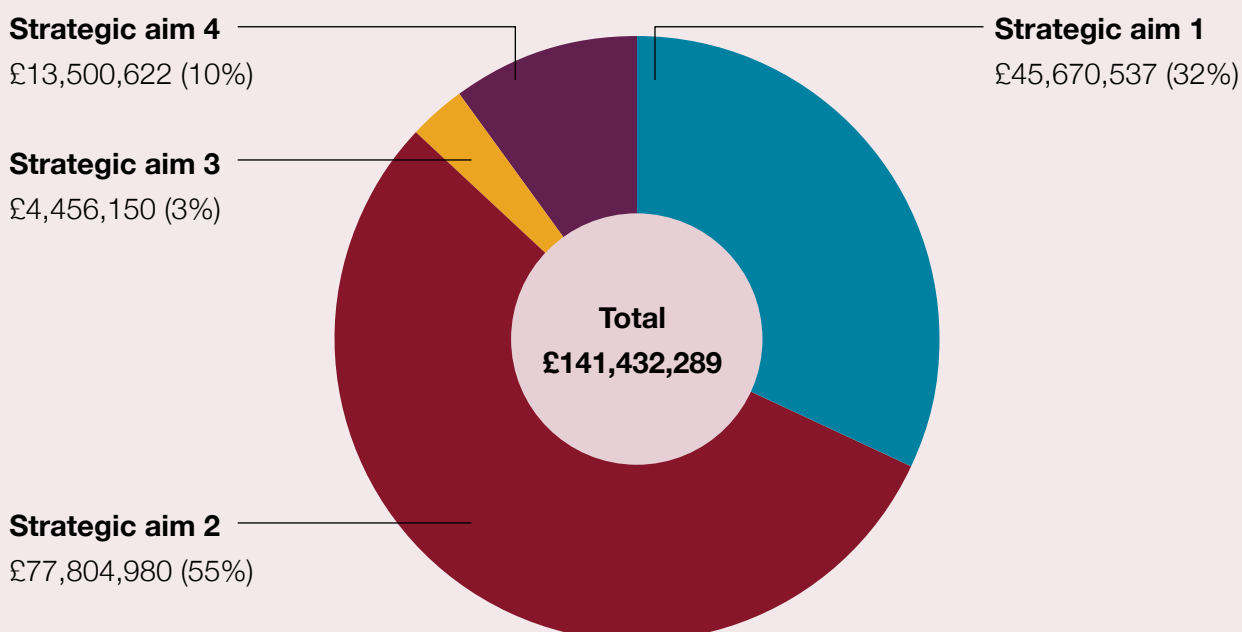
- An overspend in our staff cost budget due to higher than forecast staff retention rate.
- An overspend in IT and maintenance costs as we brought forward spend from 2025 to utilise economies of scale from IT infrastructure purchases.

The breakdown of forecast spend by strategic aim includes the CCP project activity and the normal business as usual work and operational activities that are completed across the GDC throughout the year.

The forecast budget for 2025 is £48.4m.

#	CCP 2025 – 2027 Strategic aim costs mapping	2024 outturn (£)	% of total	Initial 2025 forecast (£)	% of total
1	Dental professionals reach and maintain high standards of safe and effective dental care	14,065,372	32%	15,453,579	32%
2	Concerns are addressed effectively and proportionately to protect the public and support professional learning	23,675,941	54%	26,409,594	54%
3	Risks affecting the public's safety and wellbeing are dealt with by the right organisations	1,835,594	4%	1,798,924	4%
4	Dental professional regulation is efficient and effective, and adapts to the changing external environment	4,362,643	10%	4,716,453	10%
Total		43,939,550	100%	48,378,551	100%

Forecast expenditure by strategic aim over next three years



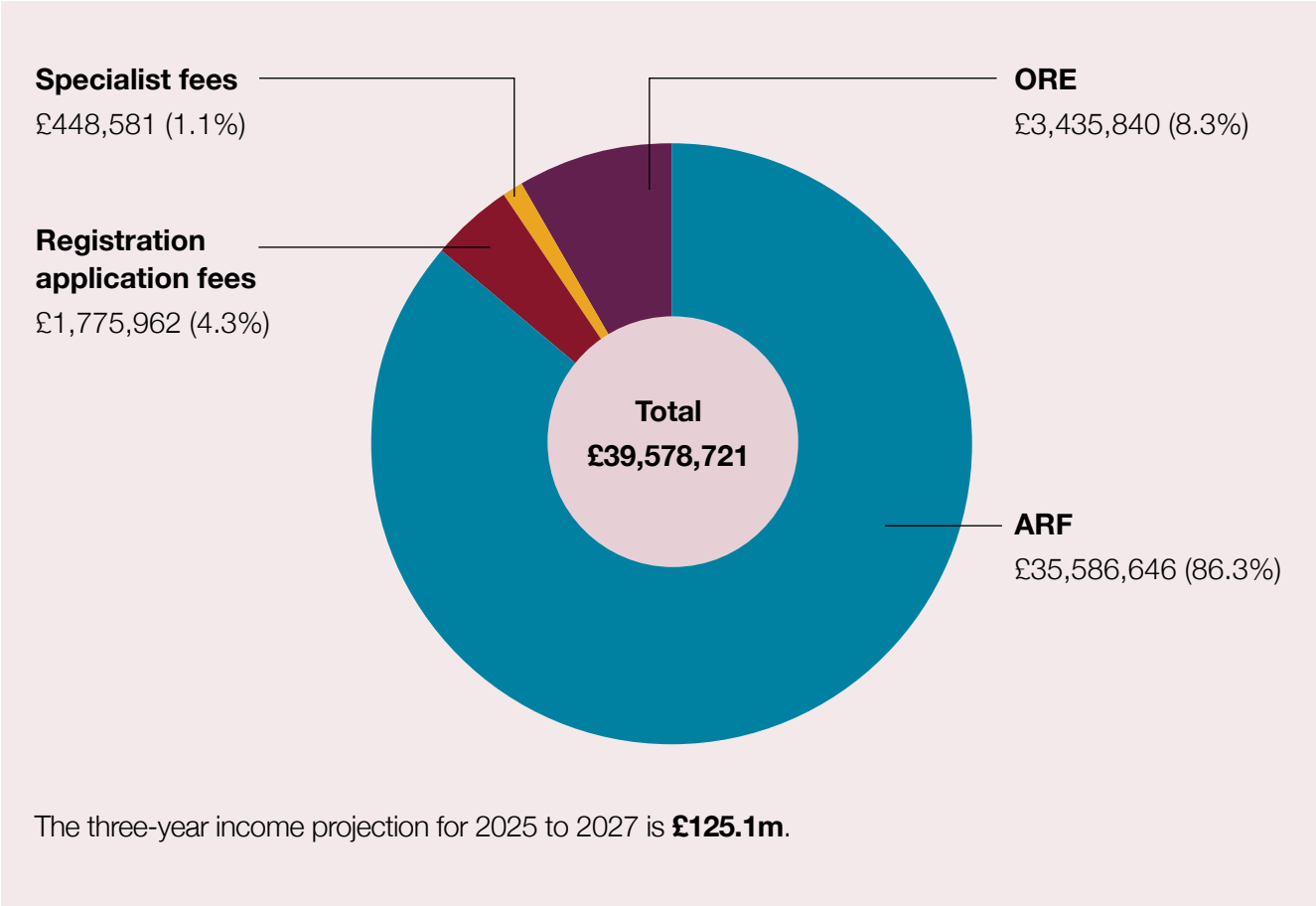
The three-year expenditure forecast, by strategic aim, for 2025 to 2027 is **£141.4m**.

Income projections

Our income forecast for 2025 is **£41.2m**, with 86.3% of income forecast to come from the ARF.

This is a £0.8m reduction compared to 2024. This is due to the income from DCP applications from overseas qualified dentists processed in 2024,

not being replicated in 2025. As most of these applications have now been processed, and this option is no longer available to overseas dentists, there is no income forecast from this route in 2025.



Reserves policy

Our [reserves policy](#) has been designed to ensure that we retain our financial viability to maintain our statutory purpose and functions. It recognises our financial risk exposure and ensures that we have adequate levels of working capital throughout the year.

We have aligned our budget expenditure, income and reserves target to our corporate strategy. Our reserves policy is reviewed annually by Council and was last considered in October 2024.

6. Registration and application fees

Annual Retention Fee (ARF)

The ARF level has been set to align to our forecast of activity, expenditure and reserves.

We have worked to ensure that we have removed cross subsidy, where possible, so that the cost of regulation is borne by those most closely associated with that activity.

Our fee-setting policy established three key principles:

1. Fee levels should be primarily determined by the cost of regulating each registrant group.
2. The method of calculating fee levels should be clear.
3. Supporting certainty for registrants and the workability of the regulatory framework.

Following a detailed and thorough review, Council approved the GDC's plans for 2025 and in doing so, set the budget and Annual Retention Fee (ARF) for 2025.

This resulted in no change in the annual retention fees for all dental professionals. For 2025 these remain as:

- £621 for dentists
- £96 for dental care professionals.

It is our ambition to keep fees at a reasonable level. However, the ARF levels paid by dental professionals may have to change, so we can continue to ensure that we fulfil our statutory role of maintaining patient safety and public confidence in the years ahead. These fees will be reviewed again later in 2025 when the Council approves the new strategy for 2026–2028, along with the budget for 2026.

First registration application fees

This is made up of two parts, a processing fee currently set at £36.33, with an additional variable rate dependent on the complexity of the application assessment.

Specialist fees

We apply a fee for initial applications for entry to specialist lists, which is £345 (per specialty). There is then an annual specialty retention fee of £72 (per specialty).

Overseas Registration Examination (ORE)

The ORE is an exam that overseas qualified dentists have to pass in order to register with the GDC. It tests the clinical skills and knowledge of dentists whose qualifications are not recognised in the UK. Candidates are expected to meet or exceed the standard of a 'just passed' UK BDS graduate.

It is made up of:

- Initial application processing fee: £102.83
- Part 1: Written exam, with a fee of £584
- Part 2: Clinical exam, with a fee of £4,235





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