



# **DHS Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Mobile Dental Therapist Service for UK Care Homes**

## **1. Purpose**

To provide a compliant, safe, and effective operational framework for UK-qualified Dental Therapists delivering mobile dental care and teledentistry services to care homes. This SOP supports prevention-led dentistry, digital workflows, and remote clinical oversight while ensuring compliance with GDC, CQC, GDPR, and indemnity requirements.

## **2. Scope**

Applies to Dental Therapists, supporting Dental Nurses, digital coordinators, and care home teams. Covers synchronous and asynchronous examinations, mobile visits, digital scanning, radiographic data transfer, preventive care, and escalation protocols.

## **3. Professional Requirements**

All clinicians must hold active GDC registration, enhanced DBS clearance, evidence of CPD compliance, indemnity (UK), and training in safeguarding, cross infection control, dementia awareness, teledentistry, and digital workflows.

## **4. Consent**

Obtain valid consent (written or recorded verbal) prior to assessment or treatment. For patients lacking capacity, follow the Mental Capacity Act with best-interest decision making. Document all consent clearly. Photographs, scans, and video require separate consent for clinical and educational use.

## **5. GDPR & Data Security**

All digital records must be encrypted and stored on GDPR-compliant platforms. Images and scans must not remain on personal devices. Access must be restricted to authorised personnel. Data transfers must use secure upload links. Retention follows NHS dental record standards (minimum 2–11 years).

## **6. Cross Infection Control**

Follow HTM 01-05 guidance. Use single-use barriers, appropriate PPE, hand hygiene protocols, equipment disinfection between visits, and safe transport of instruments. Mobile kits must include sterilised instruments, sharps disposal, water supply, and surface disinfectants.

## **7. Clinical Workflow for Mobile Visits**

- Pre-visit triage using photos/scans.
- Confirm medical history and safeguarding status.

- Perform visual assessment, periodontal screening, and preventive planning.
- Provide fluoride, SDF (where appropriate), oral hygiene instruction, and non-AGP procedures.
- Escalate to supervising dentist if findings require diagnosis outside therapist scope.
- Upload records to digital platform the same day.

## 8. Teledentistry Workflow

Synchronous (live): identity confirmation, consent check, remote camera guidance, documentation, triage.

Asynchronous (store and forward): therapist collects scans/photos; dentist reviews remotely; treatment plan created and returned securely.

## 9. Indemnity

Clinicians must maintain personal indemnity covering mobile services, teledentistry, and work in care homes. The franchise-style model requires each provider to assume responsibility for their own clinical actions.

## 10. CQC Compliance

If operating independently, therapists must work under an organisation with a CQC registration for regulated dental services. Mobile units must comply with safety, record-keeping, staffing, and safeguarding standards.

## 11. International Alignment (Australia, USA, Canada)

Australia: mobile oral health allowed with strict infection control, telehealth billing, and local licensing.

USA: state-dependent teledentistry laws; therapists expanded in Minnesota/Alaska.

Canada: strong remote care models; digital consent and secure storage mandated.

This SOP aligns with best global practices supporting portable dentistry and digital-first preventive care.

## 12. Equipment Requirements

Digital scanner, mobile dental kit, non-AGP instruments, portable lighting, PPE, disinfectants, secure tablet/phone, encrypted upload software, and optional portable X-ray with training.

## 13. Quality Assurance

Quarterly audits, peer review, CPD logs, incident reporting, and outcomes monitoring. Regular calibration sessions with supervising dentists.

## 14. Responsibilities

Therapist: clinical care, documentation, infection control.

DCP/Nurse: support, imaging, scanning, safeguarding.

Care Home Team: patient preparation, communication, follow-up.

Dentist (remote): diagnosis and treatment planning where required.

## 15. Review Cycle

Review annually or after regulatory changes. Updates should reflect advances in AI diagnostics, scanning workflows, and preventive protocols.