

Dentistry Safety Climate Survey

A guide to completing your dental practice's survey

August 2019

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Section 1 - Introduction

The Dentistry Safety Climate Survey (SCS) is a tool that allows teams to measure and better understand the current safety climate within their dental practice. All general and public dental practices will be able to take part in the survey from 1 August 2019.

The Chief Dental Officer has highlighted the SCS in the recent memorandum to his letter [PCA\(D\)\(2019\)10](#). Completing the SCS and developing an action plan for improvement is part of the 2019 – 2020 quality improvement (QI) activity.

Completing the SCS will help your dental practice start a conversation about patient safety and identify where you can make improvements.

The survey focuses on five domains:

- workload
- communication
- teamwork
- safety systems and learning, and
- leadership.

To find out why safety climate is important watch our short [video](#).

All members of your practice or Public Dental Services (PDS) team should be invited to complete the survey. When all staff members have completed the survey, each practice, or PDS site, will download a safety climate survey report from the website.

All answers are anonymised and the individual report will not be seen by anyone else out with your practice or PDS team. Discussing the results as a team allows you to begin to make positive changes to improve safety culture and in turn improve the service you deliver.

Section 2 – Undertaking the SCS and what it will involve

2.1 SCS key points

- Your NHS board will send an email to your dental practice or PDS generic email address. This will contain the hyperlink to the SCS website.
- The SCS will be available from **Thursday 1 August 2019** and will close on **Tuesday 31 March 2020**.
- A nominated dental practice or PDS coordinator will need to register all your staff members on the SCS.
- All members of your practice or PDS team will then be invited to take part. It is important that as many members of your team as possible take part.
- The SCS takes approximately 15 minutes to complete.
- A dental practice or PDS report will be generated after your team have completed the SCS.
- There is a minimal requirement that **75%** of your staff complete the SCS before the report can be generated.
- If you have a small team there needs to be a minimum of three people completing the SCS before you can generate the report.
- The report should be shared and discussed at a team meeting.
- After discussing your report your team should develop an improvement action plan. Your plan should then be uploaded to the [NHS Education for Scotland \(NES\) Portal](#) **no later than 30 June 2020**.
- All information and guidance can be found on our [webpage](#).

2.2 Preparing for the SCS

Before undertaking the SCS your dental practice will need to:

- appoint a person to coordinate the process and communicate with your staff.
 - The person coordinating the SCS will be the main contact within your team.
 - This person can be anyone who has access to IT, is able to communicate easily with all members of your team and has some protected time.
 - It is essential that those coordinating the SCS read all of the guidance provided and share all relevant information with your whole team. Full details and information for the SCS coordinator can be found in [Section 3](#).

Don't forget to:

- Advise your whole team about the SCS and share the guidance and links with them.
- Have a staff meeting to introduce and explain the concept of the SCS before you start - they may have queries which you can answer.

2.3 The SCS and how to complete it

- Each member of your team will receive the email invitation to complete the SCS.
- The survey has 28 statements grouped into five domains (see [Appendix 1](#))
- You need to indicate how much you agree with the statement on a scale from 'not at all' to 'a very great extent'.
- **Read the questions carefully as some have been worded differently, as they are deliberately scored in reverse.**

2.4 The SCS report

It is important that the report is shared and a meeting is arranged to discuss the results with your whole team.

- On completion of the SCS, a report will be generated. Only your team will see this report - it won't be shared with anyone else.
- Individual responses within your team are not available to ensure anonymity.
- The responses to the SCS are collated into two separate staff groups. This report will compare the dentists and managers with all other staff members of your team. A sample report can be found [on our website](#).
- If the report indicates low scores for one or more of the five domains, this would identify areas for the team to consider for improvement.
- Differences in the responses between the two groups should also be an area to focus on. For example, if dentists and managers' scores are high for communication and the rest of the team score this lower, this is possibly an area to be explored as part of the team discussion.
- The report will also show the national aggregated results from teams who have completed the survey, up to when your report was generated.
- The report should be shared with all members of your team.
- A meeting should be arranged to review, discuss the findings and develop an action plan.

2.5 The meeting and action plan following the report

- Set a date for a meeting when the majority of your team can attend.
- Ensure the results have been shared with your whole team before the meeting.
- Nominate someone to lead the meeting. They should have an understanding of the SCS, have reviewed the results and are able to facilitate a team meeting to generate discussion.
- An action plan should be developed after the meeting.
- The action plan should identify three good points and three actions.
- The completed action plan should then be uploaded to the [NES Portal](#).

Guidance on how to facilitate the team meeting and develop your action plan is available in [Appendix 2](#).

2.6 How to upload your action plan to the NES portal

Guidance for the NES portal for dentists only:

- The lead dentist logs into the NES portal and goes to iBooklet/Dental QI Projects.
- They will then need to create a new project in 'new application', using the project type, QI (SCS).
- The next step is to add all the dentists to the project using the participants tab and check their hours are set to five hours.
- The lead dentist will then need to upload the completed action plan using the 'supporting documentation' tab, and click 'submit documents'.
- The project will be certified as complete and the standard completion email will be sent to each dentist, advising them how to access their Certificate of Completion (GP216A). The email will also contain a link to the GP217 claim form, if they wish to submit their claim for five hours of QI Allowance to PSD.
- The project and the five hours will appear in each dentist's vCPD report as certified QI Activity.
- Please note that five hours per dentist is the maximum available, even if a dentist works across practices and participates in more than one survey. If staff work regularly between practices within the same NHS Board, these could be merged to complete one safety climate survey. Please contact hcis.pcpteam@nhs.net for further assistance should you wish to merge practices.

If you need any assistance with uploading your action plan, please contact NES at qi.hub@nes.scot.nhs.uk.

Section 3 - Information for the SCS coordinator

3.1 Registering to start the SCS

- The person coordinating the SCS for the dental practice will access the SCS here: www.dentistrysafetyclimate.com.
- You will need your dental practice location code to register. This is your practice or PDS site number. If you are unsure of your site number, you can find it here: <https://www.isdscotland.org/Products-and-Services/Data-Definitions-and-References/National-Reference-Files/>. To access your site number scroll down the webpage to 'other' and then click on 'dentprac'.
- An example of where to find the spreadsheet and how to locate your practice location code can be seen below:

Other			
File name	Description	Layout	Updated
Clinical Document Type zip	Additional codes have been inserted within V3.4 (EH4001) Clinical Document Indexing Standards which is published on the eHealth Standards Library web page . A downloadable file is published here. If you have any queries please contact NSS.isdDataStandards@nhs.net		03/07/2019
dentprac	Dental Practices (PSD data extracts)	dentprac	03/07/2019
dentref	Dentists (PSD data extracts)	dentref	03/07/2019
Error_messages	File of error messages for use by SCI Validation Engine		03/07/2019
GP_CHP.xls	GP Practice/CHP		03/07/2019
lookup_files.zip	Standard lookup files for use by SCI Validation Engine		03/07/2019
optprac	Optician Premises (PSD data extracts)	optprac	03/07/2019
optref	Opticians (PSD data extracts)	optref	03/07/2019

- Site number will vary in size. Please use the full code including the letter and numbers.

N6	Skene Street Dental	170 Skene Street	Aberdeen
N9	The Dental Practice	21 Rubislaw Terrace	Aberdeen
T97	22 Beaully Avenue	Kirkton	Dundee
T98	Hillbank Health Centre	1a Constitution Street	Dundee
T101	131 Strathmartine Road	Dundee	
T103	Downfield Dental Practice	438 Strathmartine Road	Dundee
G1063	K M Dental Care	5 Drumoyne Road	Glasgow
S1064	Links Dental Practice	101-103 Whitehouse Loan	Edinburgh

If you experience any problem with finding your practice site number, contact us at hcis.pcpteam@nhs.net.

- If you have registered on the dentistry safety climate survey website to complete a previous SCS then please use your log in details from this. If you have forgotten your password there will be link for you to reset this.
- You will need to use the email address originally registered to complete this, if this person has left the practice or you no longer have access to this email address then please get in touch with the team at hcis.pcpteam@nhs.net

How to register your dental practice

Enter your practice location code, your email and a preferred password. Click on 'register'.



The screenshot shows a registration form titled "Register Your Practice". It contains the following fields and elements:

- Practice location code:** A single-line text input field.
- Your email:** A single-line text input field.
- Password:** A single-line text input field.
- Re-enter your password:** A single-line text input field.
- Terms and conditions:** A line of text stating "I agree to accept the [terms and conditions of use](#)."
- Buttons:** Two buttons at the bottom: "Register" (a dark blue button) and "Back" (a dark blue button).

Guidance on how to set up the SCS and publish the report for your practice can be found in our [video](#).

Section 4 - Frequently asked questions

If you have a question visit the FAQ document on our [webpage](#). If your question isn't answered in the FAQ, please email us at hcis.pcpteam@nhs.net for further help and support.

Appendix 1 - Dentistry Safety Climate Survey (SCS) Definitions

1.1 Safety culture

The safety culture of an organisation is defined as the product of individual and group values, attitudes, style, competencies and commitment to patient safety and staff safety. Identifying what the culture in an organisation looks or feels like can be difficult and may only become apparent when something goes wrong.

1.2 Safety climate

Safety climate is defined as a 'snapshot' of the culture in an organisation at a particular time.

1.3 The Safety Climate Survey (SCS)

The SCS is a tool that allows teams to measure and, as a result, better understand their current safety climate within their practice. It has been used extensively in other primary care settings, such as GP practices and pharmacies. The SCS is an online survey and has been developed for dental practices.

The SCS's questions are themed around five key domains:

- a) **Workload** – this covers impairment of performance due to excessive workload, staffing levels and time constraints.
- b) **Communication** – this covers honest discussion between team members, freedom to challenge, staff's ability to understand management decisions, staff feeling able to question decisions and expressing their concerns, staff being kept up to date with current developments and the overall vision of their managers.
- c) **Teamwork** – this covers the importance of teamwork, respect for one another and the support within teams, how disagreements are dealt with and job satisfaction.
- d) **Safety systems and learning** – this covers encouragement to highlight significant events, having procedures in place to prevent significant events, including staff members in decision making and significant event analysis.
- e) **Leadership** – this covers hierarchy and any detrimental effects, the consequences to staff who highlight significant events, effectiveness of leadership within teams, attitude of managers towards staff suggestions, level of trust within teams and managers being open to improvement suggestions.

Appendix 2 - Team meeting guidance

To make the most of your teams SCS, it is recommended that you hold a team meeting to discuss and reflect on your safety climate report. The meeting also provides an opportunity agree an action plan to improve the safety climate in your dental practice. Ideally, all members of your team should participate in the meeting, even those who did not complete the SCS.

This guidance summarises a process to facilitate a safety climate meeting in approximately one hour. It is completely flexible and you may choose to use all, part, or none of it. The guidance also provides an [action plan](#) template. It is recommended that no more than **three** action points are formulated.

Discussion point	Reflective questions/actions	Potential implications
Identify how many members of your team completed the SCS. (5 minutes*)	What proportion of your team did not complete the survey?	The more people that complete the SCS the more likely it is that the results will reflect the perceptions of your whole team.
	Do non-participants have specific characteristics in common?	If non-participants have specific characteristics in common, it makes it more difficult to interpret the report with confidence.
	Why did they not complete the SCS?	Is there a need to address any barriers to completing the SCS?
Identify a maximum of three safety climate factors that your team perceived as positive. Consider how your team compares to the national aggregated results. (15 minutes*)	Do you think these perceptions are a true reflection of the reality in your team?	Sometimes perceptions and reality do not quite 'match up'.
	What evidence is there to support this?	This helps your team identify their current strengths in these areas.
Identify a maximum of three safety climate factors that your team perceived as less positive.	Do you think these perceptions are a true reflection of the reality in your team?	
	What evidence is there to support this?	

Consider how your team compares to national aggregated results. (15 minutes*)	Explore actions (if any) to improve these areas further or ensure perceptions remain positive.	It may not always be possible or desirable to improve.
Compare the results of different staff groups in your team. (10 minutes*)	Are there differences between staff groups? If yes, does one staff group consistently perceive things more positively or negatively than the other? Is there a difference in one or more area?	Focus on differences in perceptions not on whether the perceptions of one group are 'right'.
	Explore why their perceptions may be different.	This may be a good opportunity to allow one person from every staff group to suggest a reason.
	Can perceptions be aligned?	
Summarise the main discussion points and agree action plans. (15 minutes*)	Are there specific actions that could be taken to improve your team's safety culture? (<i>A template is provided in Appendix 3 to help the practice or PDS to formulate action plans</i>)	

* Suggested times for each point to ensure all sections are discussed. Aim to identify one or two important issues and resist being distracted by minor or insignificant differences in scores.

Appendix 3 - Action plan template

<p>Highlight three areas where your team performed well</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>			
What needs to improve? What is the improvement goal?	Barriers to improvement	Action plan (who, what, where, when, how)	Monitoring progress (how, when)
<p>Choose 1 to 3 aspects of your team's safety climate that were perceived as less positive and could be improved. Agree what will change as a result of making improvements (improvement goal).</p>	<p>Identify what the barriers are to making improvements and how these might be overcome.</p>	<p>Specify who needs to do something differently, what needs to change, and where, when and how changes can be made.</p>	<p>Specify how success will be measured, when it will be measured and who will do this.</p>
