

REASON WHY?

Activity coding is the process of recording the activity that NHS services provide with the payment by results system being linked to activity coding. Full and correct clinical coding is crucial to service delivery, resource management, and clinical governance. Coding guidance published by Getting it Right First Time (GIRFT) and the British Orthodontic Society (BOS) should be followed to help the department improve their understanding and accuracy of coding.

PLAN

To assess the pre-project accuracy and knowledge of clinical coding, 50 sets of case notes at RSH and 47 at PRH were audited against the respective Clinic Outcome Form (COF) codes.

Staff working in orthodontics were also asked to complete a 10-question knowledge-based questionnaire using guidance document 'Activity coding in Orthodontics, information for secondary care Trusts' Published by GIRFT, BOS and the Royal College of Surgeons (RCS) England in 2020 and updated in 2023.

64% of RSH staff (n=10) and 66% of PRH (n= 4) completing the questionnaire gave the correct response, but certain codes were consistently missed revealing knowledge gaps. 89% of the 97 COFs audited were considered to have been correctly coded for activity completed when checked against the clinical notes. The COFs were then sent to the coding department who confirmed that they had been inputted correctly into the Trust coding system closing the loop and providing assurance.

DO

Based on the results of the audit, to improve coding knowledge and accuracy it was recommended that the clinicians refer to the GIRFT/BOS aide-memoir when completing a COF. Subsequently, a copy of the aide-memoir was made available in every orthodontic surgery.

The layout of the orthodontic codes on the COF was also altered based on recommendations made from previous similar published work with additional information included to try and make the code easier to understand. Prior to adopting the adjusted COF, it was tested by repeating the knowledge questionnaire again with staff members being able to refer to the new COF and aide-memoir when completing the questionnaire.



To improve the accuracy of orthodontic coding to 90% by January 2026
To improve the knowledge of correct coding to 90% by January 2026

STUDY

By using the Aide-memoir and new COF as a reference. 90% of RSH staff (n= 9) and 86% of PRH staff (n =5) completing the questionnaire gave the correct responses, demonstrating an improvement. Some codes however were still being consistently missed by some staff including F16.7 Polishing of teeth which is currently a code which attracts one of the highest payment tariffs.

QDCS CODE	DESCRIPTION	SITE & LATERALITY	TICK
F155	Adjustment of orthodontic device		
U044+Y981	Blowing radiology		
F151	Creation of orthodontic impression		
F157	Debonding of orthodontic bracket		
F152	Fitting of orthodontic bracket		
F153	Fitting of orthodontic headgear		
F154	Fitting of orthodontic separators		
F145	Insertion of orthodontic anchorage		
F141	Insertion of fixed orthodontic appliance		
F142	Insertion of movable orthodontic appliance		
F143	Insertion of orthodontic appliance NEC (insertion of bands)		
U044+Y981	Lateral oblique jaw radiology		
U043+Y981	Occlusal radiology		
U048+Y981	Other specified diagnostic imaging of mouth		
U04+Y981	Periapical radiology		
F424	Photography of mouth		
F156	Repair of orthodontic appliance		
F147	Removal of orthodontic anchorage		
F144	Removal of orthodontic appliance		
X023	MDT		
F651	Fitting of fixed functional orthodontic brace or appliance		
F652	Fitting of removable functional orthodontic brace or appliance		
F653	Adjustment of removable functional orthodontic brace or appliance		
F654	Adjustment of fixed functional orthodontic brace or appliance		
F655	Removal of fixed functional orthodontic brace or appliance		
F661	Fitting of movable orthodontic retainer		
F662	Fitting of fixed orthodontic retainer		
F663	Adjustment of movable orthodontic retainer		
F664	Adjustment of fixed orthodontic retainer		
F665	Removal of fixed orthodontic retainer		
HYGIENE			
F164	Scaling of teeth		
F167	Polishing of teeth		
F168	Other specified operations on tooth for treatment of periodontitis		

QDCS CODE	DESCRIPTION	TICK
F015	GRT assessment	
F010	Unsupervised orthodontic treatment of mouth	
F011	Creation of orthodontic impression	
F012	Photograph of mouth	
F013	Recording of jaw relationship	
F014	Retaining radiology	
F015	Other specified diagnostic imaging of mouth	
F016	Plan of mouth	
F017	Preparation radiology	
F018	Core build up (noted during appt) NEC	
Treatment		
F019	Insertion of fixed orthodontic appliance	
F020	Insertion of removable orthodontic appliance NEC	
F021	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F022	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F023	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F024	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F025	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F026	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F027	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F028	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F029	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F030	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F031	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F032	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F033	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F034	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F035	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F036	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F037	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F038	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F039	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F040	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F041	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F042	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F043	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F044	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F045	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F046	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F047	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F048	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F049	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F050	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F051	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F052	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F053	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F054	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F055	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F056	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F057	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F058	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F059	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F060	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F061	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F062	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F063	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F064	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F065	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F066	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F067	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F068	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F069	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F070	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F071	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F072	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F073	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F074	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F075	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F076	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F077	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F078	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F079	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F080	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F081	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F082	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F083	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F084	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F085	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F086	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F087	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F088	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F089	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F090	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F091	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F092	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F093	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F094	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F095	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F096	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F097	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F098	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F099	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F100	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F101	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F102	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F103	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F104	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F105	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F106	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F107	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F108	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F109	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F110	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F111	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F112	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F113	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F114	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F115	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F116	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F117	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F118	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F119	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F120	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F121	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F122	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F123	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F124	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F125	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F126	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F127	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F128	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F129	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F130	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F131	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F132	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F133	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F134	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F135	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F136	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F137	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F138	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F139	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F140	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F141	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F142	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F143	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F144	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F145	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F146	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F147	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F148	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F149	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F150	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F151	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F152	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F153	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F154	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F155	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F156	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F157	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F158	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F159	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F160	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F161	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F162	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F163	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F164	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F165	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F166	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F167	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F168	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F169	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F170	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F171	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F172	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F173	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F174	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F175	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F176	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F177	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F178	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F179	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F180	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F181	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F182	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F183	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F184	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F185	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F186	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F187	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F188	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F189	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F190	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F191	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F192	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F193	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F194	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F195	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F196	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F197	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F198	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F199	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	
F200	Insertion of orthodontic appliance (insertion of bands)	

ACT

Whilst the SMART aims of this project have almost been achieved and actions taken have demonstrated improvements, staff working in the orthodontic clinics have been encouraged to continue to use the Aide-memoir indefinitely, particularly when complex activity has taken place during a clinical appointment to ensure activity is accurately recorded and the department is paid correctly.

The new COF coding layout has been ADOPTED and is now in use. The project has been presented at the departmental governance meeting in February 2026 and further training given in each department following reflection on individual centre data patterns.