



**NHS England and NHS Improvement South East
GDP and Urgent Dental Care hub Covid-19 briefing**

Issue No. 16



16 July 2021

Issue	
<p>Message from the Office of the Chief Dental Officer</p>	<p>As the Prime Minister has advised, the lifting of the remaining legal limits on social contact from 19 July 2021 “does not mean that we can revert instantly to life as it was before COVID”. The current Government ‘COVID-19 Response: Summer 2021’ guidance (updated 12 July 2021) still states <i>“Health and care settings will continue to maintain appropriate infection prevention and control processes as necessary and this will be continually reviewed. Guidance will be updated based on the latest clinical evidence this summer.”</i></p> <p>What this means for dental practices on 19 July 2021 is that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The key message for patients is that dental services remain safe and are open for face to face care but it is not yet business as usual. • Health premises are a higher risk environment that needs to maintain some control measures to keep everyone safe. • The Delta variant is more transmissible and patients may be contagious without knowing it. • Many people are still not yet fully vaccinated and dental practices have a vital role in reducing the potential virus transmission. • For dental teams this means that the current IPC guidance for dentistry and risk management will remain in place from 19 July 2021: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dental practices will continue with remote risk assessment of patients - patients will be asked to wear a mask (unless exempt) and maintain social distancing - IPC within the clinical environment does not change. <p>To manage patient expectation, we attach a Word and pdf version of patient facing information, sourced from LMC Humberside and adapted by OCDO for dental practice use pending further notices/posters or publications.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Patient Facing Practice Poster - 19 </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Patient Facing Practice Poster - 19 </div> </div>
<p>Provision of Phased Treatments</p>	<p>The Office of the Chief Dental Officer has provided advice on the provision of phased treatments which can be found via the following link https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/avoidance-of-doubt-provision-of-phased-treatments/</p>
<p>NHS.uk and practice websites</p>	<p>This is a reminder to ensure your practice’s entry on nhs.uk (formerly NHS Choices) and your practice website remain up to date. In line with the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), you should be open to all patients needing urgent care and your practice’s entry on nhs.uk should clearly reflect this. You are able to expand regarding your current capacity on your practice website to advise patients whether you are taking on new patients for routine treatment. NHS England and NHS Improvement – South East are still receiving a large number of patient complaints and MP enquiries from patients who are turned away from dental practices, even when they have an urgent dental need.</p>








<p>Prioritisation of patients</p>	<p>As a reminder, the Standard operating procedure - Transition to recovery remains in place and instructs all dental practices, to treat all patients with a dental emergency in the first instance, before moving on to the next patient group. Please note that this also applies to patients who were “removed” from your list of regular patients due to missed appointments in the past. NHS England and NHS Improvement does not specify a policy on failures to attend nor the period after which a patient can be removed from your list of regular attenders. You should be following your own policy, although we would appreciate some flexibility where patients were unable to return to your practice in the usual timeframe due to Covid-19.</p>
<p>Overperformance in financial year 21/22</p>	<p>A reminder that overperformance in the financial year 21/22 refers to achieving more than 100% of your normal contracted activity. The 60% threshold is a minimum activity threshold and performance of 62% would not be counted as overperformance of 2%. Dental practices are asked to deliver as much NHS activity as safely possible, any activity over the 60% threshold will result in a reduction of the adjustment of 16.75% that will be applied to all contracts.</p>
<p>Communication with Patients</p>	<p>We would like to ask that all dental practices ensure communication with patients is clear and patients are made to understand the challenges dental practices are still facing due to increased Infection Control and Prevention measures, resulting in continued limitation to the capacity in the number of patients that can be seen.</p>
<p>Additional sessions</p>	<p>The sessions outside of normal contracted hours to increase access for patients that do not have a regular dentist, will now run until 31 March 2022. NHS England and NHS Improvement South East have written out to all practices to again seek expressions of interest to participate in this scheme. We thank all practice that are already providing these sessions and who have expressed an interest in participating in phase 2. Where practices have not yet expressed an interest and their circumstances change in the coming months and so wish to sign up, the survey link is being kept open and for ease it is given here again: https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=kp4VA8ZyI0umSq9Q55Ctv1ze_yYHqgxBhOuDt1izxeRUQ0ZHREo2RUdRQTVDQTFUN0hBNkU4QURYOS4u</p> <p>As a reminder this is for sessions delivered outside contracted hours and cannot be introduced where there is a spare surgery/clinical team during contracted hours. It is also to provide a full course of treatment so that the patient becomes dentally fit and is not restricted to urgent care only.</p> <p>We continue to receive questions regarding flexible commissioning schemes from practices and stakeholders. Our first priority is to maintain and improve access to dental care, as this is the biggest issue patients are facing currently and which has been exacerbated by the pandemic. The Additional Hours scheme was therefore introduced as a form of flexible commissioning. We envision that future flexible commissioning schemes will be developed by the Local Dental Networks, once recovery of the full range of dental services further progresses.</p>
<p>Highlighting the needs of Looked After Children during the pandemic</p>	<p>We have been asked by our colleagues in the Safeguarding team in Surrey as well as CCG colleagues in Kent & Medway to circulate the attached document to highlight the needs of Looked After Children (LAC) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although this has been developed by the teams in Surrey and Kent and Medway, the message applies across the whole of the South East region.</p> <p>The Transition to Recovery Standard Operating Procedure advises that patient groups with the greatest need should be prioritised for care and, as detail in the attached document, LAC are defined as having great need. We would ask that if</p>



	<p>you have capacity to provide more than urgent and paused care that you consider prioritising LAC if contacted by their carers.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">   </div> <p>Highlighting the needs of Looked after children Dental briefing-looked after children</p>
<p>Lateral Flow Tests</p>	<p>Changes to how primary care staff access lateral flow devices (LFD) tests for asymptomatic testing</p> <p>The way that NHS staff across all primary care contractor groups (medical, dental, optometry and community pharmacy) order LFD tests has changed. From 5 July 2021, they will be able to order tests directly through the government lateral flow ordering portal and have these delivered to their home addresses.</p> <p>Asymptomatic staff testing is an important component of IPC, which all organisations and staff have a duty to adhere to. We are grateful for the continued efforts of primary care contractors in keeping staff and patients safe from potential transmission of COVID-19 in healthcare settings.</p> <p>Please see further guidance: https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2021/07/C1329-use-of-lateral-flow-devices-for-asymptomatic-staff-testing-sars-cov-2-all-nhs-staff.pdf</p> <p>https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2021/07/C1331-lateral-flow-antigen-tests-for-asymptomatic-staff-testing-faqs-primary-care.pdf</p>
<p>Signatures on prescriptions and dental forms</p>	<p>The temporary approval to suspend the need for signatures on prescriptions, dental and ophthalmic forms has been extended to 31 August 2021. See following link for further information: Temporary approval to suspend the need for signatures on prescriptions, dental and ophthalmic forms (extension to 31 August 2021) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
<p>2WW Referral – reminder to refer using DERS</p>	<p>A hospital trust in our region has recently completed a root cause analysis report into a serious incident following referral of a cancer patient outside a formal, trackable referral route (the Dental Electronic Referral System), which led to a potential delay in diagnosis. The report refers to an incident which occurred in August 2020 following referral from an NHS practice in Buckinghamshire. At this point the Trust accepted an informal referral with communications via telephone and e-mail and did not ask the Dentist to re-refer using a formal, trackable process. E-mail relies too heavily on the actions of individuals rather than a process which can be monitored and in this case, not all communications and planned actions were detailed in the Electronic Patient Record. The impact was a delay in the patient being re-booked into clinic.</p> <p>The Trust is carrying out follow up actions in line with the recommendations made following the investigation and we are following up on the recommendation that all two week wait referrals must be made via a formal, trackable process (the Dental Electronic Referral System).</p>
<p>Domestic Abuse Resource pack</p>	<p>Colleagues at Kent and Medway CCG have developed the attached domestic abuse resource pack in response to disclosures made at vaccination sites and would like to share this with all dental practices. Although the phone numbers within the pack are only relevant for the Kent area, there are other resources that can be used more widely.</p>



	 <p>Domestic Abuse Resource Pack.docx</p>
<p>Health and Wellbeing Support available to Dental Teams</p>	<p>We have been asked to share the below You Matter – Staff Health and Wellbeing Hub information by the BOB Integrated Care System – this offer is available for healthcare workers in the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West area only.</p>  <p>You Matter Slide & Temp Chart A4.pdf</p> <p>We would like to remind all practices of the support available to dental teams that is outlined in the SOP and for ease an extract from this is embedded here.</p>  <p>20210714 Health and Wellbeing Supp</p>
<p>Fit testing</p>	<p>It is recommended that staff are fit tested to all makes of FFP3 masks as a precautionary measure so that if their preferred make of mask is unavailable at particular times and an alternative is received instead, they will already be fit tested to avoid a delay in arranging this.</p>
<p>Encouraging Vaccination</p>	<p>The COVID-19 Vaccination Programme Team are asking all healthcare providers to support the vaccination programme by asking patients and their carers if they have taken up the offer of the vaccine. If you identify a patient or their carer that has not had the vaccine, we are asking you to make the patient aware of their nearest vaccination centre, where they can just walk in. Attached is some information to help you answer any questions you may be asked, as well as the current list of vaccination sites. Please treat the attached guidance as information for your use and reference and do not use them as a handout for patients. The link to the list is: Coronavirus » List of vaccination sites (england.nhs.uk). Thank you for your support with the vaccination programme.</p>  <p>Vaccination key messages July2021.c</p>  <p>list-of-vaccination-sites-06-07-2021.xlsx</p>