

COVID-19 Dental Update 16 April 2020

The Chief Dental Office has issued the fourth preparedness letter covering the following areas:

- **Operation of urgent dental care systems**
- **Availability of personal protective equipment (PPE)**
- **Redeployment and volunteering**
- **Contracts and financial arrangements including clawback**

Operation of urgent dental care systems

- The SOP for UDC systems has been issued and can be found here <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/dental-practice/>
- There is a clear message that routine dental care is not available during the delay phase
- A remote consultation and triage system are available
- In the absence of an NHS-designated UDC service, a dental practice may undertake non-AGP face-to-face dental assessment and care with Level 2 PPE. This has been recognised by the CQC and GDC as an appropriate response in the best interests of the patient. As UDC systems become operational, individual practices, unless they are identified by regions as part of the system in a region, should not see patients face to face unless there is no UDC system provision available.
- Any face-to-face treatment must be delivered in line with the guidance set out in the SOP

PPE

The SOP for dental care for UDC systems clarifies what this means for dentistry, including:

- the specific PPE to be used for aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) and non-AGPs; and
 - following consultation with the Deans of the Royal Colleges, FGDP UK, representatives of specialist dental societies and based on PHE's guidance, a clarification of AGP and non-AGP dental procedures
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- Only UDCs need PPE as all routine face-to-face work has been suspended.
 - PHE have coordinated delivery of two weeks' worth of PPE to sites delivering urgent dental care to support immediate supply levels.
 - In addition, PHE has facilitated local fit-testing training for FFP3 masks where requested, although this can also be done by any appropriately trained personnel from other local sources.

Redeployment and volunteering

- More than 15,000 members of the dental workforce have indicated a willingness to be redeployed
- You will have or will soon receive an e mail to thank you and regional contacts will be in touch. Please check your spam folder for this e mail
- The expectation of NHSE and NHSI is that in return for providing a fixed period of income stability, practices can provide continuity of employment for staff. They will therefore be able to make reasonable efforts to support staff to redeploy to support the wider COVID-19 response, including in local UDC systems, Nightingale hospitals and wider parts of the NHS as highlighted above. If staff are unable to be redeployed due to ill health/self-isolation, being in a shielded household, a medically vulnerable group or with caring responsibilities for a family member, the NHS would of course not expect them to be available to provide frontline clinical care.
- Practices will be expected to demonstrate they have made every reasonable effort to offer staff appropriate opportunities to support the wider effort.
- The NHS 111 team is planning for increased levels of dental activity within NHS 111 telephony and online because of the service changes that we have made.
- Work is underway to identify how dental resources (dentists and dental nurses) could be used to help manage this surge, and this therefore presents another option for the redeployment (where applicable) of a proportion of the workforce into a national remote environment.

Contracts and financial arrangements

- In line with the methodology of determining private and NHS income used for business rates reimbursements, you are advised to use the proportion of gross income that relates to GDS/PDS contract value as NHS revenue, the balance being private share. If you claim business rates reimbursements, you will have this data readily available
- It is anticipated that as part of the 2020/21 reconciliation process, practices will be expected to declare that they have not applied for any duplicative government funding and provide evidence of the proportions of NHS/private income used in any applications for additional support
- If you do not perform NHS activity can access wider government support in the same way as any other private business.

2019/20 contract reconciliation and clawback

- Where your March 20 activity was anticipated to be higher than March 2019, or if your practice opened after March 2019, discuss how reconciliation will be calculated with your commissioner
- Any clawback repayments relating to contract year 2019/20 may be payable over the financial year, with full balance payable by 31 March 2021.