



Update on Isle of Wight (IoW) Dental Services for Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Health and Social Care to be held Monday 6 June 2022

Procurement South East – MDS 3

As part of a planned procurement process across the South East region, the dental team have, as previously advised, prioritised Hampshire and the Isle of Wight (IoW) in the commissioning of dental services. The dental team are currently completing evaluations of the received bids across Hampshire; however, disappointingly, no bids were received for the 25,000 UDA's associated with the IoW element of the procurement. The Commissioning Support Unit (CSU) who support NHSE/I with the implementation of the procurement procedure are in the process of requesting information from previously interested parties to understand why they decided against putting in a bid for services on the IoW. Once the responses have been reviewed, the next step will be to use the information provided to consider alternative flexible commissioning. NHSE/I have incorporated elements of flexible commissioning into the procurement of new contracts which also provided a higher UDA rate in line with the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) ranking. It was intended that this additional flexibility would assist in supporting the recruitment and retention of dentists. However, this was not enough for bidders on the IoW and we await the responses provided to the CSU to consider the level of flexibility which needs to be implemented. We remain committed to providing a solution to access on the IoW.

Current position of the Standing Operating procedure (Infection Control)

The national Dental Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) introduced at the start of the pandemic was archived on the 5 April 2022, subject to no significant changes being made to the Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) guidance, as the NHS moved to align with the Government's Living with COVID-19 strategy.

There may still be additional steps some contractors might need to take prior to returning to full contractual delivery and therefore a minimum performance threshold of 95% applies during April to June (Q1) 2022/23. This is in recognition that practices are still required to follow enhanced infection prevention control measures, including a fallow time after treatment, for patients with respiratory symptoms that access dental care. This change will allow for more patients to be seen each day however there is still a considerable backlog of patients who require routine treatment which could not be received whilst the SOP was in place as this concentrated meeting the needs of patients with an urgent need.

Routine Appointments and Urgent Access

Practices that hold an NHS contract will provide both NHS and private care. Dentists have been continually reminded to spend an equal amount of time on NHS care as they did pre-pandemic and to not prioritise private care. However, practices will have different levels of dental activity so when a patient makes contact with a practice they may not have capacity to see a patient on the NHS at that time so patients are encouraged to ring more than one dental practice and may also be required to ring on different days as capacity could change on a daily basis.

Patients should continue to ring 111 or use the NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk> to find a dentist who has capacity to offer treatment at the time of contact. Practices have also been advised to update their entry on the NHS website to show they are accepting patients for routine dental care. However, patients may still need to contact several practices as capacity will change daily as practices work through their backlog of patients who require routine care.

The dental team and the 111 service are currently assessing the number of appointments available for urgent care across the IoW and a once we have a better understanding of patient numbers and access slots we will be able to work with Provider to look at increasing these slots or providing additional support to ensure patients who attend an urgent access slot receive definitive care where possible so they do not return for urgent care.

Integrated Care Boards

Primary dental care is currently commissioned by NHS England and NHS Improvement; the South East region Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) will be formed in the South East region on the 1 July 2022 and the commissioning responsibility for dental services will be delegated to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight (HIOW) Integrated Care Board (ICB). No change in commissioning and contract monitoring is expected at first however this may change as the ICB begin to understand the intricacies of dental services and the contractual restrictions.

Dental Reform and ongoing workstreams

In March 2022, the Government asked NHS England and NHS Improvement to lead on the next stage of dental system reform to better support dentists and deliver better outcomes for patients.

The NHS has published six aims of dental system reform which have been endorsed by the British Dental Association (BDA):

- Be designed with the support of the profession
- Improve oral health outcomes (or, where sufficient data are not yet available, credibly be on track to do so)
- Increase incentives to undertake preventive dentistry, prioritise evidence-based care for patients with the most needs and reduce incentives to deliver care that is of low clinical value
- Improve patient access to NHS care, with a specific focus on addressing inequalities, particularly deprivation and ethnicity
- Demonstrate that patients are not having to pay privately for dental care that was previously commissioned NHS dental care
- Be affordable within NHS resources made available by Government, including taking account of dental charge income.

The NHS continues to work with the BDA and Government on the next steps of dental system reform. Our ambition is to make improvements to the existing contract this year, which will aim to begin to address the issues in the service.

Health Education England are responsible for education and training of dentists. They have recently published 'Advancing Dental Care (ADC) Review Report', the culmination of a three-year review to identify and develop a future dental education and training infrastructure that produces a skilled multi-professional oral healthcare workforce, which

can best support patient and population needs within the NHS. The Government is currently considering the next steps.

In addition, the Government is also considering moving forward with water fluoridation, a public health initiative the Chief Dental Officer strongly supports. As the robust international evidence shows, water fluoridation is another public health tool that can reduce the incidence of tooth decay amongst adults and children – saving potentially thousands of teeth and improving oral health inequality in the process.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Responses to the questions asked about stakeholder engagement/ review of dental services.

Appendix 2 – Review of commissioned General Dental Services and dental need in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight