

NHS England and NHS Improvement South-East

Covid-19: Delivery of Urgent Dental Care

GDP and Urgent Dental Care hub briefing

Issue No. 11

27<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Issue	
<b>Communications re access to dental services</b>	We have recently issued updated communications to a range of stakeholders about access to NHS dental services during the Coronavirus pandemic.
<b>Dental practice capacity to see urgent patients</b>	Practices should have the same number of performers/staff working the same number of hours as pre-Covid to provide the same level of NHS capacity with the expectation that all patients who contact them with urgent need are seen. If practices do not have the capacity to do this then they should not have resumed non-urgent care.
<b>Information for patients on dental practice websites and in response to phone calls</b>	<p>A number of Healthwatches have recently completed reviews of information on GP and dental practice websites and made the following recommendations for dental practice websites. Practice websites should describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>how the practice is handling routine appointments (eg if patients will be contacted with a rescheduled appointment)</i></li> <li>• <i>what to do in an emergency or if urgent treatment is needed</i></li> <li>• <i>how patients will be protected and what to expect when visiting the surgery as well as any actions a patient is expected to take on arrival</i></li> <li>• <i>a prominent date when the website is updated to reassure patients that it's up to date</i></li> </ul> <p>We ask that all practices review their websites to ensure this information is included as a minimum.</p> <p><i>When patients ring dental practices and say they've been advised they're taking on new patients the practices must clarify with the patient if they have an urgent or emergency dental need.</i></p>
<b>Christmas and New Year Opening Arrangements</b>	On 28 October 2020, NHS England and NHS Improvement South East Dental team emailed all providers to seek their Christmas and New Year opening hours. This return covered the period from 21 December 2020 – 1 January 2021 inclusive. The email was sent from <a href="mailto:england.southeastwinter@nhs.net">england.southeastwinter@nhs.net</a>



The communication made it clear that hours were needed from all services with the exception of Restorative, IMOS, prisons and Sedation. Where a provider has multiple contracts then a survey would be completed for each of them, with the exception of Community Dental Services which we can identify more easily from the data received.

We would like to thank the majority of practices which have replied. We have received 1004 completed surveys. However, we are still waiting for a significant number, for 185 contract numbers, which are outstanding. We have targeted our reminders to those practices which still have yet to submit a survey, sending out two reminders already.

Please can you review whether you have completed this survey or been in contact with us to confirm your Christmas and New Year arrangements. If you have still not done this then do get in touch as soon as possible, by early December at the very latest. The survey link is shown here

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=kp4VA8Zyl0umSq9Q55Ctv1ze\\_yYHqgxBhOuDt1izxeRUOEdLM0hERFZDM1pJN0k3NEVJTfIKNk4xUC4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=kp4VA8Zyl0umSq9Q55Ctv1ze_yYHqgxBhOuDt1izxeRUOEdLM0hERFZDM1pJN0k3NEVJTfIKNk4xUC4u)

We will be sharing the opening hour arrangements with 111 and Helpdesks.

We would like to add that if as a provider you are contracted to open on Saturdays then we would expect you to do so given that the Monday 28 December is the bank holiday this year.

As stated in our original email:

“When it is clinically indicated practices must still see patients face to face. If your practice chooses to close you must have in place a buddy arrangement with a neighbouring practice. This "buddy" practice must have the capacity to carry out AAA for your patients and when necessary see them for a face to face appointment. It is acceptable for you to carry out AAA remotely with your buddy arrangement in place to see a patient face to face should this be required. Where you are closed altogether with a buddy arrangement for all urgent care your practice answer phone and website must be updated to detail your buddy arrangements for normal working hours and Out of Hours service details for those periods.

*Please be aware that it is not acceptable to refer patients needing face to face appointments either to Urgent Dental Care Hubs or to Out of Hours services. The Hubs' remit will not change and referrals should be made only in cases where you cannot carry out an aerosol generating procedure; Out of Hours*

	<p><i>services should be used by patients only where their dental pain starts outside of your normal practice opening hours.”</i></p>
<p><b>Launch: Reducing the health inequality gap; new framework for NHS trusts</b></p>	<p>A new resource from NHS Providers and the Provider Public Health Network (with support from Public Health England) sets out a plan of action for trusts to combat growing health inequalities in the next stage of the COVID-19 pandemic. <a href="#"><u>Reducing health inequalities associated with COVID 19: a framework for healthcare providers</u></a> presents a set of principles, stepped actions and examples from practice from NHS and integrated care settings, to help trusts and partner organisations understand and tackle health inequalities amongst their populations.</p> <p>Comments or feedback on the framework are welcomed – please contact <a href="mailto:leanora.volpe@nhsproviders.org"><u>leanora.volpe@nhsproviders.org</u></a>.</p>