

COVID-19

Lee Savarrio - Chief of Dentistry Update (24-3-2020)

I would like to thank you all for your continued dedication, commitment and support at this time. I appreciate the announcement yesterday by the Chief Dental Office and last night by the Prime Minister will only have increased levels of anxiety across the board. We have now as of today been instructed to stop **ALL face to face** treatment within GDS premises.

Again, I am aware that communication may be behind some other smaller Boards, but this is to ensure that what is issued from NHSGGC is **clear, accurate and not conflicting with anything else already in circulation or indeed about to be circulated from central sources.**

My utmost priority is the health and wellbeing of our clinical teams and please be assured we are working hard as a management team to provide you with up to date information about safe working and to establish clear pathways for the ongoing emergency care of our patients.

To be clear, as of today, all GDS practices should undertake NO clinical care on their premises.

Glasgow Dental Hospital will be the designated as the treatment site for symptomatic or COVID patients. There will be further PDS hubs throughout NHS GGC for emergency care for non COVID patients to allow them to have care closer to home.

Please find below area specific updates which I hope are helpful to all.

GDS

- Within GDS, you must **now cease all direct clinical care for your patients** but I would ask you to triage any calls to allow us to deal with the increased numbers to be seen within the new hubs **during normal hours**
 - Triage questions are attached to allow you to help with this. I am grateful for your help in achieving this by adopting the **Advice, Analgesia and Antimicrobials** approach as per the CDO's letter yesterday
- For out of hours, your answering machine message should state the following: **“Due to the coronavirus outbreak and in accordance with instructions from Scottish Government and the Chief Dental Officer, only patients with severe symptoms of infection, bleeding or trauma will be seen for emergency dental treatment at the present time. If this applies please contact NHS24 on 111”.** Your patients may need to wait longer than 24 hours and NHS 24 will advise them of this.

As the situation progresses and PDS services come under more pressure, we will be expecting colleagues within GDS (dentists, hygienists, therapists and dental nurses) to be deployed to help support them to deliver emergency care. This care will be from Health Board premises. Staff from all areas may also be deployed within the Board into non-dental roles.

The weekly activity sheet sent yesterday was modified for data capture and I cannot over-emphasise the importance of having this returned as soon as possible, but no later than 31 March 2020.

The DPAs have been in contact with the main decontamination supply and maintenance companies and asked them to circulate information to their respective customers to allow them to 'hibernate' equipment to minimise issues on restarting the service in the future.

Stay Safe and Look After One Another

Please continue to monitor your practice NHS mail account daily. We are also in the process of setting up a distribution list to allow us to send to all NHS.net accounts as well as via our LDC colleagues.

PDS

As you may be aware, GDS has now been advised to cease all routine and emergency care for patients. We have therefore enacted our plans quicker than anticipated to ensure we have a clear pathway for emergency patients to be seen within our service.

Our GDS colleagues will continue to triage their patients by phone and offer advice and analgesia/antibiotics if appropriate. When required they will refer only those patients who require hands on emergency care to the PDS via the Special Care Hub, this will be by telephone in the first instance. This step in GDS will be critical to try and minimise the number of emergency patients we have to see.

All children and adults, are being triaged via the Special Care Hub, COVID patients will be treated on Level 6 within GDH. Dental Managers are working to develop a rota for PDS dental teams to work across our PDS hubs, GDH or from home.

Even if you are scheduled to work from home, it may be necessary for you to come to work to provide care. Alternatively we may discuss with you options to deploy you elsewhere within oral health or wider across NHSGGC.

As pressures increase on our GDS colleagues, we are working with our pharmacy team to have ready made pharmacy packs, including antibiotics & analgesia available for effective dispensing.

Moving forward we will be introducing more 'cold' spots within PDS hubs where we can see and treat emergency non symptomatic patients. Again our GDS colleagues will be vital in working with PDS staff to support this service.

We are still pursuing the option of 'Attend Anywhere' but are hopeful this is something we can have operational soon to help support effective triage, reduce risk and ensure only those most in need attend for hands on care.

HDS

As we step down routine care at GDH, I am grateful to HDS colleagues who are in the process of preparing to be the designated treatment site for symptomatic COVID dental emergency patients. Barrier training is being provided to those teams that will be accepting COVID patients and we thank them for their skills and expertise in this.

We can and we will get through this but only if we all work together as a team, I appreciate it will be in a way that is untested and unprecedented, but I am thankful in advance for having your support.

Lee Savarrio
Chief of Dentistry