

Chief of Dentistry Update

The main concern for the Oral Health Directorate Senior Management Team at this challenging time is the health and wellbeing of patients, staff and GDP colleagues and their dental teams.

There has been a significant amount of conflicting information circulating from a number of sources over recent days. You will understand that it has taken time to review all of this in order to provide you with cohesive guidance.

I have been working closely with Director of Dentistry colleagues, the Chief Dental Officer and colleagues within other organisations to obtain up to date information.

You will have already received PCA(D)(2020)6 which provides COVID-19 guidance for NHS General Dental Services and the guidance on Aerosol Generating Procedures.

Following concerns raised by GDP colleagues we have, on a local basis, produced additional information (attached) which may be of assistance at this time.

- Guidance on the use of PPE
- A referral pathway for symptomatic patients – in hours

The Out of hours referral pathways for emergency dental care remains the same for both asymptomatic and symptomatic patients. Internal processes are in place between the Board and NHS 24 to manage this.

As Chief of Dentistry, in order to ensure dental colleagues are kept well informed and have access to all relevant updates, I aim to circulate a regular communication, where possible on a daily basis, sharing the most current information available regarding COVID 19 and how potentially this may impact on patient services.

As a Board we wish to support practices as much as possible in this challenging time. However you will appreciate that this is a rapid and ever changing situation and ultimately may impact on the level of service we can all provide in the future.

I am grateful to GDP colleagues who have already offered their support to the Board. Under these extreme circumstances it is important that we all work together to achieve the best possible outcomes we can for patients. I cannot overstate the importance of what GDS teams can contribute to managing this situation to help avoid additional pressures and strains on Acute services.