



Health Board Dental Contracting
Clinical Leads and Dental Stakeholders

25 September 2020

Dear Colleagues,

The Scottish Dental Clinical Effectiveness Programme (SDCEP)

Please be aware that The Scottish Dental Clinical Effectiveness Programme (SDCEP) has published its report on aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) and COVID-19 this afternoon. Please see the publication on the SDCEP [website](#). Should you or any of the DPAs receive any queries regarding this I thought it would be helpful to update you on how it relates to our current SOP and the context of rising community transmission in Wales.

This SDCEP report is a useful and pragmatic review. I welcome its publication and the panel's review of the evidence relating to the generation of aerosols in dental practice. The measures that can be taken to mitigate risk of viral spread, adds to our understanding in the context of Covid-19 pandemic. We are managing risk and uncertainty and the UK alert level is now 4. Please be aware that the 30 minutes and other times referred to in the report are based on low population risk and 'assessed low risk patients (not modelling of risk relating to droplets and aerosols in rising community transmission) that may relate to UK alert level 3.

It is also important to stress that the SDCEP consensus recommendations do not have the status of guidance. However the SDCEP review is informing UK Government Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) guidance. Should UK IPC guidance be updated in the coming days or weeks, we will review and update our SOP for dental practices in Wales. Until then the current SOP stands.

We are working closely with other CDOs and IPC experts in the UK to align and co-ordinate approaches and SOPs wherever possible. There is no intention or need to return to red alert status in areas of increased local restrictions and rising community transmission. We understand more than we did in March. Dental teams following the

Amber phase requirements of the SOP are protected, as are their patients. It is important to continue to restore and provide dental services, and to do so safely. Understanding and reacting to the local context of community transmission, completing pre-appointment Covid-19 risk assessment and having optimal ventilation in surgeries when providing AGPs remain the most important factors for dental practices to be considering at present; together with adhering to the need for social distancing, hand and respiratory hygiene and wearing of face coverings indoors as advised.

Given the context of rising community transmission in Wales, it is necessary to extend the Amber phase into the third quarter of this financial year, October to December 2020. The financial support offered to NHS providers in this quarter, 90% of ACV monthly payment to end of September 2020, will therefore continue in this quarter.

This is offered on the understanding that the provider is willing to resume dental services, within the requirements of the SOP and restoration of dental services plan, offering a full range of care, including the provision of AGPs and the completion of ACORNS as expected. It is also expected that NHS providers will honour payments to staff delivering NHS care and take steps to resume use of dental labs. Where practices are also willing to accept referrals, and offer open access, some health boards have restored ACV payments to 100%.

NHS providers unable or unwilling to restore services by providing a full range of care, including AGPs to a reasonable patient throughput, and/or who are not honouring payments to staff, will not continue to receive the same level of financial support in this quarter. Individual contract discussions will need to be held with local health board contracting and finance teams in October 2020.

Thank you all for your continued commitment to restoring dental services and providing essential dental care to patients in Wales in these very challenging times.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Colette Bridgman', is written over a light blue circular watermark logo.

Colette Bridgman
Prif Swyddog Deintyddol
Chief Dental Officer