**Orthodontic Report for the North Wales LDC Meeting – 11th December 2023**

The last North Wales and Powys OMCN meeting was held on the 14th November 2023. The topics discussed were:

* **North Wales Orthodontic Needs Assessment.**

It is recognised that there this likely to have been a change in the population demographics since the last North Wales Orthodontic Needs Assessment was undertaken approximately 10 years ago. As such the OMCN have requested an updated needs assessment to be undertaken. This is currently in draft form and is out to consultation amongst the membership of the OMCN. This Needs Assessment will form the basis for the perceived future orthodontic needs and commissioning strategy for the HB over the next 5+ years.

* **Primary Care Orthodontic Contracts**

The current specialist contracts have been recommissioned for 10 years as of September 2024. There is currently a loss of clinical activity due to a number of DwSI contracts which have been returned.

* **DNA policy**

The OMCN has been requested to produce a DNA policy guidance document which can be circulated to the orthodontic providers. This would allow a baseline upon which local providers can base their own local policies. This is currently in draft form and under consultation within the membership to ensure that it is in keeping with other HB DNA related polices.

* **Routine Dental Access for Orthodontic Patients**

There are still ongoing issues with patients due to commence orthodontic treatment, or who are in active orthodontic treatment, who are unable to access routine dental care. This is posing a dental risk to these patients as well as delaying their treatment. This is an issue which has previously been highlighted to the HB.

* **eRMS**

The OMCN is in the process of confirming updated referral guidelines which will be disseminated to referrers. The key point will be the request to include photographs for the most salient aspect of the malocclusion. It is felt that this will be invaluable in the helping to appropriately triage the referrals recieved.

* **Strategic Advisory Forum in Orthodontics (SAFO)**

This group had not met since the early stages of the pandemic and the OMCN Chairs felt that as a result there was a lack of national strategy. In response to these concerns the OMCN Chairs and the Chair of SAFO met with the CDO on 27th October 2023 and agreement has been reached to reinstate this group with regular meetings and subsequent input into the SAF Chairs Meeting.

* **Local Orthodontic Committee – Local PAR Scoring Exercise**

This was undertaken on the 13th June 2023 and demonstrated a mean PAR reduction of 83% across the cases assessed.

* **Restorative Service**

Lack of a Consultant led Restorative Service within North Wales is impacting on the care of patients requiring multidisciplinary input. This issue has been raised with the HB who are exploring options for a substantive replacement and locum cover.

* **Waiting Times**

Access to orthodontic treatment is determined by clinical prioritisation. Referrals deems as routine are likely to wait 3-4 years plus before being seen/treatment commenced.

* **Workforce**

Secondary care orthodontic services are currently operating with a 50% vacancy rate amongst the consultant staff. This will increase to 70% in February 2024. There are currently varying levels of service across the three acute sites and this is likely to deteriorate further in February 2024. The HB is going out to advert for both a substantive post(s) across YGC and YG as well as locum cover across the three sites.

* **CBCT**

There is still a lack of access to HB CBCT services across North Wales – both for primary and secondary care providers. This is an issue which has been raised numerous times for the past two to three years. There is currently a working party looking at both long term and interim solutions.

**Author:** B.R.K. Lewis, Chair of the North Wale & Powys OMCN.