



Russell Gidney  
Chair,  
Welsh General Dental Practice Committee  
British Dental Association (Wales)

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Dear Russell,

### **Contract variation to include ACORN in the UDA-only default GDS contract**

Thank you for your letter and opportunity to discuss the issues raised at our last meeting. Please accept my apologies for the late response to your letter and I hope the comments below reflect and clarify the points raised.

ACORN is an integral aspect of the contract reform, where the primary utility of the toolkit is a standardisation of a personalised 'risk and needs assessment once a year' across all practices. The co-production of preventive dental care plans will help to establish the delivery of prevention which was not an integral feature of the UDA system. Patient engagement in self-directed prevention at home is one of the principal components. In addition, the overall data profiling will ensure any future contracts are balanced towards patient and practice needs.

- 1. ACORN for practices not participating in the reform programme:** Thank you for raising this point at the last meeting. We agree that non-contract variation practices do not have to complete the ACORN data collection under the UDA contract. However, we would encourage all GDS practices to support ACORN data collection as experience of this process, which provides a baseline risk profile of their patient group, would assist if practices wished to consider a reformed contract in the future.
- 2. Completion time for ACORN:** This is an action learning year and will monitor the time required to complete the ACORN data.
- 3. BSA software:** We were unsure on context so have clarified with NHSBSA. The BSA team have offered to explore concerns in greater detail but have requested if there were any illustrative examples that would assist in understanding the concern or further specific details regarding the data issues and data points referred to in your letter.

Practices are requested to provide care in accordance with Delivering Better Oral Health (DBOH) as part of both the GDS Reform model and the UDA-only contract. NHSBSA has been informed by Welsh Government that UDA-only contracts do not have to report ACORN data. The NHSBSA issues requirements to all Dental Practice Management Suppliers (DPMS) and change notices on a 6-monthly timeline. As the change to UDA-only contracts not mandating completion of ACORN was made after the previous six-monthly update, we have since notified our DPMS to make the necessary changes where needed.

Part of the DBOH strategy is encouraging behaviour change in patients. The behaviour change aspects are covered under Best Practice Prevention and these 4 data points should be reported by both GDS Reform and UDA-only contracts.

If any contractor submits an ACORN with "ACORN Assessment Carried Out" indicated on the form all 8 data points must be included on the claim in order to pass validation. However, as confirmed by Welsh Government, UDA-only contracts are not required to select "ACORN Assessment Carried Out" to submit an FP17W form. Validation rules enable the claim to continue to be processed.

Any ACORN data submitted by UDA-only contracts will be captured however this will not impact on the all-Wales population figures. The "ACORN Assessment Carried out" indicator was introduced as part of the reform so data from UDA-only contracts can be reported separately to the contract variation contracts.

We would be happy to discuss any of these points in more detail.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'A. Dickenson', written on a light-colored background.

Andrew Dickenson,  
Prif Swyddog Deintyddol / Chief Dental Officer  
Y Gyfarwyddiaeth Gofal Sylfaenol ac Iechyd Meddwl / Directorate of Primary Care and  
Mental Health  
Llywodraeth Cymru / Welsh Government