

Navigating significant contract changes in NHS dentistry

Stephen Henderson BDS LLM FGDP FFFLM
Independent Dental Adviser
Specialist in Oral Surgery

stephenhendersondentalconsultancy@outlook.com

Leadership

- ▶ **What sort of leader are you?**
 - ▶ Do you have clarity of purpose?
 - ▶ Can you motivate positively?
 - ▶ How good are you at conflict resolution?
 - ▶ Do you have high levels of emotional intelligence?
 - ▶ Can you manage performance of the team constructively?

Key Roles of a Change Leader

- ▶ **Agitator:** Highlights organisational challenges and motivates stakeholders to recognize the need for change.
- ▶ **Innovator:** Develops actionable solutions and plans to address identified challenges.
- ▶ **Orchestrator:** Coordinates and scales solutions across teams and departments to achieve meaningful impact.

Leaders who integrate all three roles can drive both short-term wins and large-scale transformation.

Essential Skills and Competencies

- ▶ **Communicate:** Clearly articulate both the “what” and “why” of change to build understanding and buy-in.
- ▶ **Collaborate:** Engage employees across boundaries, encourage participation, and reduce silos.
- ▶ **Build Trust and Address Resistance:** Recognise human reactions to change, reinforce purpose, and model desired behaviours.
- ▶ **Vision and Agility:** Anticipate challenges, adapt strategies, and maintain momentum in dynamic environments.
- ▶ **Empathy and Engagement:** Support employee well-being and sustain motivation during transitions.

Where are the risks in times of change?

- ▶ Ignorance of the changes as a whole
- ▶ Ignorance of the detail in care pathways - training for the whole team
- ▶ Failure to explain the changes to patients clearly, leading to patients making bad choices - failure of consent
- ▶ Not allowing sufficient time for the key stages in the new way of working
 - ▶ Assessment - not enough detail gathered
 - ▶ Treatment planning and consent - not enough time to explain choices to patients, and impact of not following advice

Where are the risks in times of change?

- ▶ Record keeping is the key - be aware of data fields required by care pathways so that all decisions can be justified and any exceptions clearly explained.
- ▶ Mixing with consent - be very clear what choices must be available to NHS patients under the pathway.
- ▶ Make sure the whole team knows what the correct position is.....

“we don’t do composite fillings on back teeth.....”

“you can only see the hygienist privately.....”

Where are the risks in times of change?

- ▶ GDC - Put the best interest patients ahead of those of the business and yourself
- ▶ GDC FTP
- ▶ NHSE - Contract Breach
- ▶ NHSE Performers List - suitability/efficiency

Regulations & Guidance



- ▶ NHS GDS Contract Regulations
- ▶ NHS GDS Charges Regulations
- ▶ NHS Complaints Regulations
- ▶ NHS Guidance

- ▶ SDCEP
- ▶ CGDent
- ▶ UK Health Security Agency
- ▶ Specialist Societies

The National Health Service (General Dental Services Contracts) Regulations 2005

UKSI 2005 No. 3361 SCHEDULE 3 PART 2

Mixing of services provided under the contract with private services

Paragraph 10

- 3) A contractor shall not, with a view to obtaining the agreement of a patient to undergo services privately—
 - (a) advise a patient that the services which are necessary in his case are not available from the contractor under the contract; or
 - (b) seek to mislead the patient about the quality of the services available under the contract.

The National Health Service (General Dental Services Contracts) Regulations 2005

UKSI No. 3361 PART 5 Regulation 22

Fees, charges and financial interests of the contractor

- 22.**—(1) The contract must contain terms relating to fee, charges and financial interests which have the same effect as those set out in paragraphs (2) to (4).
- (2) The contractor shall not, either itself or through any other person, demand or accept a fee or other remuneration for its own or another's benefit from—
- (a) any patient of its for the provision of any treatment under the contract, except as otherwise provided in the NHS Charges Regulations; or
 - (b) any person who has requested services under the contract for himself or a family member, as a prerequisite to providing services under the contract to that person or his family member.

Standards for the dental team

- ▶ **Standard 1.7** - You must put patients' interests before your own or those of any colleague, business or organisation.
- ▶ **Standard 1.9** - You must find out about laws and regulations that affect your work and follow them
- ▶ **Standard 2.3** - You must give patients the information they need, in a way they can understand, so that they can make informed decisions
- ▶ **Standard 2.4** - You must give patients clear information about costs
- ▶ **Standard 3.1** - You must obtain valid consent before starting treatment, explaining all the relevant options and the possible costs.
- ▶ **Standard 4.1** - You must make and keep contemporaneous, complete and accurate patient records
- ▶ **Standard 6.1.3** - You must treat colleagues fairly in all financial transactions.



GDC Draft Principles of Professionalism

Treat patients with respect

Treat your patients with dignity and compassion, supporting them to make informed decisions about their care.

Practise safely and effectively

Use your knowledge and skills to provide the right outcome for your patients, keep up to date with relevant guidance, legislation and regulations that affect your work, and speak up to protect others.

Maintain trust in the profession

Act with honesty, and integrity, ensuring your actions maintain the trust of colleagues, patients, and the public.

Work in partnership with others

Work with colleagues to uphold these Principles and ensure an effective and supportive environment in which the safety and wellbeing of the patient and dental team is protected.

Challenges within the practice/group



- ▶ Interpretation of the detail in the new arrangements
- ▶ Associate agreements
 - ▶ will they be updated to reflect the new arrangements?
 - ▶ What happens when an associate leaves the practice?
 - ▶ How are refunds for failed treatments beyond NHS guarantee managed?
- ▶ Patients
 - ▶ Explaining the changes
 - ▶ Putting patients' best interests first - pathway/banded treatments?
 - ▶ Ending the relationship

Finally.....

NHS

- ▶ As ever, the devil is in the detail...
- ▶ Read the regulations including the contract and its changes
- ▶ Read the guidance in the context of your reading
- ▶ Don't rely upon others
- ▶ Follow authoritative advice not urban myths and Facebook friends