

COVID-19

Lee Savarrio - Chief of Dentistry Update (16-09-2020)

We are all aware of the Risk Assessments and Standard Operating Procedures to ensure that our physical environments and working processes are as safe as possible for ourselves, our staff and our patients.

It is well documented that the infection prevention and control measures that are in place, whether this is within GDS, PDS or HDS are of a high standard, particularly during any clinical interventions.

However, we are less used to the strict measures required to ensure our patients and staff are safe from this most transmissible Coronavirus. Being vigilant when observing physical distancing, wearing of PPE and environmental cleaning within communal staff areas or public spaces such as reception, changing rooms, canteens and break areas are all new interventions. I understand that we are all getting used to the new ways of working, but I want to remind everyone of the importance of maintaining these standards and precautions at all times. Staggered lunches should be enforced where necessary and PPE **MUST** be worn where physical distancing is impossible.

Please remember that if these measures are not followed, the potential impact could be particularly significant. Transmission between staff members could result in colleagues becoming ill, others needing to quarantine for a fortnight and could also result in an entire practice or department closing for a period of up to 14 days.

This is by no means intended to cause additional anxiety at an already difficult time for us all. However, we must be aware that we all have a part to play and I would like to thank all of you who are going the extra mile to ensure the safety of your staff and patients.

As a dental community, we must play our part, as none of us want to go back into full lockdown. Remember that five of the six Local Authority areas within NHSGGC are already subject to household restrictions, we therefore need to ensure that we are all observing the rules.

Remember FACTS

Face coverings

Avoid crowded places

Clean your hands regularly

Two metre distance

Self-isolate and book a test if you have symptoms

Stay Safe and Look After One Another

PPE

As highlighted before the storage and distribution of huge quantities of PPE is a logistical nightmare for the Board. In relation to this we had asked that unless you had informed us to the contrary you must be available and accept delivery. This may include the lunch period. Unfortunately we have been advised that last week alone 22 practices were closed when we tried to make the delivery. As you will appreciate this is a wasted journey for our very busy distribution teams and then we still have to arrange storage for the PPE.

You should be aware that from next week NSS have arranged that Menzies will be dropping off the 'simple' PPE supplies direct to practices (ie non-AGP) and, in order to prevent costs for redelivery of items, the same necessity to accept delivery on the allotted day applies.

If you decide you don't want your delivery of simple or enhanced PPE please let us know in advance by emailing Oral.Health3@ggc.scot.nhs.uk . Please be assured that if you run low on your supplies if you contact us we will seek to make arrangements for you to collect supplies. Also if you have any issues with your PPE, please also email us on the address above especially if this includes any defects or malfunction.

Can I also remind you that if you are intending to commence AGPs you must complete the last Webropol survey; this will ensure we add your practice to the list for delivery of enhanced PPE.

<https://link.webpolsurveys.com/S/ED039179086F2052>

Domiciliary Care

There have been some questions raised recently about undertaking domiciliary care. As with any of our services, where urgent dental care is required, a risk assessment should be carried out. In this setting this should be done in liaison with the care home. Following this, if appropriate, the domiciliary visit and treatment can go ahead subject to local restrictions.

You may however find that given current restrictions, including local lockdown arrangements, some care homes may be more willing to bring patients into the practice for treatment, rather than this being undertaken on a domiciliary basis.

Flu Vaccinations

In GDS you should by now have received the recent PCA (D)(2020)12 which advises dentists and DBCs of the arrangements and associated fees for participation in the seasonal flu vaccination programme for 2020/21.

Although the programme is delivered between 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021, Scottish Government has asked that we concentrate the programme before the end of November to maximise the protection of eligible individuals.

As detailed in the PCA, a one off participation fee will be offered to participating contractors set at £250 per contractor and as agreed with Scottish Dental Practice Committee of the BDA, a fee of £8.27 per immunisation.

We continue to liaise with colleagues to establish how dentists can best assist HSCPs to deliver the programme to the target group and I am aware the BDA is also pursuing this. The participation for NHSGGC would be via contact from an individual HSCP via the LDC rep for that area and would most likely be on a sessional basis at a Board site.

Urgent Dental Care – Surgery Booking

As intimated previously, we wish to implement a booking system that will allow General Dental Practitioners who are unable to provide urgent AGPs within their own practices the ability to book a slot within a PDS site for them to undertake the treatment by themselves or a nominee from their practice. This will allow the PDS teams to focus on their areas of expertise. We are in the process of finalising the arrangements for this and will send out the specific details very soon with a view to transitioning to this arrangement next week. This allows us to stand up our HDS and PDS services more fully and prepares us for the transition to the next stage of the route map whereby the responsibility for all GDS urgent dental care will be with the registering practice and will need to be provided in general dental practice or by general dental practitioners in Health Board premises. I am hopeful of an indicative date for this from Scottish Government in the near future.

Under IRMER Legislation, you will only be able to use the x-ray machine if you have undergone a competency assessment by one of the PDS Radiation Protection Team.

If the nominated dentist has not had this completed, can you please contact the team on 0141 531 8120 to arrange this prior to the patient's appointment. We would require a minimum of an hour to complete the process. When calling to arrange your IRMER competency assessment please indicated if this will be your first time providing care to the UDCC, if so further induction on your first day will be arranged.

For your information we did experience some issues receiving referrals on Monday evening and Tuesday (14th and 15th Sept) due to the migration of generic email boxes. Once identified GDPs were quickly provided with a contact telephone number. I can only apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Cover for the Public Holiday

We have now received confirmation from NHS 24 that they will cover the public holiday on Monday 28 September 2020. Please ensure that your practice answer phone message reflect this arrangement.

Kind regards,
Lee Savarrio, Chief of Dentistry

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