

## COVID-19

### Lee Savarrio - Chief of Dentistry Update (30-10-2020)

#### ➤ **PCA(D)(2020)13 – Remobilising of NHS Dental Services: Phase 4**

GDS and PDS teams will have received a copy of the above from CDO Scotland. This letter confirms that from 1 November 2020, dental practices and PDS colleagues can provide the full range of NHS treatments to all patients in need of both urgent and non-urgent care whether AGP or not.

The memorandum to the PCA also provides information in relation to PPE distribution and stocks, the statement of dental remuneration, domiciliary care and the revised financial support measures.

Although it is acknowledged that this does not mean “business as usual”, I hope this will allow our GDS colleagues and in turn the PDS and HDS to get back to doing what we all do best - seeing and treating our own patients. We will be emphasising this to patients via our communications and I enclose a letter for your own communications from me to your patients to reinforce the message that you are sending out regarding getting through the backlog of patients waiting for care.

I understand there may be concerns within dental teams at the continued remobilisation of dental services while there are more stringent restrictions for the population and society as a whole. It is also true we are seeing increased numbers of positive cases in NHS GG&C (partly through increased testing) as well as increases in the numbers of patients in hospital and ICU for COVID-19.

The public health data demonstrates that the overwhelming bulk of COVID-19 transmission occurs in social settings - in hospitality/community settings and socialising with friends and family. There are comparatively small numbers arising when considering all health care settings.

Where we have seen cases in dental settings, this has been as a result of staff members contracting COVID-19 outside of the working environment. This is a timely reminder that we all have a responsibility to be as vigilant outside the workplace as we are within. In the workplace we need to continue that vigilance in social distancing and environmental decontamination in clinical and non-clinical areas.

This is to minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19, but also to ensure our teams remain adequately staffed to deliver safe and effective dental care to our patients.

➤ **4 Nations IPC Guidance Dental Annex**

Throughout Covid all our services have acted and reacted in accordance with the best available evidence in order to provide a safe environment for patients and staff, always erring on the side of caution.

You may have seen the 4 nations IPC Guidance published by Public Health England and approved by Health Protection Scotland as well as the 4 UK CDOs which includes revised fallow times following AGPs. This is now national guidance which has been approved by all 4 Chief Dental Officers and as such should now be followed in GDS. We are currently going through Board processes for adoption in PDS and HDS. New risk assessments based on this guidance will facilitate shorter fallow times, where appropriate.

Within GDS, if you wish to reduce your fallow times and are unsure of the air exchanges in your surgeries, then you should seek guidance from a ventilation company. Unfortunately no one at the Oral Health Directorate has this expertise.

➤ **Indemnity Cover**

Just as a reminder, over the last few months you may have reduced your indemnity cover. You should now ensure you contact your indemnity provider and confirm the reviewed sessions/work type you will be doing going forward.

➤ **Communication with the Chief of Dentistry**

A number of you in GDS have kindly contacted me directly, some in response to my updates, others with general questions or queries. In order to ensure a quick response and resolution of your questions/concerns I thought it would be helpful if I provided some direct contact details for some of our teams who may also be able to assist you.

- For routine GDS enquiries, please contact the GDS admin team [GDSAdmin@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:GDSAdmin@ggc.scot.nhs.uk)
- Our Dental Practice Advisers are available to give you advice, help and support. They can be contacted by email [omarigbal@nhs.net](mailto:omarigbal@nhs.net), [ahaleem@nhs.net](mailto:ahaleem@nhs.net) or telephone 0141 201 4210. Please remember they are both also practising GDS dentists so there might be a delay in responding
- For any issues in relation to PPE supplies and face fit testing, contact [oral.health3@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:oral.health3@ggc.scot.nhs.uk)

It may also be worthwhile reminding you of our coordinated approach of interfacing with GDS. We as a Board meet with LDC members every two weeks. Therefore questions can also be channelled via this route, particularly those which could benefit from further discussion with GDS peers and / or clarification from CDO or Scottish Government. That way we can more fully discuss issues raised and provide a response which can be shared more widely.

➤ **FFP3 Masks**

We have been advised of a small number of people who have experienced an allergic reaction to the face masks provided. If you or any of your team have experienced any adverse reaction to the PPE supplied, we would be grateful if you could let us know by emailing [oral.health3@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:oral.health3@ggc.scot.nhs.uk).

Also if you find that you have excess simple or enhanced PPE, this can be returned to us. Please let us know by emailing [oral.health3@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:oral.health3@ggc.scot.nhs.uk) and we can arrange for this to be picked up and re distributed.

➤ **Wearing of Face Masks**

I thought it may be helpful if I provided a reminder on the new restrictions with regard to the use of face coverings. The wearing of face coverings in indoor settings such as staff areas and corridors is now mandatory; dependent on your particular service setting and environment.

Masks should be worn:

- By staff who work in a clinical or care area at all times.
- When providing direct care, staff should continue to wear appropriate PPE in line with the UK IPC remobilisation guidance and according to their own professional judgement.
- In other areas of health or social care where direct care is not being undertaken but where physical distancing isn't always possible (e.g. corridors, offices, call centres, shops and other public areas), face masks/coverings should be worn by all staff.
- By staff on arrival at work, when entering the premises or using services.
- By staff transiting to staff areas e.g. restaurants or going into changing rooms or if needing to queue in cafeteria.

Staff are NOT required to wear a face mask during mealtimes in staff restaurants or when in changing rooms. If working at a desk in open areas, there is no need to wear a facemask. If leaving the desk to any communal areas, a facemask must be worn.

Where face masks are not worn, carrying out 2 metre physical distancing is essential and consideration should be given to the space in which the communication can take place i.e. a well ventilated room.



**Stay Safe and Look After One Another**

➤ **Practice Closure**

In the event that you are required to close your practice due to a member of the team testing positive, on reopening no additional 'special' cleaning is required as you should already be following transmission based protocols for daily cleaning. You would simply continue to follow this guidance:

<https://www.scottishdental.org/professionals/covid-19-summary-page/>

*Kind regards,  
Lee Savarrio, Chief of Dentistry*