

NHS Dentistry- update HOSC item 20 November 2009

1. Introduction

This report provides an update on the previous year's report to HOSC on

- a. Location of NHS dentists & whether they are accepting new NHS patients & have wheelchair access
- b. Increased awareness of how to access an NHS dentist
- c. Progress on Emergency Dental Services review
- d. Report on Special Care Dental Services
- e. Changes as a result of Professor Jimmy Steele Review and impact on dental contracts

2. Location of NHS dentists in East Sussex and whether they are accepting new NHS patients and have wheelchair access

- a. The map shows the location of dental practices including new practices set up as a result of tendering for more dental services. A total of 88 premises providing NHS dental services are available. The number of practices accepting new NHS patients has increased to 58 (66% of premises), and the number of practices with wheelchair access has increased to 53 (60% of premises). Practices successful in tenders were required to have wheelchair access and accept new patients. Seven new practices have opened already, one other new practice will open in the rural Rother area in the next few months and five existing practices were awarded increased contracts through tendering.
- b. The tendering for general dental services, which was recommended in the oral health needs assessments (<http://www.esdw.nhs.uk/about-us/strategic-documents/oral-health-needs-assessment/>) and (<http://www.hastingsandrother.nhs.uk/about-us/strategic-documents/oral-health-needs-assessment/>), has now been completed. As the majority of additional services have only recently started, it is expected that the impact on more patients accessing NHS dental services will happen over the coming months. The oral health needs assessment is being updated with a view to informing further commissioning.

3. Increased awareness of how to access an NHS dentist

- a. The PCTs have conducted a media campaign to increase awareness of how to find a dentist in the period July to October 2009. This comprised:
 - i. Flyers promoting the dental helpline 0300 1000 899 have been widely distributed in healthcare practices and public offices (A4 poster attached).
 - ii. Large advertisements/ hoardings have been placed at key locations near supermarkets and railway stations incorporating a text back service campaign (photo examples are attached)
 - iii. A5 booklets were distributed to all households in East Sussex with informative facts about the importance of oral health and how to achieve it throughout life, with key messages for different age groups (sample attached). This also promotes important telephone numbers for accessing NHS dental services and gives details of where to raise any concerns.
 - iv. News releases on availability of NHS dentists
- b. The success of increasing awareness was evaluated by monitoring the volume of calls to the dental helpline.
 - i. Calls were monitored from 10 July, on weekly basis. A high of 180 per week was reported in week ending 21 August and has now reduced to about 55 calls per week in October.

4. Progress on review of Emergency Dental Services

- a. The terms of reference for the review were agreed with stakeholders, including a representative from HOSC. A draft report has been received and this is now being assessed for completeness.

5. Special Care Dental Services (SCDS) Report

- a. Public Health:Epidemiology
 - i. Special Care Dental Services took part in the 2008-2009 national dental health survey of 12 year-old children and will shortly be able to provide an update in the dental health of this age group. This will help with identification of areas of need and help with service planning.
- b. Oral Health Promotion

- i. The team, managed by Sarah Benwel, teaches Oral Health Promotion at various establishments across the region, including schools, nursing homes and care homes. Teaching is also provided to professional staff groups.

c. General Anaesthetics

- i. Special care patients continue to have access at three hospital sites (Uckfield, Eastbourne and Conquest) for treatment under general anaesthetic. Waiting times remain within national limits (18 weeks from referral to treatment). Routine paediatric exodontia is provided at Bexhill Hospital and Eastbourne and waiting times remain short for this patient group. For paediatric extractions, the waiting time in Bexhill was an average of 2 weeks and in Eastbourne, and average of 5 weeks.

d. Clinics: Across the 7 SCDS sites:

- i. Since May 2009 we now have a full time senior dentist working at Seaford Health Centre and Peacehaven Health Centre. She is providing dental care for special needs patients both in clinic, with the support of a dental therapist, and on a domiciliary basis where necessary. Before May, care was provided in these areas by the Clinical Lead one day per week at each site.
- ii. The Arthur Blackman Clinic at St Leonards is due to have modifications to one of the treatment rooms on the ground floor which will improve wheelchair access for special care dental patients in the Hastings area. There is also an upgrade to the decontamination facilities here, which includes a separate decontamination room (as recommended in the latest Health Technical Memorandum 01 05 report). Decontamination concerns procedures, equipment, facilities, and work flow to prevent cross contamination and sterilize appropriately. Building work is imminent, with a completion date due for early 2010.
- iii. There are minor changes at the other Special Care Dental Services sites, generally concerned with improving manual handling of patients. This is to ensure the moving of patients is in a safe way for them and staff (e.g. by provision and use of hoists). There are also improvements in decontamination policies and procedures.

6. Changes in East Sussex as result of Professor Jimmy Steele's Review and impact on NHS Dentistry contract

- a. A new contract called Personal Dental Services plus is expected to be used for new procurements only, both in East Sussex and nationally. Currently the PCTs are waiting for the guidance on these contracts to be finalised and provided by the Department of Health. This guidance is expected to be available within the next few weeks.
- b. We understand the Personal Dental Services plus agreements are a forerunner to the contractual changes expected from Professor Jimmy Steele's review. The proposals from this review are currently being piloted by a small number of other PCTs working in conjunction with the Department of Health. The outcome of these pilots is awaited (no timescale has been suggested) to inform any longer-term changes to NHS general dental contracts.

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