

Re-design of the Community Dental Service: Briefing for HOSCs

NHS England and NHS Improvement



Background

A Review has been undertaken of the Community Dental Services (CDS) in the following Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) areas:

- Birmingham and Solihull
- Coventry and Warwickshire
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire
- The Black Country

A review of current CDS service provision has been completed in order to:

- fully understand the nature of each service (in the context of the NHS England Guides for Dental Commissioning);
- identify, assess and engage regarding options for change to improve equity of access to CDS services across this geographic area.

The CDS provide care for those with special or additional needs who, because of these needs, cannot access appropriate care from a family or high street dentist. They all offer elements of Paediatric Dentistry and Special Care Dentistry. Across the area CDS currently provide a varied set of other services, sometimes for local historic reasons. These include domiciliary care, services for specific vulnerable groups and dental Public Health services for Local Authorities. CDS may in addition provide other services such as Orthodontics or Minor Oral Surgery but these are out of scope of this project.

The key principles underpinning the Review were:

- To improve equity of provision and access to these services;
- To implement the recommendations of the relevant national Dental Commissioning Guides;
- To encourage the development of sustainable services;
- To enable greater equity in the distribution of the associated funding and resources.

Methodology of the Review

The methodology of the Review comprised several elements including:

- A fact-finding stage where each current provider of CDS services provided detailed information regarding current service provision (such as the nature, scale, location(s) and costs of the services provided);
- Market, stakeholder and patient and public engagement activities and events to discuss and inform on the future of CDS services;
- Identifying options for change, presenting recommendations and engaging regarding the future of CDS (the current phase).

Findings and Recommendations

The Review found evidence of significant variance in the nature and scale of the services provided across the West Midlands, leading to inequitable access for patients.

We have produced an engagement document that is intended for current providers and other stakeholders setting out the findings and recommendations of the Review in more detail. It should be noted that while this document will be publicly available the intended audience is not patients or the public. The purpose of the document is to feed back to those who contributed to the review and so gives a detailed account of the complexities that they identified. It is this complexity which has informed the decision to pursue a re-design (rather than a re-procurement) in order to ensure that the necessary changes can be identified and enacted in a managed way. This will minimise disruption to the services delivered for patients during the transition to the new model.

A copy of this is attached for your information. An Easy Read version of this document is also available.

As detailed in this document, there has already been significant engagement both nationally and locally with respect to the development of the recommendations from the review. As the project moves to implementation through redesign, providers will continue to review the level of impact of any proposed change to services in each area and consult as appropriate when necessary.

The Review made eight recommendations as follows:

- 1:** We recommend that the services will comprise a 'core offer' of the Community Dental Service within the West Midlands in future. (Note: further details of the composition of the core offer can be found in our engagement document).
- 2:** We recommend that in future Community Dental Services within the West Midlands should be delivered by services aligned with the four local Sustainability and Transformation Partnership Areas and that providers work collaboratively within these geographies to deliver a service for their relevant population.
- 3:** We recommend that General Anaesthetic services for both Paediatric and Special Care patients are consolidated and provided in future from a reduced number of specialist centres across the West Midlands.
- 4:** We recommend that more sedation services should be made available across the West Midlands as a local alternative to General Anaesthetic where clinically appropriate.
- 5:** We recommend that commissioning arrangements for General Anaesthetic services are strengthened locally to ensure the appropriate level of governance. Future services should be commissioned as a shared care model hosted by the relevant Acute Service with dental staffing provided by the relevant Community Dental Service teams.

6: We recommend that there should be a requirement for each service to be able to offer access to Consultant and/or Specialist provision in both Special Care and Paediatric Dentistry locally.

7: We recommend that a Personal Dental Service (PDS) contract model incorporating Key Performance Indicators should be used in future for Community Dental Services in the West Midlands.

8: We recommend the adoption of a mixed model for payments in respect of contracts for Community Dental Services.

Transition and Engagement Strategy

As previously stated we intend to work with existing providers to re-design Community Dental Services across the area in line with these recommendations. Providers will be encouraged to work collaboratively to reconfigure services in such a way as to meet the needs of their local STP population. If it is not possible to secure the required changes in line with the recommendations then it may be necessary, following the appropriate consultation, to conduct a procurement in respect of the relevant services. Contracts are being issued to existing providers for a period of two years from 1 April 2019 to allow time for this work to be undertaken.

A dedicated Project Manager will lead the re-design project and manage the service development improvement plans that will be used to support providers in its implementation.

NHS England will continue to engage with the relevant stakeholders, including providers, Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) boards and the public throughout the implementation of the re-design. We will hold at least one launch event in each STP area.

We are happy to attend any Local Authority, Health Oversight Scrutiny Committee or other meetings to provide further details about the Review and our plans for the re-design.

We would welcome your comments on our recommendations for the re-design. You can comment (or obtain a copy of the engagement document setting out the recommendations and findings of the Review) by writing or e-mailing us by 31 August 2019 as follows:

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