

# Briefing Paper for HOSCs

## Consultation on Dental Out of Hours services for the West Midlands (Birmingham, Solihull, the Black Country, Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire)

Contracts for Dental Out of Hours services in the West Midlands are due to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. It is our intention to re-procure these services and this briefing paper is to inform HOSCs of the upcoming consultation on the options for service configuration. This will take place from 15<sup>th</sup> July 2019 to 30<sup>th</sup> August 2019 and will inform our procurement strategy.



## What is out of hours dental care?

Out of hours dental care is available for people who need urgent or emergency dental care from a dentist when their dental practice is closed. Urgent dental care covers dental problems that need emergency care (assessment within one hour) or urgent care (assessment within 24 hours) which is often followed by dental advice or treatment in hours. The number of people using these services each week is very small; most dental problems can be dealt with by an urgent appointment with a dentist during normal opening hours.

## Where are the existing out of hours dental services provided?

There are a total of 13 locations available for out of hours dental services on weekends and bank holidays across the West Midlands. On weekday evenings services are provided from eight locations across the West Midlands. It should be noted that some of the services are not routinely staffed and operate on a telephone triage model.

## Where are the proposed new locations?

Please see the attached consultation document for details of proposals for locations for new services. This also contains a weblink to the consultation website where further information will be available including the full needs assessment which includes full details of current services.

Proposed locations have been chosen based on; the urgent care needs assessment, new commissioning guidance and previous patient engagement. These are indicative only at this stage and we intend to take account of the responses to the consultation when finalising plans before re-procuring the services.

## Why is the change necessary?

Contracts for the current out of hours dental services in the West Midlands expire in March 2020. These services were established when the population and its health needs were very different to what they are now. We are looking to make changes to these services so that services will more closely meet the current and future need of people living in the West Midlands. An urgent dental care needs assessment has been undertaken to inform the changes and support addressing the lack of equity in the current service provision. It is envisaged that direct booking via NHS 111 will be introduced at a later date and the current model does not facilitate this.

There is robust evidence to support the proposed changes which can be accessed at:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/commissioning-standard-for-urgent-dental-care/>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/790933/urgent\\_dental\\_care\\_evidence\\_review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/790933/urgent_dental_care_evidence_review.pdf)

## How does this benefit patients?

Patients will have access to services which are more closely aligned to their needs as identified in the needs assessment and patient and public consultation exercise. The new services will have increased opening hours and the sites from which they operate will be staffed for the duration of their opening hours. This will improve both equity and accessibility.

## Is this a cut in services?

No. If the proposal goes ahead the aim is to provide enhanced services within the existing budget.

## Why are we suggesting changes to locations for services?

The needs assessment shows the locations and access arrangements of the current services are not equitable. The proposal represents improved equity and improved access for those most likely to use the services.

## Will people need to travel further?

In some areas travel time may increase slightly, in other areas it is likely to be reduced. All patients would have access to a service within 60 minutes of their home by car in line with guidance. The vast majority of patients would have access to a service within 30 minutes by car. We intend to review the proposed locations following feedback received during the consultation.

## Have patients and the public been engaged?

Yes. We have surveyed the views of people who have previously used the service, the wider public and groups specifically supporting vulnerable people. This formal consultation on the proposed changes will give us feedback on our proposals which will inform any changes necessary to ensure these services meet the needs of the local populations. We will respond to any concerns raised as we design the service for the future.

## Why can we not clarify the exact location of the new centres?

It is important to consider feedback received during the consultation before we can determine the exact location of future services. Based on this the locations above are indicative only.

## What are the next steps?

To proceed with a formal consultation exercise on how out of hours dental services are configured based on our proposed locations. We are asking the respondents to consider the location, opening times and transportation issues.

## How do patients and the public feedback or find out more?

Comments or questions can be e-mailed to [ENGLAND.dentalcontractswm@nhs.net](mailto:ENGLAND.dentalcontractswm@nhs.net) or we can be contacted by telephone on 0113 825 4644 and we will arrange for a senior member of our team to return the call.

The deadline for providing feedback for consideration is 30<sup>th</sup> August 2019.