

NHS England: Leicestershire and Lincolnshire Dental Procurements: Engagement /Consultation

1. The Purpose of this Briefing Paper

1.1 The purpose of this briefing paper is to make the board/committee aware of a number of forthcoming dental procurements, timeframes involved and subsequent consultations happening within Leicester, Leicestershire, Rutland and Lincolnshire.

1.2 The two dental procurements relate to:

- General Dental Services (Leicestershire and Rutland)
- Special Care Dentistry Services (Leicestershire, Rutland and Lincolnshire)

2. Background Information

NHS England is involved in the procurements of dental contracts. The procurement will be open to existing dental practices and to other providers. Greater East Midlands and Arden Commissioning Support Unit has been commissioned to undertake the engagement and consultation involved with these procurements.

The engagement and consultation will take place in two phases. The first phase will be engagement to find out patients' views on the dental services in order to shape the procurements. The second phase will be formal public consultations on the procurement specification. The engagement and consultation feedback will help inform decisions about the best providers to take on the contracts.

3. Dental Procurement Overview

The following information provides an overview of the dental procurements.

3.1 Dental Procurement: General Dental Services (routine and urgent care)

NHS England is reviewing the provision of urgent and routine dental services for patients in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The pre-engagement and consultation will inform the most appropriate service model to improve access to urgent, routine and out of hour's dental services.

Currently the urgent care and dental out-of-hours service for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland operates from Nelson Street, Leicester (off London Road, LE1 7BA). The Dental Access Centre provides a dental service for people with an urgent need who do not have an NHS dentist. The service operates by triaging patients and providing advice or booking appointments based on clinical need. Their hours of service are Monday – Friday, 9.00– 17.00 and Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays, 9.00am – 13.00pm. Normal NHS dental charges apply to this service.

There is also an Out-of-Hours Dental Service which provides clinical triage and self-care advice for patients with urgent dental needs between 18.30pm - 08.00weekdays and all day at weekends and bank holidays, via 111. The on-call dentist for the out-of-hours service will only provide urgent dental care, if for clinical reasons the patient is unable to wait until their dentist is open. Normal NHS dental charges apply to this service.

Instead of having a single Dental Access Centre in Leicester and out-of-hours service in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland the proposal is to provide urgent and routine dental by a different service model. The preferred service model is an 08.00 – 20.00 model.

The 8 to 8 service model of care for General Dental Services is designed to offer routine as well as urgent care for patients not linked to a dental practice. The service will be expected to encourage patients into routine care, either at the site/s or with other local dental practices. Normal NHS dental charges will apply to this service.

The purpose is to commission general dental services in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to improve access to urgent and routine dental services.

Access to general dental services within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to offer extended opening hours to meet patient needs, routine as well as urgent care for patients not linked to a dental practice. The services will be expected to encourage patients into routine care either at the site or with other local dental practices. Normal NHS dental charges apply to these services.

The aim is to improve access to urgent and routine dental services will be based on the oral health needs assessment and commissioning strategy recommendations. The locations and number of new contracts is under review.

3.2 Dental Procurement: Special Care Dentistry Services

The Community Dental Services based in Leicestershire and Lincolnshire will now be known as Special Care Dental Services. The aim is to commission a service to provide continuing care that is an integrated, clinic-based service for patients within Leicestershire and Lincolnshire who are unable to access a high street dentist i.e. special needs patients.

The service will provide referral management of patients who require services under sedation or general anaesthesia, for children who require multiple extractions, or have complex health needs, as well as adults with special needs.

The procurement will be to procure these services, as currently available, but this provides an opportunity to check with service users and carers whether there are any gaps in the current services and their delivery.

These are likely to continue to be provided in the clinics where they are currently sited.

Overall

NHS England's clinical aim for dental practice is to deliver high quality NHS clinical services defined as:

"Patient-centred and value for money primary dental care services, delivered in a safe and effective manner, through a learning environment, which includes the continuing professional development of dentists and other dental professionals."

There are four key clinical principles that underpin this aim. They are:

- Services should be patient-centred
- Services must be delivered safely and through a learning environment
- Services must be effective and
- Services should reflect a preventative ethos.

NHS England's over-arching aims for dental service provision are:

- to improve oral health and to reduce inequalities in health and wellbeing
- to improve access to NHS dental services and to improve the experience of all service users
- to develop excellent integrated and more localised services
- to ensure that key evidence based, preventive, consistent messages and interventions are communicated and delivered by all
- to ensure access to unscheduled and elective dental care is available to all
- to provide evidence informed care according to identified need
- to promote choice by service users, by ongoing consultation and engagement

4. Timescales

At this stage we are currently in the planning process which will soon move into the pre-consultation engagement (March 2015) where patients/carers and healthcare professionals will be invited to take part in a survey asking them their views and personal experiences of the current service.

Due to purdah and complying with the legal requirements around activity during the run-up to the general election in May, any formal consultation will be suspended until the new government is formed. The likelihood is the consultation will take place mid-May to early September. This will allow more than 90 days because of the fact that the consultation goes across the summer holiday period. The final consultation report for the procurements is expected to be completed early September.

5. Next Steps

We will continue to update the board/committee on progress during the consultation and will inform the board/committee to any outcomes following the consultation period.