



## BDA Scotland Update

April 2022

This document summarises recent key developments and BDA Scotland activities. We publish regular updates on these issues on the BDA's Coronavirus Live Updates web page:

[Live updates: Coronavirus and dentistry \(bda.org\)](https://www.bda.org)

### 1. General issues

#### Updated Standard Operating Procedures

Following an update from the Chief Dental Officer (CDO) in April [advising changes to Covid-19 Infection, Prevention and Control measures](#) in Scotland, the Scottish Government updated the NHS Scotland [Standard Operating Procedures](#) (SOPs) for dental practices to follow.

This was confirmed in a further [update from the CDO](#) which clarified that staff may choose to wear an FFP3 face mask, rather than a fluid-resistant Type IIR surgical mask, when performing an AGP on a patient on the non-respiratory pathway. This is a personal PPE risk assessment for practitioners to undertake.

BDA Scotland will update our FAQ document on the revised guidance to aid the profession.

#### New report highlights the widening oral health inequalities gap

In April, Public Health Scotland published [The impact of COVID-19 on NHS dental services and oral health in Scotland: annual report](#) which provides useful information about the gradual recovery of dental services during the pandemic although activity is largely still below pre-pandemic levels. The report also highlights that the stark inequalities that were present before the pandemic have widened in the past 2 years – something we [commented on earlier this year](#).

#### Tackling abusive patient behaviour

Following discussion at the Scottish Council meeting in March, we recently wrote to Optometry Scotland, Community Pharmacy Scotland and the BMA to investigate their respective approaches to tackling abusive patient behaviour. Discussions are ongoing, including a possible joint approach across the professions.

#### PPE supplies reaffirmed until March 2023

The Director of Dentistry for National Services Scotland (NSS) [recently wrote to dental practices](#) to reiterate that PPE will continue to be supplied at no charge until the end of March 2023, unless there is a significant change to Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) guidance.

PPE stock is at sufficient levels and there has been no discussion about limiting supplies following the recent relaxation of IPC guidance when treating patients on the non-respiratory pathway. NSS have confirmed they are well prepared for a higher PPE demand to support the increase in dental activity this change will bring. Practitioners can also exercise choice and decide whether they would prefer to continue using an FFP3 mask or a Type IIR mask when treating patients on the non-respiratory pathway. We will continue to meet regularly with NSS to discuss any issues from members on PPE supplies.

### Directors of Dentistry

We are currently in the process of arranging a meeting between Scottish Council representatives and Directors of Dentistry (DoDs) to discuss:

- DoDs' roles and responsibilities, including communication with the CDO/Scottish Government, involvement in developing oral health policy, and line management of hospital dental staff in some NHS Board areas
- Information around the state of oral health in each NHS Board area
- Public health issues, including water fluoridation and waiting times for paediatric extractions under GA.

## **2. General Dental Service**

### Revised contractual arrangements

Following our [letter to the Scottish Government](#) and [public statement](#) in March to reiterate our misgivings about the interim financial arrangements for dental practices, we subsequently published a [blog by SDPC Vice Chair Josephine Weir](#) setting out our concerns about the interim funding model and calling for meaningful and long overdue contract reform negotiations with the Government. SDPC meets on 11 May, and SDPC Executive will meet with the CDO and Scottish Government officials on 18 May.

### Funding to improve dental equipment

In April, the Government issued [guidance for practices](#) for the purchase, renewal or repair of various items of dental equipment. Practices can claim up to a maximum allowance payment of £2,500 per individual surgery. The amount allocated will be pro-rata, based on a practice's NHS commitment percentage. Applications must be received by 30 June 2022. As a condition of the payment, all contractors within a practice need to continue to provide general dental services until 1 April 2024.

### Scottish Conference of LDCs

The [Conference](#) was held on 22 April in Stirling as a face-to-face event for the first time since 2019 following cancellation in 2020 and an online event in 2021. It was preceded by a dinner on 21 April which included the presentation of several lifetime achievement awards.

Around 70 people attended the Conference, including delegates from a range of LDCs. In the first presentation, Humza Yousaf (Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care) outlined the challenges facing dentistry during the pandemic and ongoing Scottish Government support for the profession. This was followed by a question and answer session which covered a range of issues, including: the Scottish Government's policy to abolish NHS dentistry charges in the next 4 years; long-term contractual reform; engagement and communication with the profession; and workforce challenges.

Chief Dental Officer Tom Ferris and Deputy CDO Gillian Leslie then hosted a Q+A session which included: the urgent need for contractual reform; lengthy waiting times for paediatric

extractions under GA; recruitment and retention of DCPs; and consistency of IPC guidance across the UK.

David McColl (Chair, SDPC) provided a summary of the work of the committee over the past year, including extensive discussions with the Scottish Government about the interim funding model that was introduced on 1 April, and SDPC's continued opposition to a return to the Statement of Dental Remuneration (fee-per-item) system and pre-Covid "treadmill".

A total of 20 [motions](#) were presented in the afternoon session, most of which were passed and will now be considered by SDPC as to whether they are adopted as formal committee policy.

### **3. Public Dental Service**

The Scottish Public Dental Service Committee is currently considering possible issues to raise at a meeting of the Scottish Joint Negotiating Forum. These include PDS contractual reform, overtime working, and student supervision payments for PDS staff.

### **4. Hospital Dental Service**

In April we published [a blog by John Ho-A-Yun](#), Lead of the Scottish Hospital Dentists Reference Group and BDA SAS representative in Scotland, which outlined a range of issues facing SAS grade dentists across the UK. These included contractual negotiations and a lack of funding for SAS career development.

### **5. Forthcoming meetings**

5 May	BDA Principal Executive Committee
6 May	The Health Foundation health inequalities webinar
11 May	Scottish Dental Practice Committee
18 May	(a.m.) SDPC Executive (p.m.) SDPC Executive / Scottish Government
19 May	NHS Dental Working Group
26 May	NES Doctors and Dentists in Training Dental Subgroup

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