

Agenda Item 4

		THE HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LINCOLNSHIRE	
Boston Borough Council	East Lindsey District Council	City of Lincoln Council	Lincolnshire County Council
North Kesteven District Council	South Holland District Council	South Kesteven District Council	West Lindsey District Council

Report to	Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire
Date:	19 April 2023
Subject:	Chairman's Supplementary Announcements

1. Closure of Dental Practices Providing NHS Treatment

Further to paragraph 1 of my announcements circulated with the agenda, a briefing has been prepared on behalf of NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board, which states that there are seven BUPA dental practices in Lincolnshire providing treatment to NHS patients. The closure of the Skegness practice has been confirmed for 30 June 2023, with a further two practices in Boston and Sleaford under review.

Information on patient numbers is usually presented in the form of data counts for the number of adults (seen over 24 months) and children (seen over twelve months). The following information relates to the Skegness practice:

Snapshot Month	Adult Patient Count - 24 Months	Child Patient Count - 12 Months	Total Patient Count
February 2021	4,122	145	4,267
February 2022	2,896	579	3,475
February 2023	3,117	498	3,615

In addition, the ICB has provided information the number of patients treated and age ranges for 2019/20 and 2022/23

- 2019/20 - 5,050 patients treated (21% under 18; 32% aged 18-54; and 47% over 55)
 - 2022/23 - 2,576 patients treated (21% under 18; 29% aged 18-54; and 29% over 55)
- Note: Information is still being submitted for 2022/23, so these are not the final figures for the year.**

The ICB has advised that BUPA has referred to the challenges with the recruitment of dentists and concerns over the viability of some practices and BUPA states it has been unable to recruit dentists to deliver NHS care in some practices for some time. This can be seen from both contractual performance and the number of patients treated as the practice may not have been able to provide the access to NHS dental services owing to workforce shortages.

The ICB has referred to recruitment and retention is one of the four themes in the Lincolnshire Dental Strategy, presented to the Committee in January 2023; and state that work is progressing to develop and agree the action plan from the strategy document with partners and stakeholders.

Specifically on Skegness, the normal process for contract terminations is to undertake a review of the area to establish if there is sufficient local dental practice capacity to undertake an interim activity dispersal to those dental practices surrounding the terminated contract; and whether any urgent dental care model is necessary to supplement any activity dispersal or as an interim commissioning option. Any interim solutions would be in place whilst re-commissioning plans are developed and delivered via a procurement process to secure future NHS dental services in the area.

2. Covid-19 Spring 2023 Booster

From 17 April 2023, people aged 75 and over, those in care homes and over, and those with a weakened immune system will be offered their spring booster against Covid-19, with appointments available between April and June 2023. Those at highest risk will be called first. Locally, bookings will be offered at one of Lincolnshire's vaccination centres, GP surgeries and pharmacies.

The spring 2023 booster vaccines, made by Pfizer, Moderna and Sanofi, have been updated, compared to previous vaccines, to target different Covid-19 variants. The Department of Health and Social Care states, as has been stated previously, that the Covid-19 booster will reduce the chances of people becoming severely unwell from Covid-19, but as no vaccine is completely effective, some people may still get Covid-19 despite having a vaccination, but any infection should be less severe.