

Agenda Item 8

		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

Open Report on behalf of NHS England, Central Midlands

Report to	Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire
Date:	20 March 2019
Subject:	NHS Dental Services Overview for Lincolnshire

Summary:

This report will provide an overview of the NHS dental services commissioned in Lincolnshire and update on the current challenges and commissioning intentions to improve NHS dental services and oral health across Lincolnshire.

Actions Required:

The Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire are:

- i) requested to note the contents of the report; and
- ii) invited to consider and comment on the report.

1. Background

National Context

NHS England has been responsible for commissioning primary, community and secondary care dental services since April 2013.

The government has made a commitment to oral health and dentistry with a drive to:

- Improve the oral health of the population, particularly children
- Introduce a new NHS primary dental care contract
- Increase access to primary care dental services.

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

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

NHS England's over-arching aims for primary 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 services users, by ongoing consultation and engagement.

Local Context

NHS England's Central Midlands Local Office is responsible for commissioning NHS primary, community and secondary care dental services. The Central Midlands Local Office has two locality teams that manage dental and optometry commissioning. Lincolnshire is part of the North Locality, which covers Leicestershire, Rutland and Lincolnshire.

In Lincolnshire there are 71 contracts providing NHS dental services:

- 44 providing general dental services (8 are restricted contracts, for example children under the age of 18 years, 19 years if in full-time education and/or exempt patients)
- 1 pilot contract providing general dental services
- 15 providing general dental and orthodontic services
- 5 providers providing orthodontic services
- 5 providers providing minor oral surgery services
- 1 Special Care Dentistry Service provider.

One provider is piloting a new prototype dental contract, which is testing a new remuneration system that blends activity and capitation (patient registration) aligning to financial and clinical drivers with a focus on prevention and continuing care. There are five practices which provide access to urgent and routine care over extended hours, for example 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday, and extended access cover over weekends and Bank Holidays excluding Christmas Day, New Year's Day and Easter Sunday. From January 2019 there are now two Practices in Lincoln and Sleaford that provide access to urgent and routine care from 8am to 8pm and 365 days a year.

Secondary dental care services providing specialist services, for example orthodontics and maxillofacial services for Lincolnshire, is delivered by United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust (ULHT).

NHS Dental Contract

In April 2006, NHS dental providers were transferred over to the new NHS dental contract. The new dental contracts are activity based and providers are required to deliver an activity target each financial year. General dental services contracts are monitored against delivery of their unit of dental activity (UDA) target and orthodontic contracts are monitored against delivery of their unit of orthodontic activity (UOA) target. Specialist services delivered in primary care, such as minor oral surgery are commissioned on a cost per case basis.

Since April 2006, patients are no longer registered to a dental practice and are only attached to a dental practice when they are in an active course of treatment. However, practices usually hold a notional list to assist managing their capacity to provide dental services to regular patients/new patients seeking routine or urgent care. Practices' capacity to take on new patients can vary and is dependent on a number of factors. Patients can choose any geographical area to access services in NHS England and there are no restrictions on where patients can access NHS dental services.

Patients will be advised by the dental practitioner on their recall interval based on The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) Clinical Guidance 19 Dental Recall, October 2004. Dental recalls are determined by the patient's oral health and other factors for example age, diet, oral hygiene, fluoride use, tobacco and alcohol. Recall rates for children up to age of 18 years can be every 3/6/9 or 12 months and adult recall intervals can be every 3/6/9/12/15/18 months to 2 years. It is important that young children (up to 2 years) attend a dentist for their first examination to commence monitoring their oral health.

Patient charges were changed with the introduction of the new contract and these were simplified into three treatment bands. NHS dental charges apply if a patient does not meet the exemption criteria. Patients will be charged for one completed course of treatment and the charge is determined by the treatment provided. The patient charges are:

Treatment Band	Type of Treatment	Patient Charge £
Band 1	This covers examinations, diagnosis (including radiographs), advice on how to prevent future problems, scale and polish if clinically necessary, and preventative care (e.g. applications of fluoride varnish or fissure sealant). This band also covers urgent dental care in a primary care dental practice such as pain relief or a temporary filling.	21.60
Band 2	This covers everything listed in Band 1, plus any further treatment such as fillings, root canal work or if your dentist needs to take out one or more of your teeth.	59.10
Band 3	This covers everything listed in Bands 1 and 2, plus crowns, dentures, bridges and other laboratory work.	256.50

Oral Health Needs Assessment

Public Health England has developed, in conjunction with NHS England Central Midlands Local Office, an Oral Health Needs Assessment (OHNA) for the North Locality covering Leicestershire, Rutland and Lincolnshire in consultation with the Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups. The OHNA is based on a point in time, is based on NHS dental activity delivered in 2013/14 and relates to patients resident in an area.

The OHNA reviews the demographics of the resident population, provision of services, and access to NHS dental services and makes recommendations for the commissioners to consider when developing the dental commissioning intentions to improve service provision. An access measure is used to determine the number of patients seen as a proportion of the resident population and access rates can be affected and influenced by many different factors, for example deprivation or prosperity of the resident population, lifestyle choices etc. It is important to note that a low access rate may not necessarily be solely due to a lack of provision as this can be affected by patient choice of accessing services outside the area or opting for private dental treatment. The OHNA identifies access rates for children under the age of 18 years and adults by local authority.

The OHNA identified that the following local authority areas access rate is similar to or above the NHS England and the Leicestershire and Lincolnshire averages:

- West Lindsey for children and adults
- North Kesteven for children
- South Kesteven for children and adults
- East Lindsey for children and adults

The following local authority areas access rate is below the NHS England and the Leicestershire and Lincolnshire average:

- Boston for children and adults
- Lincoln for children and adults
- South Holland for children and adults
- North Kesteven for adults.

The Local Office reviewed the outcomes of the OHNA along with other intelligence, which includes patient engagement and consultation feedback, to develop the dental commissioning intentions. It was agreed to commission new contracts as part of the dental procurement programme to improve access to general dental services in priority areas identified within the resource envelope available:

- Boston
- Lincoln
- Sleaford (North Kesteven)
- Spalding (South Holland).

Any new contract has to be awarded via a procurement process to comply with dental contract regulations, competition and procurement law requirements.

Dental Foundation Training

All newly-qualified dentists are required to complete a one-year dental foundation training following completion of their dental degree. The Foundation Training process is managed by Health Education England. Foundation dentists are assigned to accredited dental practices and have an identified mentor to support them through their foundation training process. Funding is provided to cover the costs of the Foundation Dentist and funding to support the accredited mentor. Three out of the 29 training places across Leicestershire and Lincolnshire were secured within Lincolnshire practices.

Dental Commissioning Guides

The Dental Commissioning Guides provide a standardised framework for the local commissioning of dental specialities. They provide guidance to Local Offices on improving access to care, based on needs that are criterion referenced, with demonstrable high value health outcomes experienced by patients.

Local Offices work closely with the Managed Clinical Networks (MCN), the Regional Dental Public Health Consultants and Local Dental Network (LDN) to deliver the best patient journey possible, supported by mandatory specialist advice and/or access to care, that meets the needs of the local patient population whilst achieving the nationally expected standards of care provision within existing resources.

NHS England's Guides for Commissioning Dental Specialities relate to the commissioning of NHS dental care in England. This series has been collaboratively produced by the dental profession and commissioners overseen by Chief Dental Officer England. NHS England has worked with Health Education England (HEE), Public Health England (PHE), specialist societies, patients and the public:-

- Special Care Dentistry (Adults)
- Orthodontics
- Oral Surgery and Oral Medicine
- Service standards for Conscious Sedation in a primary care setting
- Paediatric Dentistry

Commissioning Standards for Restorative Services is in development and publication is awaited.

Local Dental Network (LDN)

The Local Dental Network for Leicestershire and Lincolnshire was established in 2013. The main aims and objectives of the LDN are to:

- Provide robust and quality clinical input to the Local Office
- Improve clinical outcomes
- Address health inequalities
- Putting the patient in the center of everything that we do
- Engage with the Dental profession across the entire pathway.

The LDN Steering Group develops work priorities each financial year and progress is monitored by NHS England Central Midlands. The Steering Group has good engagement from the Oral and Dental health community, Health Education England, Dental Public Health, Healthwatch and Local Authorities; however, Clinical Commissioning Groups engagement has been a challenge. The LDN chair aim is to ensure that the Oral Health agenda is reflected in the wider Primary Care Strategy being developed for the Lincolnshire STP (Sustainability and Transformation Partnership).

The LDN has been recognised nationally for the work on older patients' oral health in Lincolnshire linked into the Oral Health Promotion Strategy.

Work is ongoing to improve general practice implementation of the Delivering Better Oral Health guidance. Training has been provided to dental care professionals to apply fluoride varnish to children at risk of dental caries. The provision of training to support the upskilling of Dental Nurses to Oral Health Educators has recently been completed in Lincolnshire.

The LDN has continued to support the provision of interpretation services to dental practices across the whole of the Leicestershire and Lincolnshire area with non-recurrent funding support from NHS England.

There are a number of challenges that the LDN has identified within their work priorities and these relate to:

- Improved access to Restorative Services - Whilst there has been no progress to introduce a restorative service to ULHT the LDN has advocated the introduction of a pilot of Tier 2 restorative services to Lincolnshire in the near future which would provide improved access to these services in the local area. Accreditation of Performers and Providers of Level 2 Complexity Care national guidance is available and the introduction of a local process is in development which will provide the workforce to enable the services to be delivered under the pilot.
- Gerodontology MCN has developed a business case which has been presented to NHS England for consideration; this would develop a link between local dental practices and nursing and care homes to support the oral health care for the ageing population.
- Delivering prevention to families who have experienced extraction with General Anaesthetic (GA) for tooth decay - A pathway has been developed that will deliver prevention to those families where children have experienced extraction under GA and for those siblings in higher risk families which will also benefit from targeted prevention interventions.
- Workforce, one of the biggest challenges for Lincolnshire, to work in conjunction with Health Education England to develop the workforce.
- Encourage the increase in foundation training practices in Lincolnshire.

The LDN has established Managed Clinical Networks for Special Care Dentistry, Orthodontics, Minor Oral Surgery, Paediatrics and Gerodontology to support delivering the work priorities, review commissioning guidance to improve patient pathways and patient outcomes.

The LDN chair is supervising a number of leadership fellows in the NHS Central Midlands area and there is one in Lincolnshire who is placed clinically with the Special Care Dentistry service in Lincolnshire for two days and three days developing their leadership skills and supporting a project. The project being undertaken by the Lincolnshire fellow is focusing on the ageing population with particular emphasis on Mouth Care matters and its potential implementation in Lincolnshire hospitals.

Joint Working with the Lincolnshire County Council on Oral Health Promotion

Lincolnshire County Council became responsible for improving health and reducing inequalities for its local population from 1 April 2013. Local Authorities are responsible for commissioning oral health promotion programmes and epidemiology surveys. Lincolnshire County Council commissions oral health promotion and epidemiology through NHS England's Special Care Dentistry Service contract, which offers synergies in provision and added value in joint working.

An Oral Health Alliance Group for Lincolnshire has been set up to facilitate joint working across the health community. The group has developed a joint Strategic Action Plan for Oral Health Promotion in Lincolnshire. The aim of the strategic action plan is to improve oral health promotion of the Lincolnshire population and target identified priority patient groups, including children at high risk of dental caries, those who have already required extractions under general anaesthetic for dental decay and older persons at higher risk of poor oral health. Initiatives include the evidence based distribution of toothbrush and paste packs alongside advice to targeted families, a tooth brushing in schools programme where there are higher rates of decay and guidance and training for oral health for care settings for adults and older people. Future priorities include ensuring that all children referred for dental extractions follow an optimal pathway with prevention of further decay at the forefront of its aims.

Chief Dental Officer Smile4Life Initiative

SMILE4LIFE is a programme of initiatives to improve dental access and oral health in England, complemented by communication and engagement activities to raise awareness of oral health issues and promote healthy dental habits.

Starting Well is a general dental practice based initiative designed to promote early-years dental access and preventive care in England. The initiative is made up of two complementary parts:

Starting Well 13 – This programme has been launched in 13 high priority areas. These areas were chosen on the basis of decay experience at a local authority level, existing oral health improvement plans and trends in oral health, the Local Office has launched the Starting Well programme in Leicester and Luton. This programme of dental practice-based initiatives aims to reduce oral health inequalities and improve oral health in children under the age of five years. It is hoped that the learning from the Starting Well 13 programme will feed into other areas in the future.

Starting Well Core is a commissioning approach which aims to reduce oral health inequalities and improve oral health for children aged 0-2 years through:

- Increasing dental access and attendance for children aged 0-2 years.
- Delivering evidence-based preventive care in practice (e.g. preventive advice, fluoride interventions, support for behaviour change).
- Raising public and professional awareness to promote early-years dental attendance, and support the British Society of Paediatric Dentistry's campaign for a Dental Check by One.

The LDN continues to progress the Starting Well Core initiative across NHS England Central Midlands geography. Five events have been organised and held across the five STP areas of NHS Central Midlands. The event for Lincolnshire will be held on 7 March 2019 at Boston Pilgrim Hospital and will feature how we can work across the wider health and social care sectors, local authority and dental teams in Lincolnshire.

Dental Procurement

The local office completed a procurement process to commission new NHS dental contracts across Lincolnshire and Leicester City; this included the following services:-

8 to 8 Service Model:

The 8 to 8 practices will provide services between 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week, 365 days per year. The 8 to 8 service model of care is designed to offer routine as well as urgent care for patients not linked to a dental practice. The services are expected to encourage patients into routine care, either at the site(s) or with other local dental practices; for Lincolnshire this was in the following areas.

- Lincoln
- Sleaford
- Spalding

Extended Access

Extended access services will provide routine and urgent care between Monday and Friday, 9am to 5pm, with additional extended access sessions, e.g. a minimum of two 1.5 hour sessions per week either early morning or evening and a Saturday morning 3.5 hours per session per week. Contract procurement has been undertaken for extended access services commissioned in the following Lincolnshire areas:

- Boston
- Louth
- Skegness or Spilsby

In addition to the above extended access, it had been agreed to recommission the closed Spalding contract at Johnson Community Hospital site. This contract will operate the same opening hours. This will provide extended access in the early mornings/evenings across the week, a Saturday morning session per week, alternate Sunday morning sessions and will operate the same opening hours for the day the Bank Holiday falls except on falls except on Christmas Day, New Year's Day and Easter Sunday.

The new contracts would have a contracting term of 7 years with the option to extend for a further 3 years.

After completion of the procurement process for the NHS dental contracts described above, this resulted in the following contract awards:-

8 to 8 Service:

Lincoln
Sleaford
Spalding
Preferred Provider – JDSP Dental Ltd

Extended Access:

Spalding (Johnson Community Hospital)
Preferred Provider – Community Dental Services CiC

Boston
Preferred Provider – JDSP Dental Ltd

Preferred bidders were not identified for Louth and the Skegness/Spilsby areas as the bids evaluated did not meet financial sustainability requirements.

Following notification of the procurement outcome to the preferred providers and the required standstill period, JDSP Dental Ltd and Community Dental Services CiC moved forward with mobilising the new services in readiness for the agreed start date of 7 January 2019.

JDSP Dental Limited (known as Treeline Dental) opened two new NHS dental practices delivering services between 8am to 8pm, 365 days a year in January 2019 at two new dental practices in Lincoln and Sleaford.

However, owing to the difficulties experienced by both JDSP Dental Ltd and Community Dental Services CiC in recruiting qualified dentists, the new services identified for Boston, Spalding and Johnson Community Hospital, Spalding have not commenced in January 2019 as originally planned.

NHS England was disappointed not to have these new services mobilised in January so that patients can access NHS dental services in these areas. We had frequent meetings with both preferred providers during the mobilisation period and supported them where appropriate. However, despite the preferred providers exploring a number of options, they were not able to find the workforce required to operate these services safely from January 2019.

Community Dental Services CiC and other local providers in Spalding confirmed they were able to continue with the interim urgent dental service that was already in place. This means patients are able to access urgent dental care if needed, although we do acknowledge the importance of ensuring patients are also able to access routine dental care.

The urgent care arrangements have been secured as an interim measure to enable patients in Spalding and surrounding areas to access urgent dental care.

Community Dental Services CIC are providing two urgent care dental sessions a week from the Johnson Community Hospital dental practice. The sessions are on a Tuesday and Saturday and will run until January 2020. The Local Office will review the urgent care arrangements beyond January 2020 in light of the approval of further commissioning intentions detailed below.

Mablethorpe

During 2018/19 unfortunately we were informed that Bupa Dental Care had decided to withdraw from provision of NHS dental services in Mablethorpe and gave us the required three-month notice period to end their contract in February 2019. NHS England was disappointed with Bupa Dental Care's decision, which they attributed to their difficulty in recruiting and retaining qualified dentists.

NHS England met with the Provider to discuss the termination and to understand if there was any support that NHS England could provide that would have enabled them to continue providing an NHS dental service. Unfortunately, because of the long standing difficulties in retaining dentists which impacted on their ability to deliver their contractual responsibilities, they were not able to reconsider their decision. We fully appreciate the impact this has had on the local population and are working hard to address this issue.

We are currently reviewing caretaking options for the provision of NHS dental services in the Mablethorpe area and as a minimum for patients to access urgent dental care in the local area of Mablethorpe. This will include exploring a similar interim option to that which we have put in place in Spalding whilst we commence the longer-term solution and procurement of NHS dental services in Mablethorpe.

NHS England remains fully committed to ensuring patients have access to NHS dental services in the Mablethorpe area and we are continuing to work to secure future NHS dental services provision for both routine and urgent dental care in this area.

Non-Recurrent Activity

The Local Office have offered Lincolnshire dental providers the opportunity to bid for additional non-recurrent activity to improve access to NHS dental services in 2018/2019 financial year, whilst longer term commissioning plans are considered. The Local Office received six expressions of interest in non-recurrent activity across Lincolnshire. The expressions of interests have been reviewed and approved to award non-recurrent activity equating to an additional capacity for approximately 5,000 patients in the following areas: Gainsborough, Skegness, Spilsby, Lincoln, Boston and Spalding.

Commissioning Intentions to Improve Access to NHS Dentistry Services

Following on from the outcome of the previous procurement which concluded in 2018, the Local Office has recently reviewed the dental commissioning intentions and is planning to re-procure the NHS dental services contracts for Spalding, Boston, Louth, Spilsby/Skegness and Mablethorpe in 2019. Plans for the procurement are being finalised, a notice has been shared with the market with an aim to commence the general dental services procurement process in May 2019.

The procurement process would conclude with award of contracts currently estimated to be by the end of September 2019 to enable the preferred bidders a realistic mobilisation period to enable new services to commence in early May 2020.

Dental Recruitment and Retention

All dentists delivering services as part of a NHS contract are required to be registered with the General Dental Council and need to be included onto the national performer list to ensure they are suitably qualified and trained to deliver NHS dental services.

Nationally dental recruitment and retention has become an increasing pressure and it has been identified as a significant local issue particularly across Lincolnshire.

The LDN chairs have presented at a national workshop and a multi-agency group has been established to understand and to tackle the issues.

NHS England and the LDN are exploring a number of options in order to develop a strategy that will improve the recruitment and retention of the dental workforce in Lincolnshire. These include exploring the learning and success from the Lincolnshire GP international recruitment exercise and whether it could be applied to dentistry, increasing the attractiveness of NHS dentistry in Lincolnshire by the use of flexible commissioning to support the development of skill mix with dental therapists, and peer mentoring schemes. There is also a focus to increase the number of foundation dentists, dental core trainees and leadership fellows in Lincolnshire as well as considering whether a Dental School in Lincolnshire would assist in developing a local workforce.

Already implemented locally in conjunction with HEE is the Performers List by Validation of Experience (PLVE) process. The PLVE process is to enable non EU qualified dentists to be assessed by Health Education England to determine that they have the knowledge and experience equivalent to that of a dental practitioner who has satisfactorily completed foundation training. This enables providers across the NHS England Central Midlands to access a PLVE scheme to support with recruiting dentists outside the European Union area.

The LDN continues to work in partnership with Health Education England to develop training programmes to support the development of the dental workforce across the Central Midlands area.

Due to the increasing dental workforce issue and the impact on delivering NHS dental services and access for patients, NHS England requested that the LDN Chair form a Dental Workforce with the following terms of reference:-

- The primary focus of the group is to review information received as regards the dental workforce;
- the group will lead on the development of initiatives to support a suitable workforce to deliver NHS dentistry;
- the group will focus on information from the whole of Central Midlands but will also have particular focus in the Lincolnshire area;

- the group will provide local leadership within the dental community and promote best practice in this area;
- the group will support the utilisation of skill mix in the dental workforce;
- the group will review the implementation of Performers List by validation of experience (PLVE) and;
- The group will make recommendations to NHS England and report into NHS England Central Midlands PCCP.

The Dental Workforce group have met a number of times over 2018 and a further meeting is taking place in March to consider a number of initiatives that have been explored and develop a dental workforce strategy proposal for NHS England.

The aim of the proposal will be to deliver short-term as well as longer-term solutions to address the current difficulties in recruitment and retention in Lincolnshire, and to be able to have a workforce solution in place in readiness for the mobilisation of the new NHS dental contracts to be awarded and delivering services in 2020.

NHS England can provide an update report on the dental workforce strategy to the Health Scrutiny committee or attend a future meeting if required to discuss the developments being made.

2. Conclusion

The Health Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the contents of the report and to consider and comment on the content of the report.

3. Consultation

This is not applicable.

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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