

## Somerset LDC Covid-19 Update 13/05/20

Well we have all listened to Boris and it is completely clear what you can now do! Go back to work unless you can't in which case stay at home, stay alert, travel for exercise ( everyone seemed to be travelling today when I was out on my bike), meet ONE person outside. If they are going to come inside your house, then you have to pay them and call them a cleaner! And stay alert, but only in England.

No news yet though when dentists can go back to work and open their practices.

Attached to this letter for interest, are two protocol and position papers by Pandora Dental and the BAPD, which some of you may have already seen. They seem to be full of common sense and certainly the BAPD are working with the BDA in their dealings with NHS England and the CDO. The BDA announced that they are having a "big" meeting with them on Thursday to discuss the details around Dentistry emerging from the lockdown. They have also announced that they have instructed an experienced firm of lawyers to review the insurance policies that many dentists have bought to cover business interruption , as many of the claims under these policies have been rejected.

Devon LDC hosted an excellent webinar on VE Day and the details are attached for anyone who would like to watch it. If you do then please note that the information regarding the referral forms relate only to Devon----the Somerset version is on the LDC website.

Some of the salient points from the meeting are summarised below.....

### Hubs

-the hubs would like copies of any relevant radiographs to be sent with the referral as well as any pictures that the patient might have sent during the triaging

-ensure that patients keep their mobile phone on as this is the point of contact from the hub as they only book in one session in advance.

-manage patients' expectations—if they are not seen by the hub and you need to re-refer then fill in a new referral form.

- no priority for non-registered patients

Ian Mills—Dean FGDP

-everyone is fully aware that too many antibiotics are being prescribed, please prescribe responsibly.

-lots of questions about when we can start work again and what plans need to be made.....

Waiting for government response from CDO

Monitoring other countries experiences

Future NHS treatment under current UDA system and increasing cost of PPE

Likelihood of accelerated change to contract reform .

## **PPE**

This is the big issue delaying the opening of the next hubs, two of which are in Somerset; both supply as well as fit testing successfully. I am assured that they will be open very soon!

It is requested that practices do not overstock PPE in anticipation of re-opening as SOPs and conditions may change and this also takes supplies away from the hubs where they are needed. There is a desperate need for more hubs, but I feel some of the reluctance to open them is the concern about the sustainability of supply.

Discussions are ongoing re the level of PPE that is required to treat non AGP cases, as most of the current UDC hubs are using the highest level of PPE. I keep asking for a breakdown of AGP & non-AGP cases being treated in the hubs!! There is an investigation being undertaken into a reuseable mask that has replacement filters that can last up to approx. 28 days.

In discussion with the chair of Cumbria LDC, he states that NONE of their UDC hubs perform AGPs and the only centre that carries out these is the Newcastle Dental Hospital, and they have performed very few!

### **Out of hours and 111 system.**

Some areas are reporting difficulty in triaging calls, especially over weekends and bank holidays, due to the sheer volume of calls. The LDCs have suggested utilising volunteers from the workforce data that many of you filled in---we have 24 dentists in our area.

Devon LDC, at the request of the area team, have sent out letter seeking support in their area for this weekend. We have had no request for Somerset as yet. Issues have been noted concerning the level of advice that GMPs are giving to dental patients who phone for emergency support. The area team will send out relevant information to general medical practices.

Practitioners are reminded that secondary care at MPH is still open for relevant urgent referrals, especially under the 2 week wait protocol.

For those of you with time on your hands, you might consider supporting the Eastman DH postgraduate student's request attached to the letter.

Please report any ongoing issues or queries you may have as well as your experiences with the hubs etc, to Andre at [secretarysomersetldc@gmail.com](mailto:secretarysomersetldc@gmail.com). I can then bring these up at the regular steering group meetings as well as add them to the Q & As. The SW LDC chairs are certainly very positive in their united front in raising any issues, and I am sure the area team are relieved when they move on from that section of the meeting agenda!!

As the country starts to mobilise I expect an increasing level of patient frustration with our inability to care for them in the manner in which we would all expect. Make sure that they realise that it is just as frustrating for you, but that at this moment in time the decisions are out of our hands and that as soon as you are able to re-open the practice you will be there for them.

Keep well, keep safe and keep sane.

Best Wishes

Geoff Worrall

Chair Somerset LDC