

Jim Fairlie MSP  
Convener  
COVID-19 Recovery Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023  
Our Ref: JG/LLPA

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Dear Mr Fairlie

### Recovery of NHS Dentistry Services

Thank you for your enquiry of 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023 regarding the recovery of NHS Dentistry Services. Please find below the responses from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board.

**1. How much COVID-related funding did you receive from the Scottish Government to fund the following measures:**

- **Ventilation improvements**
- **Equipment**
- **Variable speed drilling equipment**

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde distributed funds to local independent General Dental Service (GDS) practices as follows:

Measure	Received
Ventilation	£1,110,626
Variable speed drilling/equipment	£1,665,939
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,776,565</b>

**2. What was the uptake (percentage or number of practices; and amount paid out) of the above funding by General Dentist Service (GDS) dentists?**

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde has 276 independent GDS practices, offering NHS or a mix of NHS and private care. Of these practices, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde received applications for funding as detailed below:

	Number of practices	Amount paid out
Ventilation	141 (51%)	£454,764.09
Electric Hand Pieces	103 (37%)	£683,706.06
Replacement/repairs to Dental Equipment	150 (54%)	£913,251.90

*(NB: percentage is based on the total number of practices (276) at 2021/2022).*

Multiple opportunities were provided for practices to apply for the above COVID related funding.

The remaining balance of £724,843 was allocated to support replacement equipment within the PDS.

**3. How many practices in your health board area have withdrawn or reduced NHS provision for patients – for example, registering and treating only children:**

- **No. and % withdrawn completely**
- **No. and % reduced provision**

- We are aware of 4 independent GDS practices who have withdrawn from the delivery of NHS dental care completely and become private practices.
- Some practices are de-registering patients, and some are moving to new business models. However since the end of the pandemic we are aware that GDS activity has been steadily increasing and has been at approximately 80% of post pandemic levels since June 2022. We are only aware of 1 practice who has confirmed they are seeing children only for NHS care.

**4. What impact, if any, has a reduction in NHS GDS provision had on the Public Dental Service?**

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Public Dental Service (PDS) staff and estates in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde were organised to support Urgent Dental Care Centres. During re-mobilisation of GDS there were significant capacity issues leading to a sustained reliance for the PDS to support unscheduled care. This reliance on the PDS has persisted beyond the pandemic as patients have experienced difficulty in accessing GDS care, either through de-registration, or not being able to access timely care with their own dentist. Service Activity Monitoring data provided to NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde by Public Health Scotland (PHS) demonstrates an increased proportion of claims sent to Practitioner Services are for occasional treatment by the PDS.

Additional support was required to cover occasional and urgent care for patients of Inverclyde HSCP, where there were no NHS practices accepting new patients. This was facilitated by temporary recruitment of additional staff through Winter Preparedness Funding, but this ended at the end of March 2023 as the funding was not extended. The PDS, in line with GDS practices, experiences significant challenges in recruiting to vacant posts, which places additional pressures on existing teams.

The increased demand for the delivery of unscheduled care has impacted the ability of the service to deliver care to core PDS patients and other priority groups. This is compounded by increased referrals into the PDS for complex, unmet dental need in the population. These patients include care home residents who are unable to access care, with increasing numbers of GDPs not able to support care homes.

**5. How many patients are registered with the PDS in your Health Board area? Has the number risen since 2020? If so by how much?**

<b>NHS Public Dental Service</b>					
Number of patients registered with the NHS Public Dental Service; by NHS Board and snapshot date <sup>1</sup>					
	Snapshot Date				
NHS Board	31st Mar 2019	31st Mar 2020	31st Mar 2021	31st Mar 2022	31st Mar 2023
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	11,187	10,630	10,310	10,015	9,146
Source: Public Health Scotland, MIDAS					
Data extracted in May 2023					
<sup>1</sup> Excludes registrations held in abeyance (patients registered with a list number that ceased before the date of snapshot)					

Please be aware the registration figures above do not provide a full picture with regard to the majority of activity provided by the PDS which has been during, and post pandemic the delivery of unscheduled care for patients who are not registered with the PDS.

**6. What other funding do you receive to support dentistry in your Health Board area (for example, funding related to PDS, Childsmile and any initiatives to improve recovery of services and access to dentistry for your population)?**

For 2022/2023 the Scottish Government allocated funding to support additional Childsmile interventions at a national and local level. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde received funding of £475k p.a. for 2 years. This was allocated for the recruitment of 13WTE temporary dental healthcare support workers (DHSWs) and 1WTE band 5 temporary team lead post to manage the new DHSWs.

In the financial year 2021/22, the PDS was allocated additional funding of £1,043k (Winter Preparedness Funding), this funding came to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

“The funding should be used to support immediate mitigations and delivery actions, using existing models of service delivery to augment capacity quickly”.

This funding was used to support clinical teams to augment capacity focussing on:

- Emergency and urgent dental care
- Patients who were not able to register with a NHS dentist, particularly within the Inverclyde area where there was a shortage of NHS GDS provision of dental services
- Routine dental care, including examinations, and restorative care that could be provided under Occasional Treatment codes of the Statement of Dental Remuneration
- Domiciliary care

I trust this information is helpful, however should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to come back to me.

Yours sincerely

**Jane Grant**  
**Chief Executive**  
**NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde**