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NHS Dental Services

Our ref: POL/33888
30 March 2020

Dear colleague

I am responding to the legitimate concerns that many of you have raised with me over the last few days about the ongoing financial stability of the NHS dental service during the current COVID-19 outbreak. I know that the current situation with COVID-19 has created a high degree of uncertainty across NHS dental services and I want to firstly recognise the professional commitment shown across the dental team in the face of unprecedented and extremely challenging times and I commend you for that.

The primary objective for government is to ensure equitable and sustainable funding solutions are put in place to support the whole service to manage its way through the present very challenging situation. I understand the impact that the cessation of routine NHS dental services has had across NHS dentistry in particular upon practitioner and practice incomes, including the loss of patient contributions.

To support you better during this period, I have revised the funding package, which will now provide 80 percent of the average income from item of service and patient contributions. This funding is additional to the protection provided through capitation and continuing care payments, GDPA, rent reimbursement and commitment payments, which will continue to be paid. This considerable enhancement replaces the funding announced on 17 March. Payments will be delivered through the March paid April schedule, and will be subject to review after 30 June. The full details of the arrangements will be provided in a memorandum which will follow as soon as possible.

I hope that the principles outlined above will reassure you that the sustainability of NHS dental services is at the forefront of government planning and trust that you will respond appropriately to these additional measures.

Finally, I am pleased to see the commitment to the health service coming through strongly in dentistry and government is working hard to determine how we can best deploy your skills within the NHS to support the effort to combat COVID-19.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Ferris". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'T'.

Tom Ferris
Chief Dental Officer