

Briefing on Dental Services in the Former Selby and York PCT Area of the North Yorkshire and York PCT

The new dental contract was introduced on 1 April 2006, which means that PCTs are now responsible for commissioning NHS dentistry in their local area.

35 of the dental practices in Selby and York PCT signed up to the new contractual arrangements, covering 92% of the existing NHS dental patients.

Some practices decided not to sign the new contract and left the NHS at the end of March 2006. Since 1 April 2006 only 1 practice has given notice on their dental contract and they left the NHS at the end of September 2006.

Now, if a dentist moves, closes a practice, or reduces the amount of NHS dentistry they provide, the money to provide this service will remain with the PCT for reinvestment in NHS dentistry for the local community. Over time, this will help us to ensure that NHS dental services better meet the needs of local people.

We have already agreed significant growth in patient numbers with some of our existing dental practices and there are still approximately 8,000 of these places to deliver. We are also in the process of going out to tender to commission additional dental services and it is planned that these services will be in place by 1 April 2007 at the latest.

Anyone who wishes to register for NHS dental care can add their name to the database via an on-line form on the PCT website: www.nyypct.nhs.uk or by phoning the dedicated dental database number: 01904 724107.

The database was set up in September 2005 and to date 7,941 people have been assigned to an NHS dentist. There are currently 4,170 people on the database awaiting assignment.

Unfortunately it is not possible to say how long a person will remain on the dental database before being allocated to a dentist as this does depend on the oral health needs of those being allocated. On average, where a practice is accepting new patients, they will take on 30-40 new patients each week. This enables them to assess the patients' oral health and undertake any treatment that may be required before they take on the next group of patients. However, if some of the patients have significant treatment needs this may delay the next group of patients being taken on.

There are always those patients who prefer not to register but who access services only when they need treatment and those who prefer to register privately.

Any person within the North Yorkshire and York Primary Care Trust area who does not currently have an NHS dentist and who requires urgent treatment can access the North Yorkshire Dental Care Service. The service has sites across the county, including Selby and York, and an appointment can usually be offered within 24 hours. Patients should telephone NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 for further details of this service.

North Yorkshire and York PCT is committed to improving access to NHS dental care to meet the needs of the local population. We are confident that the expansion plans we have in place will ensure that in the future anyone in the area who wishes to access ongoing NHS dental care and treatment will be able to do so.

If you do not currently have an NHS dentist and you need urgent treatment you can access the North Yorkshire Dental Care Service by telephoning 0845 4647.