Community Dental Services

Referral Criteria

The importance of maintaining teeth and oral health and its impact on quality of life for patients cannot be underestimated. The demand for the provision of ‘Specialist Services’ continues to rise. This rise is generated by a number of factors which include the complexity of diseases as a result of people living longer and retaining their teeth longer, the dental practitioners competence at dealing with these and also the external factors that are triggered by the changing GDS contracts and associated remuneration.

This brochure provides an overview of the remit of the outreach services that are provided by Community Dental Services to address the Restorative, Endodontic and Periodontal demands in the area. The referral criteria and a modified referral proforma are set out to help us manage referrals in line with the agreed contracted activity. The criteria help ensure the appropriateness of the referral and that resources are being used most effectively within commissioned activity. The type of referral case mix being referred and seen has been ascertained by audits that have been undertaken on an ongoing basis. All health care specialist providers work on a shared care basis with the general dental practitioners, such that dental practitioners continue to remain the gatekeepers of entry into specialist service provision.

The referral criteria and acceptance criteria into the service will be monitored and modified as deemed appropriate based on audit trails and feedback from users of the service.

Service Lead:

Community Dental Services:

Mr Michael Cranfield Clinical Director
Our Specialist Services:

Specialist Services are offered for:

- **Periodontology** – Advisory and treatment
  This is delivered from The Dental Care Centre, Bedford Health Village, Kimbolton Road, Bedford, MK40 2NT and is Consultant led but is delivered by Specialists in Training who are at the end of their training programme. The service currently runs on a weekly basis on Tuesdays*.

- **Endodontics** – Advisory and treatment
  This is delivered from The Dental Care Centre, Bedford Health Village, Kimbolton Road, Bedford, MK40 2NT and is Consultant led but is delivered by Specialists, Specialists in Training who are at the end of their training programme and dentists with enhanced endodontic skills. The service currently runs 5 days a week*.

* *The frequency of the services currently delivered are subject to change pending discussion with commissioners.*

- **Restorative** – Advisory with only very limited treatment
  This is delivered from the Liverpool Road Health Centre, Mersey Place, Luton LU1 1HH and is Consultant led and Consultant delivered. The service runs on weekly basis on Thursdays.

Referrals should be made using the standardized proforma ensuring that all areas within the proforma are completed. Incomplete proformas will be returned to the referrer. Once the proforma is received it is processed by the administrative team and assessed by a Consultant. The Consultant will allocate the referral to the appropriate service.

The diagram below shows the referral journey for patients who are referred to the service.

![Diagram showing referral journey for patients referred to specialist services](image-url)
Our Objectives:
- To provide a service for patients who need specialist intervention by bringing care closer to home.
- To build a relationship with the referring practitioners to help improve the quality of care for patients in the locality.
- To initiate awareness and raise the educational and competence standards of referring dentists.

Our Limitations:
- The current demand on the service far outweighs the commissioned activity. This makes it difficult for us to see all patients currently being referred into the service. The acceptance criteria are rigorously applied to all referrals. We are working with the NHS England to review the criteria and the commissioned capacity of the service.

Our Quality Standards:
We will ensure:
- All referrers will be sent a clinical report for patients seen for consultation.
- For patients who are treated within the service, a progress report will be sent to the referring dentist to ensure that they remain an integral part of the patient’s management.
- For patients who have completed treatment a discharge summary will be sent with details of the treatment the patient has completed and what the dentist will have to do to ensure the treatment outcome is maintained.

We pledge to work with our referrers within the constraints of our contractual agreement. We will also build a close working relationship with the NHS England/Commissioners to ensure that patient care is delivered to a high quality standard. The referrer can have direct contact with the Consultant in Restorative Dentistry should any query regarding their clinical triage decisions arise.

Training/Education:
We will work with NHS England/Commissioners to ensure that there are adequate training opportunities to support referring General Dental Practitioners.

Patient Journey:
Patients who receive treatment within the specialist care provision will be treated on the understanding that the dentist continues to maintain the patients’ routine dental care. The patient journey will be mapped along the pathway shown below and any variance against the pathway will be monitored:

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Patients who fail to keep their appointments will be discharged back to the referring dentist and will not be offered another appointment. Patients who repeatedly cancel their appointment or make two late cancellations (less than 24 hours notice) will also be discharged back to the referring dentist.

How to make a Referral:
All referrals MUST be made using the combined Periodontology, Endodontontology & Restorative Proforma. The following information must be included:
- Patient’s details including name, date of birth, address and daytime contact telephone number.
- Date of referral.
- Name of referring dental practitioner.
- Name & address of the dental practice including postcode and telephone number.
- Patient’s GP details to include name, address and telephone number (Only patients with a Bedfordshire or Luton GP will be considered).
- Relevant medical history.
- Details of the problem being referred for including the treatment provided to date.
- Confirmation that the primary disease has been stabilized.

Referrals must be written in a legible manner. It is important that the referring practitioner provides as much information about why the patient is being referred and what help they may need to ensure the objectives of the service are met.

The referral may be refused if:
- The mandatory information required is not provided.
- The BPE (Basic Periodontal Examination) score is not provided.
- Primary disease has not been treated unless there is a clear explanation in the letter of why it has not been treated (e.g. active caries, failing restorations, poor oral hygiene).
- It is made on financial grounds i.e. patient states cannot afford charges. Continued…..
• Failure to provide information or data if requested on the proforma (e.g. good quality and timely radiographs).
• Sedation is required/requested.
• The referral criteria are not met as established by the Service Providers.

Referrals not accepted will be returned to the referring dentist after triage.

Please ensure that all information asked for on the referral form is given.

Please ensure that your patient understands that their initial appointment will be for a consultation only. At the end of this appointment, the relevant specialist will decide whether or not the patient will be accepted for treatment.

If your patient is accepted for treatment, we would expect you, as their dentist, to:
• Manage any emergency that may arise whilst they are waiting for their treatment.
• Maintain their routine care whilst they are on any treatment waiting list, or undergoing treatment from the service.
• Provide maintenance and supportive care once active treatment has been completed by the service.

Service Specific Information:

Periodontology Service

Advisory and Treatment Service. The following types of patients will be considered:
• BPE scores of 3 with additional complicating factors e.g. systemic disease, gingival overgrowth.
• Severe chronic periodontitis (BPE scores of 4).
• Medical conditions or drugs interactions affecting the periodontium.
• Acute problems e.g. desquamative gingivitis, necrotising gingivitis.
• Aggressive forms of periodontal diseases.
• Non responding patients with pockets >5.5mm.
• Mucogingival problems, including recession and ridge enhancement.
• Patients with multidisciplinary treatment needs.
• Patients requiring intra oral / minor grafting procedures in preparation for implant treatment.
• Patients with peri-implant disease (Advice only).

It is expected that all patients prior to referral have received at least one course of therapy with non-surgical debridement using local anaesthetic in pockets >4mm (as necessary) and reassessed and treatment evaluated 6 weeks after the last debridement visit ensuring that the patient demonstrates excellent oral hygiene and good compliance.
Endodontology Service
Advisory and Treatment Service. The following types of patients will be considered:

- Primary treatment of pulpal/periapicals disease in teeth with anatomical complexities.
- Conventional re-treatment of failed root canal treatment (including retrieval of gutta-percha, resin, metallic root fillings), where the initial root filling was satisfactory.
- Removal of fractured instruments and intra-radicular posts.
- Root perforations.
- Traumatic dento-alveolar injuries in adults.
- Tooth Resorption.
- Surgical treatment of failed root canal treatment in the presence of adequate conventional obturation.
- Pain diagnosis.

All endodontic referrals must be accompanied with a good quality radiograph. Teeth being referred for endodontic treatment MUST have the restorative status assessed and the teeth temporized with a well fitting temporary restoration or band placed. Single rooted teeth with root treatment deemed to be simple will not be accepted.

Restorative Service:
An advisory service with limited treatment. The following types of patient will be seen:

- Complex treatment needs.
- Multidisciplinary treatment needs.
- Congenital disorders e.g. hypodontia, clefts, aggressive disease.
- Acquired defects e.g. RTA, trauma, Head and Neck Cancer.
- Poor and atrophic ridges.
- Advanced tooth surface loss.
- Complex prosthodontic needs e.g. deranged occlusion.
- Advice for patients that the dentist cannot seem to ascertain a way of treating.

Following consultation advice will be given to the patient and a report sent to the dentist. Those requiring extensive multidisciplinary care may be accepted for limited treatment within the service. Dental implants are not currently funded within the commissioned activity.

Please note:
The above criteria will be reviewed on a 3 monthly basis, to ensure that they are appropriate, in order to target the commissioned activity to help those patients in greatest need of specialist advice and care. For up to date acceptance criteria and downloadable proforma please visit our website:

www.communitydentalservices.co.uk