



## All private dental practitioners in Wales

4 June 2020

### Message to private dental practitioners in Wales:

On behalf of communities in Wales, I want to thank you for your patience and sacrifice in these last few months. The challenges of providing a full range of dental care without risk to you, your staff, the patients and the wider public in a pandemic is the same for both NHS and private dental practitioners. However, unlike practitioners holding NHS contracts I was unable to offer any financial support other than direct you to the UK Government website offer. I am aware this has limitations for many of you.

I trust you found the decision to allow you to remain 'open' not just for remote triage, provision of prescriptions and advice but to 'assess and treat' your patients face to face, if absolutely necessary, welcome. However, the treatment you can offer is currently limited to non-AGPs and urgent care. It is much more complex to restore services than to scale them back. I recognise the need to take steps to make progress from provision of limited urgent care, to essential care and eventually routine assessment.

Covid-19 is still in circulation in Wales and therefore, any resumption of dental services is to be phased to align with the First Minister's easing of lockdown in Wales which depends on a continuing decline in Covid-19 infections. During June, you have time to make the necessary adjustments in your practices to comply with social distancing, IPC and enhanced PPE requirements. I will continue to ensure you receive all the advice and Standard Operating Processes dentists who hold NHS contracts receive (via HIW and the e-referral website).

There may be setbacks as there is a global shortage of FFP3 masks, they require fit testing and Covid-19 infections could rise again. I understand that these cautious but necessary steps will continue to have a financial impact on private practitioners but at least we are making progress to a return to service. I trust you will find the offer of being able to access the Attend Anywhere software (without charge for software licence) a helpful support. It is in 'test' in dental practices in Wales and I will send details on how to access and use it as soon as it is ready for roll out.

Stay safe, collaborate and contact me if necessary for clarity on any of the advice or directions the Welsh Government publishes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colette Bridgman', written in a cursive style.

Colette Bridgman  
Prif Swyddog Deintyddol  
Chief Dental Officer