What are the latest PPE updates?

- Initially NSS confirmed that PPE would be supplied to practices until the end of June 2021. **Scottish Government have recently approved the continued delivery of free PPE until the end of March 2022.** A decision on whether supply is to be extended beyond March is due to be made in December 2021.
- National Procurement increased available free PPE to all NHS boards through Pecos by 50% at the start of July 2021. This enabled boards to target increases in practice allocation where required. This should not be seen as a blanket 50% increase in PPE for all practices, but rather as a strategic increase to allow boards to enable practices where possible to treat more NHS dental patients. The capacity of many dental practices will still be limited by a variety of factors including fallow time, ventilation and social distancing.
- * FFP3 masks were added to Pecos for online ordering on 17 August 2021. There is an approximate 6-week transition period for this change to take effect, depending on when the order cut-off date lies within the month for each NHS Board. Any orders placed before the cut-off date will arrive or be collected in the usual way and any orders placed after the date will have the change applied. Practices located within NHS Boards where collection of FFP3 masks has previously been required, may still need to collect them for another few weeks until the next order is put through on the system.
- * Practices that required staff to be face fitted can have this done. All Boards have face fitting staff and extra face-fitting services have been made available via Arco. Please contact your Board for more information on face fitting services.
- * From August 2021, an allocation of free PPE has been made available to NHS practices who host dental nurse trainees. Eligible practices will have extra allowance added to their allocation through Pecos. An allowance will also be available for dental nurse assessors. Supplies will also be provided to facilities, such as colleges, who train dental nurses. To ensure VDPs and VDTs continue to be able to see more patients and gain enough clinical experience National Procurement have also enhanced the available volume of PPE for all VDPs and VDTs. The increase of advanced PPE made available is to allow the VDP/VDT to support up to 10 patients including up to 5 AGPs per day.
- Surgical gowns were made available on Pecos in May 2021 and have been delivered to practices by NSS.
- The validation of 3M 1863 FFP3 masks expired on the 31 March 2021. NSS asked all NHS boards to ensure that any unused stock was disposed of safely via domestic waste prior to the deadline. Board stock was quarantined.
How is PPE allocated to practices?

- PPE was previously allocated according to the number of ‘stood-up surgeries’ in each practice. **However, NSS moved away from the concept of a ‘stood-up’ surgery as it was confusing.** Whilst 50% more PPE has been made available to boards, boards have been encouraged to convert ‘stood-up’ surgeries to a notional factor of 10 patients per day per address. This is a simpler method as all PPE for decontamination and spare PPE will be shared across every 10 patients and not just the first stood-up surgery per location. This makes every increase pro-rata and easier to understand. This is a positive change as the amount of PPE practices will have for decontamination will be increased, as well as spare PPE.
- The allocation of 10 patients per day was agreed on the basis that GDPs usually see, on average, between 20-30 patients per day.
- Boards work within their overall PPE allocation and distribute the practices in their area how they see fit.

How does each board determine how to allocate PPE to practices in their area?

- Boards have not been provided with a specific list of criteria to determine how they should decide a practice’s PPE allocation.
- Each board is operating independently which causes discrepancies and some are more organised than others.
- Some boards seem to be proactive in liaising with practices about their circumstances, however others are less organised and seem to be acting only when the practice contacts them.
- **Gross IoS data** is generally the main source of information boards use to determine if they are allocating enough PPE per practice. They also may use some/all the methods below:
  - **Using Dental Practice Advisers’ local knowledge** of practices
    For example, from inspections, they would know the building structure/layouts of practices so could comment on whether social distancing would be easy or more difficult. They may also have good knowledge of practices that are not using branch practices and only the main site or are shielding. They would also have an idea if a practice were mostly NHS or private split.
  - **Informal self-assessment** – some boards are asking practices to ‘self-assess’ and provide information on what measures they have taken if they are following the SOPs.
  - The boards also have access to GP234 data outlining the pre covid **NHS/Private split** of a dental practice and the PPE is to support NHS activity.

What do I do if I want to discuss/check my practice PPE allocation?

- Discuss your situation with your local board rather than NSS.
- NSS do not decide the individual practice PPE allocation but can advise the allocation they have been asked to supply.
- If you require this information, feel free to contact kirsten.phillips@bda.org and she can liaise with Paul Cushley at NSS on your behalf.
What boards are set up to order PPE online?

- All boards are now set up for online ordering via Pecos.
- Paul Cushley has conducted virtual training sessions for boards on how to use Pecos and more can be arranged as required.
- Online ordering is essentially the ‘pull model’. This provides NSS with more detailed information on the specific type of PPE practices require (for example, all medium gloves rather than a mixture).
- A ‘push model’ was used initially where all practices received the same type of PPE regardless of specific requirements.
- Boards will have access to data from Pecos and any unordered PPE will be recycled and available to allocate the following month to practices through their authorisation process.

What do I do if I am concerned about the quality of the PPE I have received?

- There are now quality control contacts within each health board. You would report the situation to them in the first instance and they will escalate to NSS.

*What do I do if I want to report an issue with my PPE delivery?*

- There is now a centralised third-party team to deal with PPE order queries, such as missing deliveries or delivery issues.
- Contact details: Email - primarycare@hubppe.co.uk or Telephone - 0300 303 3536.
- Menzies should only be contacted if there is an attempt to deliver PPE and the practice receives a ‘missed delivery’ card. Telephone 0141 568 4293.

BDA Scotland

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