

23rd February 2021

Dear Practice Principal,

REVENUE GRANT SCHEME (RGS) FOR GDS DENTAL PRACTICES 2021/21

Background

The Department of Health has agreed to fund a £1.5m non-recurrent grant scheme to assist dental practices in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to increase patient throughput in line with the GDS Operational Guidance. The funding for this scheme is in addition to the existing GDS budget and must be utilised by the 31 March 2021. We appreciate that this is a very tight turnaround; therefore we recommend that practices follow the scheme application instructions carefully in order to secure their grant allocation.

Allocation of Grants

Grants will be paid, at the HSCB discretion, to dental practices towards the cost of improving and increasing their delivery of General Dental Services. As with previous Revenue Grant Schemes, it has been agreed that grants will be made at a practice level. The HSCB have calculated each practice grant based on the number of dental chairs in your practice. The RQIA have supplied the HSCB with this information for practices registered with them and the HSCB holds this information for purely health service practices. This scheme is not applicable to wholly private practices.

The amount of grant allowance allocated to your practice will be issued by post to the practice principal/lead dentist this week together with the application form.

Allowable Expenditure

This RGS is aimed at addressing COVID-19 mitigations and increasing patient throughput through reducing the necessary AGP follow times.

Information about the areas deemed suitable for funding are outlined in Annex 2. Further advice in relation to ventilation is outlined in Annex 3.

Application for Grants

Applications for grants should be made by practices to the HSCB using the application form (Annex 1) which you will receive in the post, along with the appropriate receipted invoices (dated within the financial year 2020/21) and must be with the HSCB no later than **30th April 2021**.

Please note that practices will be able to submit paid receipts for appropriate equipment which has been purchased prior to the issuing of this letter. However, only receipts dated for the current financial year, 2020-21, will be considered.

Conditions

The HSCB will want to satisfy itself that the funding has been used for the agreed purpose, that the terms of the scheme have been complied with and that any dentist receiving an allowance is compliant with their terms of service under the GDS Regulations (NI) 1993 and the Minimum Dental Standards (2011).

The HSCB will undertake an evaluation of this scheme to ensure that it has achieved its stated outcomes.

Summary of RGS Scheme: What you need to do...

1. Read the list contained in Annex 2
2. Decide whether you want to:-
 - Submit a receipt for equipment already purchased in 2020/21
 - Make a new purchase before 31 March 2021

In either case your purchase must comply with the list contained in Annex 2

3. For an existing purchase or other minor works – email the receipted invoice to GDS.Correspondence@hscni.net along with a completed application form (Annex 1) **as soon as possible**. Receipts received before 5 March 2021 should be paid in the March 2021 schedule.
4. For a prospective purchase – purchase the goods and email the receipted invoice to GDS.Correspondence@hscni.net along with a completed application form (Annex 1) **before 30 April 2021**
5. If your purchase(s) complies with the list in Annex 2, HSCB will instruct BSO to reimburse you up to your maximum practice allocation

or the sum of your accepted receipt(s) (whichever is the lesser amount)

Contact Us

If you have any queries about this scheme, the most effective way to contact your local office is via email GDS.Correspondence@hscni.net or if necessary, by telephone 028 9536 2812.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Donncha O'Carolan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Donncha O'Carolan
Interim Head of Dental Services