

Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP  
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care  
39 Victoria Street  
London SW1H 0EU

29 September 2020

Dear Secretary of State,

**Access to a future COVID vaccine for dental services**

We are writing following interim advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), and their recommendations that health and social care workers should receive priority access to a coronavirus vaccine, if one is authorised for use in the UK.

We are clear there must be no ambiguity over the status of all dentists and their teams, and considering ongoing patient access problems, any vaccine must be readily available to all colleagues in all settings, both NHS and private. We have a disease that can spread person-to-person, even among those not showing any symptoms, and a vaccine offers the best chance to protect both staff and services from the impact of future waves.

While primary care dentists in devolved nations have been granted access to the free NHS flu vaccine, colleagues in England remain excluded, and given the current shortages are now struggling to access it via commercial channels. Likewise, the failure to offer explicit references to the 'key worker' status of colleagues has also been a major issue since lockdown, particularly in terms of access to childcare. In both cases, neglecting to consider the needs of dentistry has had, will continue to have, a material impact on our ability to provide care.

A COVID vaccine may still be in development, but we need clarity on access to it now.

We are therefore seeking written assurances from you that all parts of dentistry will feature as part of the priority group, alongside other frontline healthcare colleagues. This would send a welcome signal both to the workforce, and to millions of patients currently struggling to secure dental care.

Yours sincerely,



Eddie Crouch  
**BDA Chair**



Charlotte Waite  
**Chair, England Community  
Dental Services Committee**



Dave Cottam  
**Chair, General Dental  
Practice Committee**

cc: Jo Churchill MP, DHSC; Sara Hurley, NHSE; Sandra White, PHE.