

**DENTISTS/DENTAL BODIES CORPORATE
NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE
GENERAL DENTAL SERVICES**

Introduction:

This Memorandum gives details of:

- Cessation of emergency support payments (made in accordance with PCA(D)(2020)7) after the March-paid April 2022 payment schedule, replaced by a 'multiplier' payment in addition to item of service payments from the April-paid May 2022 to June-paid July 2022 schedules inclusive;
- Continuation of the 30% protected enhancement for General Dental Practice Allowance, as outlined in PCA(D)(2020)10.

Recovery of NHS Dental Services: Revised Payment Arrangements

Background

1. As you will be aware the Cabinet Secretary wrote to all NHS dental teams on 21 October 2021 explaining the Government's intentions to remove the present emergency support payments from 1 April 2022. This was based on the relaxation of Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) restrictions that have significantly reduced capacity within the dental sector during the pandemic period.
2. However, in view of the continued challenges during the winter period, IPC guidance remained largely unchanged in Scotland for the provision of dental services. The Government recognises that while IPC restrictions remain in force it is not possible for the sector to secure full recovery, and that financial support measures and other mitigations are required. The CDO wrote to all NHS dental teams on 7 December notifying them we would write to NHS dental teams with details of the revised financial payment arrangements.
3. Throughout the pandemic, the Government has provided over £50m of financial support payments as part of the emergency support payments regime. However, the top-up arrangement is not conducive to continued recovery of NHS dental services and will cease after the March-paid April 2022 payment schedule. The arrangement was put in place at the start of the pandemic to protect NHS dental contractor incomes; while this was a suitable vehicle at the time to preserve the NHS dental sector, the balance of policy priority now needs to focus on increasing patient care while maintaining a degree of financial protection.
4. The Government is clear that the intention is to recover NHS dental services in a way that both supports patients receiving the care they need and provides a mechanism which allows the sector to return to reasonable normality and returns discretion of earnings back to NHS dental contractors.
5. The Government has also made a commitment to complete the development of a fully sustainable payment system that better reflects modern dentistry, building on the preventive care plan set out under the New Model of Care. It is not the Government's

intention within the reform space to return the sector to the pre-pandemic SDR. This work will begin apace in the Spring and we will write to the sector with more details in due course.

Revised Payment Arrangements (for non-orthodontic practices)

6. Beginning with the April-paid May 2022 schedule the present emergency support payments will be replaced with a 'multiplier' payment made in addition to the value of actual item of service claims. The value of the 'multiplier' will be determined by Scottish Government after considering:
- Infection, prevention and control (IPC) measures in place;
 - Levels of dental activity;
 - Budgetary requirements.

For the period of 12 months beginning with the April-paid May 2022 to March-paid April 2023 schedules (inclusive), the Government will review the requirement for a 'multiplier' - and set an appropriate value, from 0.0 upwards, should this continue to be required - at three monthly intervals based on the factors described above in that period. The 'multiplier' is not intended to be in place any longer than necessary. The value and continuation of the 'multiplier' will therefore be subject to regular review, reflecting IPC constraints, dental activity and budgetary factors.

7. From the April-paid May to June-paid July 2022 payment schedules (inclusive), NHS dental contractors will receive for each month an additional 'multiplier' payment equal to 0.7 (the multiplier) times the value of the item of service claims which the contractor is paid in that same month. This means that for every £1 paid under item of service (IoS) a further £0.70p will be paid to the contractor as a support payment.

What this might mean for you?

8. The value of the 'multiplier' has been set on the basis of the continued uncertainty around IPC restrictions on the sector, the need to ensure a reasonable transition for NHS dental contractors moving off emergency support payments, and what is affordable to the Scottish Government.
9. As we have said these revised payment arrangements are not linked to the present system of emergency support payments. They have been carefully calibrated along with changes from 1 February 2022 (see below) to support dental incomes in a constrained setting, while recognising the need to reinstate the link between earnings and seeing patients.
10. The following table shows a comparison between these revised payment arrangements and the present emergency support payments. For a NHS dental contractor with earnings of £5,000 per month prior to the pandemic, and in receipt of 85% of these earnings under the present emergency support payments, the revised payment arrangements would mean a total payment of £5,100 if they were able to gross £3,000 per month and £4,250 if they were able to gross £2,500 per month.

Table: Revised Payment Arrangements Comparison

Pre-Pandemic (Gross) IoS	Emergency top-up at 85%	Present Actual Gross IoS	Multiplier payment (at 0.7)	Total Payment
£5,000	£4,250	£3,000	£2,100	£5,100
£5,000	£4,250	£2,500	£1,750	£4,250

11. This means that for every £1 paid under item of service a further £0.70p will be paid to the contractor as a support payment. For example, for item 1(f)(i) which is will paid at £14.85, from 1 April the 'multiplier' payment will provide an additional £10.39, which means that the contractor will receive £25.24 in total within the transitional period. The 'multiplier' ensures that there is not a cliff-edge cut off associated with the withdrawal of the emergency support payments and delivers a balance between IPC constraints and the necessity for patients to receive treatment.
12. The 'multiplier' payment will be paid to all NHS dental contractors except those currently in receipt of maternity, paternity and sickness absence allowances using a value of 0.7 . The amount that may be earned under these revised payment arrangements will not be capped. The continued need for the 'multiplier' payment and the value used to calculate it are subject to future changes as a result of the reviews carried out every 3 months, as set out in paragraph 6.

Orthodontic-only Practices

13. IPC guidance does not have a similar constraint on orthodontic practices, as AGP and fallow time are not impacted within the setting. This means that the 'multiplier' payment will not be made to orthodontic-only practices.

Orthodontic Claims in a Non-Orthodontic Practice

14. Orthodontic treatment may be undertaken from time to time within a non-orthodontic practice and any claims will be included for the purposes of the 'multiplier' payment.

Fee Changes from 1 February 2022

15. NHS dental contractors are reminded of the fee changes from 1 February, including enhanced examination fees for adult patients, new enhanced examination and radiograph fees for children, and the extension of Childsmile eligibility and fluoride varnish application. This constitutes a substantial investment in General Dental Services by the Scottish Government with an estimated cost of between £20m and £25m per year. More information may be found at:

[PCAD20221-Amendment-No.-154-to-the-SDR-17-January-2022-MEMORANDUM-1.pdf \(scottishdental.org\)](https://www.scottishdental.org/PCAD20221-Amendment-No.-154-to-the-SDR-17-January-2022-MEMORANDUM-1.pdf)

16. While in place, the 'multiplier' payment will be calculated using those enhanced fees.

Protected Enhancement of the General Dental Practice Allowance (GDPA)

17. As part of the emergency arrangements, the Government temporarily increased the value of the GDPA Allowance by 30%. The protected enhancement will be applied to all practices

currently in receipt of the payment and will be retained subject to the same review arrangements as the 'multiplier'.

Review Arrangements for Revised Financial Payments and GDPA Enhancement

18. The 'multiplier' payment and GDPA enhancement are part of temporary mitigations to support the sector during recovery. They are subject to regular review with a maximum period between reviews of three monthly intervals.

Future Communications

Allowance Payments

19. The Government intends to reinstate the allowance payments from the April/paid May 2022 schedule. A memo will be provided with details of these arrangements shortly.

Capital Funding: Ventilation and Red Band Hand Pieces

20. Practices are reminded there are still opportunities to apply for capital funding for ventilation improvement and speed adjusting red band hand pieces. The intention of the Government is to fully deploy all the funding available by allowing practices to apply for capital funding to meet general repairs and improvements. A memo will be sent to the service shortly.

Revenue Funding: Legionella Risk Assessment/Additional Clinical Sessions

21. The Scottish Government also intends to make a one-off revenue payment to qualifying practices. This funding is being provided to meet the costs of a Legionella Risk Assessment (LRA), for additional hygienist and nurse sessions, and extra out of hours provision. Practices will have the discretion to manage their funding across each of these priorities and may choose to opt out should they so wish. A memo with the precise arrangements will be sent to the service shortly.

Enquiries

An FAQ on the multiplier payment will be forthcoming but in the meantime any enquiries arising from this memorandum should be taken up with your NHS Board.

Primary Care Directorate
2 March 2022