

Chairman's Announcement

Update on NHS Dentistry Services and Oral Health in Wiltshire

On 29 March 2023, the Health Select Committee undertook a Rapid Scrutiny Exercise on the NHS dentistry services in Wiltshire ahead of the delegated commissioning responsibility being transferred from NHS England to Integrated Care Boards from 1 April 2023. The report highlighted the issues with local residents accessing NHS dentistry which had further been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. In response to the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise a paper, written by ICB and Public Health provides an update of programmes of work aligned to the 3 key priorities of this agenda;

- improving dental access
- increase dental workforce and
- improve oral health outcomes for Core20PLUS5 populations.

The report at agenda item 8 which has been prepared by Katie Davies (Public Health Principal – Health Improvement – Wiltshire Council) and Victoria Stanley (Programme Lead – Community Pharmacy, Optometry and Dentistry, NHS BSW ICB) seeks to provide an update on the work undertaken to increase dental access and the improvement of oral health for residents across Wiltshire and in particular the focus of vulnerable populations and the opportunities this brings to deliver activity towards the three priorities above. The authors seek the Health Select Committee agreement for a future committee discussion where further updates on progress will be provided and reporting timescales for this activity can be agreed.

The NHS has a duty not to distract or influence the election campaign or give the impression that it is doing so. As always, the NHS must remain politically neutral. There is a specific requirement to not participate in debates or events that may be politically controversial. At the same time, we must remain accountable and provide factual information, when it is appropriately requested. It has been determined that a written response will provide the Wiltshire HSC with the facts it needs, while avoiding the perception that the ICB is competing for attention or entering into any form of debate.

Due to the political interest in dentistry and in light of upcoming elections Katie Davies and Victoria Stanley will not be attending this meeting but are happy to attend a future meeting to respond to any questions raised by the Committee.

Also to note that Sarah-Jane Peffers from the NHS Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire ICB will also not be in attendance for agenda item 11 for the above reasons.