

5 January 2021

Dear colleague,

Happy New Year and I hope that you and your teams managed to have a good festive break.

Further to my letter of 23 December regarding the Level 4 COVID restrictions introduced in mainland Scotland from Boxing Day; I would like to clarify the position for dental practices following the further restrictions announced by the First Minister in parliament yesterday and which came into effect today. In essence, there is no change, this is because:

- Essential travel includes leaving home for healthcare;
- Dental treatment is healthcare;
- Dentistry can therefore continue in Level 4 and under the revised restrictions announced by the First Minister;
- Facial aesthetic treatment (Botox / fillers) is not essential healthcare (not available on the NHS) and should not be undertaken privately.

We are not restricting the range of treatments available through the SDR since I believe that if a patient attends a dentist with a concern then the full range of clinical dental care should remain available to the dentist in order to manage their condition.

Also, you and your patient together, should consider whether there would be an oral health detriment to postponing purely cosmetic dental treatment and if not, this should be deferred to minimise travel around the local area.

As mentioned in my previous letter, financial support of NHS dental practices at its current level will remain in place. I am mindful of the potential impact on practices, for example, through staff having to shield or the natural reluctance of some people to attend and wishing to defer their treatment. Therefore, I have decided that the move to tiered financial support

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which was due to commence in the 'March paid April' schedule will be delayed for 3 months in the first instance. We will continue our modelling of practice activity during remobilisation and keep you informed of developments.

Again, can I thank you and your team for your resilience and support over the past months.

Yours sincerely,



Tom Ferris
Chief Dental Officer