

Dear Colleague

1. **QUALITY IMPROVEMENT DATABASE**
2. **THE BRITISH NATIONAL FORMULARY (BNF)**

### Summary

1. This letter advises NHS Boards and Practitioner Services of:

- progress in the establishment of the single database of quality improvement information for NHS Boards and dentists; and,
- the discontinuation of hard copies of the British National Formulary (BNF).

### Action

2. NHS Boards are asked to note the Memorandum to this letter and issue the Memorandum to all dentists and DBCs on their dental lists.

Yours sincerely,

TOM FERRIS  
Chief Dental Officer

23 January 2020

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#### Addresses

##### For action

Chief Executives, NHS Boards

Director, Practitioner Services

##### For information

Chief Executive,  
NHS National Services Scotland

Chief Executive,  
NHS Education for Scotland

Directors of Dentistry

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#### Enquiries to:

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

- 1. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT DATABASE**
- 2. THE BRITISH NATIONAL FORMULARY (BNF)**

**Summary**

- This Memorandum advises of:
  - progress in the establishment of the single database of quality improvement information for NHS Boards and dentists; and,
  - the discontinuation of hard copies of the BNF.

**Quality Improvement Database**

**Background**

2. The Scottish Government has been working with partners on how we assure that patients receive the best quality care under the NHS. The output of this work will be a single database of quality improvement information for NHS Boards with appropriate access for dentists.

**Purpose**

3. The purpose of the database, or dashboard, is to allow dentists to monitor their activity against established quality indicators for them to identify unwarranted variation in their performance when compared against national standards and peer groups. It is expected that this will afford dentists the opportunity to address any variation to deliver the highest standards of patient care.

4. Authorised individuals within NHS Boards will also have access to this information for the purposes of improving the efficiency of monitoring the activity of dentists.

**Summary of implementation progress**

5. The dashboard has been developed through an iterative process from initial specification through feasibility testing and presentational development to final testing and national roll out.

6. The development and roll out process falls into two phases. The first phase involved developing capacity within Business Objects to host the database to enable access to all dentists who hold a list number with PSD. Each dentist will have access to their own activity. Protocols have been established to enable dentists to compare their own data with an anonymised group of their peers.

7. Initially four quality indicators have been chosen. These are Childsmile activity, DRO returns, anti-microbial prescribing and Quality Improvement (QI) activity.

8. While significant progress has been made in developing the visual presentation of information, it is anticipated that this aspect of the dashboard will develop further in due course.

9. The database will soon be made available in a live environment. There will be a final round of testing with a small number of dentists. Following this we anticipate a full national rollout later in the year.

10. The second phase will see the introduction of a greater range of quality indicators and the development of a modified interface for use by NHS Boards.

### **The British National Formulary (BNF)**

11. An updated version of the BNF, which includes the Dental Practitioners' Formulary (DPF), is currently provided to dentists every six months in March and September. The September 2019 BNF will be the last update provided in hard copy.

12. The BNF and BNF(c) are available as an:

- app from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store, or;
- online version, which can be accessed at <https://bnf.nice.org.uk/>;

and dentists should access the BNF, including the DPF, using these methods from March 2020.

### **Enquiries**

13. Any enquiries arising from this Memorandum should be taken up with your NHS Board.

Scottish Government  
Population Health Directorate  
CDO and Dentistry Division

23 January 2020