

To All Primary Care Dental Practitioners

Dear Colleague

Decontamination of Dental Instruments in Primary Care – Timescales for Compliance

The purpose of this letter is to update you on the timescales for compliance for decontamination requirements and inform you of the action required by 31 December 2009.

In previous correspondence, I indicated that I appreciated that your ability to comply with the requirements will be dependent on appropriate equipment and support being available. These issues have been crucial in determining what the revised timescales should be and have been agreed by the dental decontamination working group.

The group which includes general dental practitioners as well as specialist advisers from Health Facilities Scotland, Health Protection Scotland, National Procurement and the University of Glasgow, has been considering what would be realistic and achievable timescales.

From an early stage the group were keen to ensure that practitioners were consulted so a survey of all practices in Scotland was carried out. There was a good response rate (71%) and as a result we have a better understanding of how practices are managing in their move to the new system. I appreciate the effort that so many of you made to complete and return the questionnaire.

The survey results indicated that whilst most practitioners have either been able to establish a local decontamination unit (LDU) in their practice or have room for an LDU; others have had difficulty in doing so mainly through having to find new premises or build an extension. We recognise therefore that some practitioners will need more time than others to meet the requirements and consequently there will be timescales appropriate to each; one for those who have room within existing premises and intend to develop an LDU on site (Group 1) and a second for those who think they need to relocate or build on (Group 2). It is also recognised that some practitioners may want to pursue the option of using a central decontamination facility.

**From the
Chief Dental Officer**
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Addresses

For action
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Dental Lead Officers

For information
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All groups, including those who have established their decontamination arrangements (Group 3) will have to take some action **before the end of December** this year and this is detailed below and in the table at the end of the letter. One response from each practice is required.

Group 1

If you are developing an LDU in your practice:-

- by the end **December 2009**, you will be required to:-
 - provide your health board with a time limited plan for installing your LDU;
 - indicate whether or not you need help with your planning process;
 - have arranged with NHS Education Scotland (NES) a visit from the infection control support team to provide in-practice training if this hasn't already been accessed.
 - confirm to the board that a system is in place to manage the current decontamination processes effectively;
- by the end of **December 2011**, confirm to your board that your decontamination arrangements are in place, compliant and fully functional.

Group 2

If you will have to either move premises or build an extension you are required to keep to the following timescales:-

- by the end of **December 2009**
 - inform your board whether you will be moving premises or building an extension;
 - inform the board of any anticipated problems;
 - arrange with NES for a visit from the infection control support team to provide in-practice training if this hasn't already been accessed.
 - confirm to the board that a system is in place to manage the current decontamination processes effectively;
- by the end of **June 2010** submit a time limited plan to the board;
- by the end of **December 2012** confirm to your board that your decontamination arrangements are in place, compliant and fully functional.

Group 3

If you have already established your decontamination arrangements or you have opted for using a central decontamination facility you are required to keep to the following timescales:-

- by the end **December 2009**
 - confirm to your health board that you have installed your LDU/arranged to use a central decontamination facility;
 - provide your health board with confirmation that a system is in place to manage the decontamination processes effectively

Support for the development of LDUs

Information updates as usual will be available on www.Scottishdental.org and the contract for accessing the equipment is now known as NP143/09 (previously MEK 005), this is accessible through the same website.

By the end of January 2010, HFS intends to have in place a call off contract for design, project management and similar professional support for the construction of decontamination facilities. This will be a national framework procured in accordance with public sector procurement rules and with appropriate training for those providing these services. This will be available to all parties developing local decontamination units.

Making the returns to your boards

Forms will be issued for this purpose under separate cover.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margie Taylor".

MARGIE TAYLOR
Chief Dental Officer

	By December 2009	By June 2010	By December 2011	By December 2012
Group 1	Provide Board with details of time limited plan Indicate if help required in planning process Arrange training through NES Confirm process is in place to manage current system effectively		Time limited plan fully completed	
Group 2	Inform Board of plans to either move or build an extension Inform Board of any anticipated problems Arrange training through NES as appropriate Confirm process is in place to manage current system effectively	Submit time limited plan to Board		Time limited plan fully completed
Group 3	Confirm to Board that LDU is installed/arrangement is made to use a central decontamination facility Confirm that a process is in place to manage system effectively			