

May 2018

Stakeholder briefing:

Procurement of Special Care Dentistry in the East of England

Background

NHS England is responsible for commissioning primary and secondary care dental services in the East of England and this includes community dental services.

NHS England Midlands and East (East) is currently reviewing existing community dental services and it has been identified that there are slight variations in the way services have been commissioned and delivered.

Community dental services are intended to treat patients of any age whose care cannot be met by other local general dental practitioners due to their special needs; whether that is medical, physical or behavioural. Some community dental services also provide primary dental care services to vulnerable people of all ages to ensure that there is access for all patients.

There are four providers of community dental services across the East of England covering Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Great Yarmouth and Waveney, and Norfolk. The current services are delivered from a number of clinics in each of these areas.

Current position

As all of the current contracts come to an end in March 2019, NHS England is re-procuring these services in line with the NHS England guidance for commissioning dental specialties (Special Care Dentistry), which supports general dental services for vulnerable adults and children, and also supports hard to reach groups to ensure

that patients have access to general dental services.

It is intended that services will continue to be provided from various locations in the East of England, however it is inevitable as a result of the re-procurement that there may be some changes to the current locations for the delivery of services.

NHS England is currently undertaking a programme of engagement including collating the views of existing patients and holding local engagement forums. In addition, NHS England is in communication with local authorities regarding the responsibility for epidemiology, dental public health and health promotion services which will be considered as part of the new service. These views will inform future service delivery and simplify the referral process.

The benefits of this change are:

- There will be a consistent service provision across the East of England;
- Providing appropriate and patient led services in the right place; and
- More cost effective use of NHS resources.

It is intended that the new service will start from 1 April 2019. NHS England will update stakeholders throughout the process.

If you have any queries about the content of this briefing, please email Julie Bradshaw, NHS England's secondary care dental commissioning manager at england.essexatcontract@nhs.net