

To all General Dental  
Practitioners

*Directorate of Integrated Care  
Northern Office  
County Hall  
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18th September 2019

Dear Colleagues

**Re: Cessation of Hard Copy Schedules and Withdrawal of HCN Phone-line**

You will be aware from previous correspondence that the HSCB has invested significant resources to date in the development of the FPS Dental Portal.

A range of Portal applications enables you currently to submit electronic claims and prior-approval requests with supporting documentation to BSO safely and securely. It provides you with access to your payment schedules and patient Health & Care Numbers and allows you to send secure emails from your own HSC Email account. Plans are also in place for you to send electronic referrals to secondary care and to receive access to the NI Electronic Care Record via the Portal.

The secure HSC network is the only GDPR compliant method of transferring confidential patient information and the HSCB strongly advises against the routine use of personal email accounts for HS purposes. There may be occasional or urgent circumstances where personal email is used as an exceptional facility but broadly it is counter to usual processes and is not deemed best practice, particularly as a more secure option is available to you. Use of the Dental Portal also affords significant time and cost efficiencies both for practitioners and HSCB/BSO staff alike.

The HSCB has been operating dual systems over the past 12 months to allow practitioners time to make the necessary adjustments. Our view however, is that in order to fully benefit from the investments made some of the manual processes should now cease.

We wish therefore to notify you that from 1 December 2019 we will make the following changes:

- **Hard copy monthly schedules will no longer be posted out. Instead these can be accessed via the FPS Dental Payments System on the Portal.**

- The BSO telephone line for patient Health & Care Numbers will be withdrawn and HCNs will only be available via the Lookup facility on the Dental Portal.
- All correspondence including alerts will now be sent by email only and uploaded to the BSO website at the following link: <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/3011.htm> Posted copies will no longer be issued.

For those of you not yet using the Dental Portal the BSO has a small team of eBusiness staff who can help you gain access and can provide technical advice and training as required. The eBusiness Team can be contacted on Tel: 028 9536 3751 or 028 9536 3681 or at [ebusiness@hscni.net](mailto:ebusiness@hscni.net) Advice is also available on the BSO website at the following link: <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2772.htm>

To support connectivity to the Dental Portal we have a supply of Sophos Antivirus licences which are available free of charge via the eBusiness team. Also, towards the end of the financial year, we expect there to be a revenue grant scheme, similar to last year, under which you may claim reimbursement of a proportion of any costs you may have incurred in this financial year associated with the development of practice systems. Details of this will follow, once approved.

Please be assured that HSCB and BSO are committed to providing you with all necessary support to make the full transition to electronic processes as simple as possible.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Donaldson  
Head of Dental Services