

General Dental Services – Monthly News Sheet

January 2017

Safe Recruitment

General Dental Practitioners should be aware that it is a requirement for RQIA registered practices to recruit staff in line with statutory legislation and mandatory requirements. These include Regulation 19 (2) Schedule 2 of the Independent Health Care Regulations (NI) 2005 and The Regulations and Improvement Authority (Registration) Regulations (NI) 2005.

There should therefore be:

- A written policy and procedure for staff recruitment
- Staff personnel files including details of any criminal offences and confirmation that they are fit to fulfil the duties and responsibilities
- Appropriate references
- Full employment history including reasons for any gaps and reason for leaving a position if it involved working with children or vulnerable adults
- Satisfactory Enhanced Access NI checks received prior to new staff commencing work.

Optimising Medicines Use in Primary Care

Joe Brogan, Head of Pharmacy and Medicines Management, HSCB recently wrote to all GPs in relation to reducing the prescribing of Over the Counter (OTC) treatments for common conditions and non-evidence based medicines. Although this letter and associated guidance is directed primarily to GPs, your assistance in reducing dental OTC expenditure would be welcome and appreciated. For letter and associated, please see: <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2783.htm>.

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AI Learning Alert – Consequences of Inadequate IT Security

Patient data held on a dental practice clinical system was corrupted by a virus as a result of someone opening an unsecure internet link within an email. While the virus was successfully removed it was not possible in this case to fully restore the clinical system due to an inadequate external back-up system. This resulted in the loss of a substantial proportion of patient clinical information including open courses of treatment with obvious disruption to clinical care, business continuity and claims for payments etc.

It was found that systems were not in place to keep the antivirus up to date. The practice did perform back-ups, but as the hardware has been faulty for some time inherent issues were not detected as back-ups were not regularly checked and validated. A data breach did not occur on this occasion as the clinical system was not accessed by an outside party.

Learning from this and similar AIs – “do’s and don’ts”:

- Don’t ever open email attachments from unknown or suspicious sources
- Do have an IT Security Policy - to protect electronic equipment and information held in electronic format.
- Do have effective antiviral protection installed and keep this up-to-date to mitigate the risk of attack.
- Do have a secure external back-up system in place for data held on the clinical system and routinely check/validate to ensure that it works as intended.
- Do take advice from your systems supplier.
- Do train all staff and reinforce the importance of IT and information security.

HSCB Guidance is available on the BSO website: <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2705.htm>

The Information Commissioner’s Office website also has very useful information: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/it-security-top-tips/>

****Reminder to all Dentists: Please return your FPPS Dental Portal User Agreement****

BSO is currently implementing the use of online payment systems across all areas of Family Practitioners Services. The collective name for these portals is Family Practitioner Payment Systems (FPPS). There are numerous benefits of using the secure dental portal, including the ability to submit real time payment claims where claim rejections are highlighted and can be rectified immediately, the ability to search for patient information, potential for improved cash flow, increased security of data and communication of regular important news and urgent alerts. We are hoping that in time, users will be able to make safe and secure electronic referrals to hospital dental services and that prior approval submissions will be possible, resulting in faster processing at BSO.

Work is currently ongoing within BSO to progress practice connectivity to the FPPS Dental portal. Usernames, passwords and user agreements have now been sent to all dentists in the Western, Northern and Southern LCG areas. User agreements have recently been posted out to South-Eastern LCG users, with the Belfast LCG to follow soon.

Further benefits of using the portal and some practical information on its use will be outlined during upcoming practice training (details to be issued separately). In order to access the portal you are reminded to complete and return the user agreement as soon as possible after receiving it.

A Cryptotoken was delivered for each dentist on the NI dental list as of late 2014/early 2015 to each dental surgery. These are assigned to each individual dentist and should be kept throughout their NHS career. Please have a look for these Cryptotokens now as they will be required to log in to the FPPS Dental portal. If you have moved practice since 2014, please contact your previous practice to arrange delivery of this to you. If you cease doing NHS work then you should return the Cryptotoken to BSO. In the next few months, Cryptotokens and user agreements will be issued to dentists who were not on the NI dental list during the original rollout.

Feedback: We would appreciate your comments and/or queries regarding the Monthly News Sheet. Please send them by email to: GDSEMonthlyNewsSheet@hscni.net or telephone 028 9536 2823.