

**Issued on behalf of:**

Simon Reid, Chief Dental Officer, Department of Health  
Michael Donaldson, Head of Dental Services, HSCB

25 June 2018

Dear Colleague

**Restrictions on the Use of Dental Amalgam from 1 July 2018 Onwards**

The Department and HSCB have been working on the implementation of this legislation and you will already have received some guidance on this matter within the Chief Dental Officer letters of 6 April, and particularly that of 11 June. An MDS communication has also been issued by BSO. The headline information within these documents will hopefully be of help when you discuss treatment options with those patients affected by the restrictions on the use of amalgam.

SDCEP only recently published its guidance and we were granted permission to make adaptations for use in Northern Ireland. Whilst we want to try to move to electronic formats we did want to make an initial batch of HSC sponsored patient leaflets available to practices to assist you with this legislative change and to help patients become familiar with the new arrangements. However, this project has now come within formal procurement rules that have unfortunately introduced an unexpected delay in the commercial printing of the main batch of these leaflets.

As an interim measure the HSCB is sending the enclosed posters and a small batch of patient information leaflets. We would suggest these leaflets are read by the relevant categories of patients and retained within the practice. Whilst your practice will be able to print your own copies to hand out to patients, perhaps a longer term strategy might be to try to reduce the need for printing leaflets. So whilst you will receive some further leaflets, the promotion of practice retained leaflets could accompany a move to the electronic format which so many of us now use to access information. PDF files of the patient leaflet will be made available through the FPS Dental Services pages of the BSO website and HSCB dental e-newsletter so that they can be downloaded. We would ask you to please promote this electronic format through the various means available to you such as your practice website, your practice use of social media, e-mails and texts to patients, an electronic newsletter, or video or computer delivered waiting room advertising. This patient information will also be made available to the public through the dental pages of NI Direct.

Thank you for your help and understanding. If you have any queries on the above, please contact Marlene Drummond on 028 9536 2823.