

Terms of Scheme for Enhanced Dental Access and Prevention of Dental Decay in Children Aged 0-10 Years.

1.0 Aim

The Enhanced Child Registration Scheme is designed to promote and facilitate dental registration and preventative treatment for children in Northern Ireland aged 0-10 years who are not currently registered with a General Dental Practitioner.

2.0 Background

The COVID-19 pandemic had a very significant impact on General Dental Services. However, while registration levels for the wider population remain at a historical high, levels of registration for children in the 0-10-year age group have fallen markedly over the last three years. The enhanced access and prevention for 0-10-year olds scheme aims to address this situation by encouraging early registration with a dentist, and in doing so provide an opportunity for early preventive interventions.

The terms of the scheme will run from 1st January 2023 to 31st March 2023. Patients seen under the scheme should be seen in addition to dentist's normal GDS work.

The scheme aims to provide an opportunity for dental registration for to up to 7618 children aged 0-10 years. The Strategic Planning and Performance Group will monitor the number of patients registered under the scheme and this will form part of the post pilot evaluation as detailed in section 7.0.

3.0 Objectives

- Increase access to General Dental Services and improve attendance of children aged 0-10 years in Northern Ireland
- Promote the delivery of preventative evidence-based care in General Dental Practice. This may include interventions such as fluoride application, fissure sealing of newly erupted permanent first molars, oral hygiene and dietary advice, tooth brushing advice, and support for families to promote good oral health behaviours.
- Raise public awareness of the importance of early attendance at the dentist and promote asymptomatic patterns of attendance at the dentist.
- Support Dental professionals to encourage early attendance and registration with a General Dental Practitioner.

4.0 Service Delivery

4.1 Patient Eligibility

Children aged 0-10 years who are NOT registered with a dentist at time of acceptance

4.2 Clinician Eligibility

Any Dental Practitioners on the Dental List who accept children into capitation arrangements
(Registration with a foundation dentist is not eligible for the enhanced payment.
Orthodontists are not eligible for the enhanced payment.)

4.3 Eligible Treatment

Dentists should provide an 'extensive clinical examination' to patients seen under the scheme. This includes

- examination of the oral cavity
- age-appropriate oral health advice in line with Delivering Better Oral Health 2021 ([Delivering better oral health: an evidence-based toolkit for prevention - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/531212/delivering_better_oral_health_toolkit_for_prevention.pdf))
- Assessment and documentation of dental decay risk of child and determine appropriate recall interval
- Toothbrushing demonstration and advice. Recommend fluoride-containing toothpaste according to age of child.
- For those 8 years and above with active dental caries, consider recommending or prescribing daily fluoride mouth rinse (0.05% NaF; 230ppm F), to be used at a different time from brushing, until dental caries risk is reduced
- Application of 2.26% Sodium Fluoride varnish for children over the age of 3

Additional fees are claimable for:

- Application of resin sealant to permanent molar teeth on eruption as set out in the SDR

4.4 Case Numbers

It is anticipated that 7618 enhanced examinations will take place from 1st January to 31st March 2023.

- Approximately 5734 enhanced examinations in 0-4-year age category.
- Approximately 1884 enhanced examinations in 5-10-year age category.

5.0 Remuneration

5.1 Additional Fees

This is a one-off enhancement, after which the practitioner will be paid under the normal capitation arrangements as detailed in Determination I of the SDR.

The scheme involves a one-off payment of £14.30 for each child aged between 0-10 years who is newly registered with a GDS dentist from 1st January 2023 to 31st March 2023 and has an enhanced examination completed.

This payment will be based on the 'acceptance date' with a GDS dentist. The payment will be automatically applied to any new 0-10-year-old patient registrations from 1st January 2023 to 31st March 2023 therefore does not require dentists to actively claim for this scheme. However, we encourage initial submission of registration within the window of 1st January to 31st March 2023. This is to facilitate payment of the enhanced fee. The cut off date for submitting EDI/Portal claims for this scheme is the 12th April 2023. Claims should be submitted once the examination has been completed and if the patient requires any subsequent treatment this can be claimed for within the normal claiming mechanism and time scale as set out in the SDR.

There is no SDR code associated with the scheme. BSO will apply the £14.30 payment to all new patient registrations age 0-10 years from 1st January to 31st March 2023.

This one-off fee is an additional payment for each patient age 0-10 years registered and examined under the scheme in the time frame 1st January 2023 to 31st March 2023.

BSO will aim to make the payment inline with the monthly payment schedule where possible.

The £14.30 enhanced fee is superannuable and will contribute to the calculation of practice allowance. The one-off enhanced fee will not contribute to RSS.

6.0 Scheme Evaluation

Practices must maintain patient records to support all payments made as part of the pilot. An audit of individual patient clinical records may also be carried out by the SPPG.

The following will be monitored and evaluated as part of the pilot:

- a) Changes to registration rates for children in each specific age category 0-4 years and 5-10 years.
- b) Payments made to dental practices under the scheme.
- c) Qualitative data collection- surveys of dental practices in Northern Ireland.

7.0 Post Scheme Arrangements

Following evaluation of the scheme SPPG will make a recommendation in regards to any potential next steps. This may include refining the scheme and the remuneration model or the scheme not proceeding beyond 31st March 2023.

8.0 Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes of the scheme include:

- Increased child registration rates with General Dental Services
- Increased opportunities for preventive interventions
- Detection of early disease (where present) and opportunities for secondary prevention and/or minimal intervention techniques
- Adoption of asymptomatic patterns of dental attendance
- Reduced demand for emergency dental appointment with a GDP.