

Item 5: Dentistry.

By: Paul Wickenden, Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 7 January 2011.

Subject: Dentistry.

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## **1. Background**

(1) In previous discussions that the Committee has had about different ways to restructure and refocus the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, one of the recurring themes has been that the Committee's meetings should be more focused on the outcomes it would like to achieve. Another has been the need to make the work of the Committee more accessible to members of the public.

(2) This paper is intended to be a way to progress towards achieving these twin aims. Two sets of questions are set out below, both of which the meeting will look to having answered by the end of the meeting: the strategic, overarching questions, and the more detailed questions. All were sent to the relevant attendees in advance.

## **2. Strategic Questions**

### **(1). Overarching Questions**

- a) What are the main challenges in the way of delivering first class community health services for the people of Kent?
- b) How can the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee help to achieve this goal?

## **3. Detailed Questions**

### **(1). Questions submitted to NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent and NHS West Kent.**

1. Please provide some key facts about the levels and types of dentistry activity in your PCT area, including:
  - a. Numbers of dentists providing NHS dental treatment, and the percentages working under the different types of contract;
  - b. Numbers of dentists providing NHS dental services to children but not adults;
  - c. Information on the levels of dental activity (Units of Dental Activity) and Courses of Treatment, broken down into patient type (i.e. adults and children); and
  - d. Total number of patients seen by an NHS dentist, and what this is as a proportion of the resident population.
  - e. For a-d above, how have these numbers changed over the last three years?

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2. How much is spent on commissioning dental services and how do dentists receive remuneration for providing services?
3. Can you please provide comparative data showing where your PCT resides in the national and regional table for dental funding? How is this allocation determined?
4. How are dentists remunerated for carrying out preventive work?
5. Is any dental provision commissioned from community service providers?
6. What information can be provided on the state of children's oral health in your PCT, and how this has changed over time?
7. What plans are there to develop children's dental health and dental health services?
8. Regarding orthodontic services:
  - a. How many orthodontic courses of treatment are provided on the NHS to residents of your PCT area?
  - b. How are orthodontic services accessed by patients?
  - c. How are providers of NHS orthodontic services remunerated and what decisions are being made around commissioning orthodontic services after 31 March 2011?
9. Who provides out of hours dental services and how do patients access these?
10. What is the patient pathway for those with advanced oral health needs (such as cancer, and/or courses of treatment involving referral to a consultant)?
11. Are there any particular geographical areas where there are issues around commissioning adequate dental provision?
12. Are there any particular times of year where there are issues around commissioning adequate dental provision?
13. What are the challenges faced by PCTs in commissioning adequate dental provision, what plans does the PCT have to develop dental services in the future and what will be the impact of the NHS White Paper proposals?
14. What actions are you taking to ensure dental care is provided to groups with a traditionally low take up?
15. Is there any mobile dentistry provision within your PCT area, and is this something you have considered?
16. What powers of prescription do dentists have and how much prescribing is carried out by them?
17. Please provide the following information relating to customer services (including information from PALs):
  - a. How many enquiries are received each quarter relating to dental services and what trends can be identified regarding the nature of these enquiries?
  - b. How many complaints/compliments/comments have been received about accessing dental services?
  - c. How many complaints/compliments/comments have been received about the quality or cost of dental services?
  - d. How has information from customer services about dentistry informed service development?

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18. What part is your organisation playing in the development of a new dental contract following the Steele Review?

(2) Questions submitted to the Kent LINK.

1. From the information received by LINK, have any trends emerged about the problems faced by people in Kent in accessing dental services, and any specific areas of the county where issues exist?
2. From the information received by LINK, have any trends emerged about the problems faced by people in Kent in the quality of the dental services provided?
3. Is the LINK involved in, or planning to get involved in, any work relating to dentistry in Kent?

(3) In addition, the Kent Local Dental Committee was asked for any information they wished to provide on this topic.

#### **4. Recommendations**

- (a) The Committee is asked to assess whether the outcomes in section 2 above have been achieved or if further information on this topic is required by the Committee.