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To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 8 January 2010

Subject: Item 4. Intended Outcomes: Dentistry.

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: one for members of the public and the other for the Scrutiny Committee.

2. Outcomes for the Dentistry Agenda Item

(1). Public Question

- a) How can I access NHS dentistry and be certain I will receive quality treatment?

(2). Scrutiny Questions

- a) Are the Primary Care Trusts commissioning sufficient dental provision to meet the needs of their resident populations?
- b) Is the care being provided of an appropriate quality?
- c) What can be done to improve dental service provision in Kent?

3. Background Questions

(1) The following questions are those that have been asked in advance of the meeting:

(a) Questions asked of 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.
(For comparison purposes, could the above information be provided for 2007/8 and 2008/9 along with the most current information you have)
2. How much is spent on commissioning dental services and how do dentists receive remuneration for providing services?
 3. How are dentists remunerated for carrying out preventive work?
 4. Does the PCT provider arm provide any dental services directly?
 5. What information can be provided on the state of children's oral health in your PCT, and how this has changed over time?
 6. Who provides out of hours dental services and how do patients access these?
 7. 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)?
 8. Are there any particular geographical areas where there are issues around commissioning adequate dental provision?
 9. Are there any particular times of year where there are issues around commissioning adequate dental provision?
 10. What are the challenges faced by PCTs in commissioning adequate dental provision and what plans does the PCT have to develop dental services in the future?
 11. What powers of prescription do dentists have and how much prescribing is carried out by them?
 12. 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 of dental services?
 - d. How has information from customer services about dentistry informed service development?

(b) Questions asked of 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?

(c) Questions asked of the Local Dental Committee:

1. Does the Local Dental Committee consider that the provision of dentistry in Kent is sufficient to meet the needs of the people in Kent?
2. Is the provision of NHS dentistry uniform across the county, or are there some areas where issues exist?
3. If the answer is no to either of the questions above, what does the Local Dental Committee consider to be the main issues limiting dental provision in Kent?
4. What suggestions does the Local Dental Committee have for improving dental provision?
5. A list of the key questions which we have asked NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent and NHS West Kent is attached to this letter. This is for your information, but if there are any areas about which you would like to provide additional information, please do so.

4. Recommendations

(1) 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.