



Department
of Health &
Social Care

*The Rt Hon Dame Andrea Leadsom DBE MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health, Start for Life and Primary Care
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU*

15 March 2024

Dear Iain,

Following our tearoom meeting on 26 January, I committed to write to you on addressing how the Government will open NHS Dentistry to new patients.

We want to make it faster and simpler for new patients to access NHS dental care and that is why our Dentistry Recovery Plan will offer dental practices an additional payment for each new patient requiring treatment. This will help treat patients who've not seen an NHS dentist in over 2 years.

This new patient premium will support dentists to take on new patients and a new marketing campaign will help everyone who needs one to find an NHS dentist. We will support dentists to treat around a million new patients and launch a new public health campaign to raise awareness of how to find and access a dentist when it is needed. We have recently issued guidance to practices and ICBs on the operation of this new incentive scheme. We will measure the impact of this new payment on the number of new patients accessing the system and on wider access to NHS dentistry.

We are working on further reforms to the 2006 contract, in discussion with the dental profession, to properly reflect the care needed by different patients, and more fairly remunerate practices. We expect to develop options for consultation with the dental profession in advance of a further announcement later this year. Any changes would be phased in from 2025 onwards.

Our Dentistry Recovery Plan sets out a number of additional ways in which we will improve access, especially in the most under-served areas of the country. We will deploy dental vans offering appointments to patients in targeted rural and coastal communities. These dental vans will provide care to patients in need, and patients will be able to have dental examinations and straightforward treatments, such as fillings. We will also launch a new golden hello scheme for dentists who want to move to those areas which persistently struggle to attract dentists into NHS work.

With regards to Brooklands Health Centre in Milton Keynes, I have checked the status of their telephony system with NHS England. According to their records, the

practice is currently using a solution provided by X-on. The supplier has confirmed the practice is on an upgrade list, which is due to be implemented during Q1 of 2024/25. This upgraded system will provide the practice with additional functionality, and hopefully improve the patient journey and accessibility.

I hope this is helpful.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrea Leadsom". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

THE RT HON DAME ANDREA LEADSOM DBE MP