

From the Chief Scientific Officer

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SHA Chief Executives
PCT Chief Executives

25 August 2011

Dear Colleagues

HOME OXYGEN SERVICES (HOS)

Since my last note on 6th December 2010, I am pleased to inform you that we have successfully passed a number of further milestones in relation to HOS. My previous note informed you that the NHS would be taking over responsibility for the re-procurement of HOS, whilst on-going current contract management would remain with the Department of Health until Service Commencement in each region.

With the above in mind, I am pleased to announce that:

- In the first tranche, East of England and North East have appointed British Oxygen Company (BOC) with the new contracts.
- In tranche 2, South East Coast have appointed Dolby Medical Home Respiratory Care Ltd, who will replace Air Liquide (Homecare) Limited.

Whilst other regions have started their re-procurement, at time of writing to you announcements have not formally been made on the award of further contracts.

Assessment and review

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you as part of the new contract the HOS suppliers will align themselves to the Home Oxygen Assessment and Review (HOS-AR) services in the areas that they serve. This obligation comes in to effect at Service Commencement date.

Over the last eighteen months I, along with Dr Robert Winter, my joint National Clinical Director, have been working with our SHA Respiratory Leads to ensure home oxygen is being prescribed effectively for the patients, and economically for the NHS. We have seen significant clinical benefit and cost savings achieved by regions that already have effective HOS-AR services in place – data which the SHA Respiratory Leads will be pleased to share with you in anonymised form.

Future commissioning of HOS

I am aware that the future of HOS commissioning is also high on the agenda, and I would like to assure you we are in dialogue with colleagues in the Department and NHS to identify the most appropriate commissioning model. I will write further on this point in my next update.

Members of my team will continue to be available to help assist you at a local level. Please continue to reach out to them using your current channels or via the mailbox, HomeOxygenService@dh.gsi.gov.uk.

As before, Ministers continue to show an interest in the re-procurement of Home Oxygen and so, again, I would urge you to liaise with your region's Lead PCT Chief Executive to ensure that everyone in your locality is prepared for the task ahead.

I have copied this letter to HOS Regional Leads and SHA Respiratory Leads.

Thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue Hill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping underline that loops back under the name.

PROFESSOR SUE HILL OBE PhD DSc CBiol FSB Hon FRCP
Chief Scientific Officer, Department of Health