

Gateway reference: 18199



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To: SHAs CEs

SHA Directors of Commissioning

SHA Directors of Performance

Cc SHA dental leads

5 October 2012

Dear colleague,

Reform of the NHS Dental Contract in England – next phase of piloting

I am writing to bring to your attention proposals, published today, for the next phase of piloting in the dental contract reform programme.

As you know, the government is committed to improving oral health and increasing access. Introducing a new national NHS dental contract based on registration, capitation and quality is a key part of the programme to deliver on these goals.. The dental contract will be structured to reward dentists on a capitation basis for the continuity and quality of care provided to patients, as opposed to simply reimbursing them for activity.

The government committed to piloting any changes, and we currently have 70 pilots testing aspects of the reform programme in three pilot types. These pilots started in the summer of 2011, and were extended earlier this year to run until March 2013.

Ministers have today announced their proposals for the next phase of the NHS dental contract reform pilots. This phase will take the total number of pilots to

around 90 -95, test in more depth how the elements of any new contract work most effectively together and extend piloting to include some salaried services. The proposals and accompanying reports setting out the early learning from the existing pilots are available at www.dh.gov.uk/dentistry.

In the second phase of piloting, current pilots will be invited to sign up to continuing in the programme from April 1 2013. In addition, we are inviting applications from other dental practices in England with an NHS contract, from which we will select approximately 20-25 pilots. Applications for the next phase will also be open to salaried dental services.

The application process will run from Monday 8 October to 4pm on Thursday 8 November for existing pilots and new practices. For new practices we are using an online form which will be available at <http://dentalpilots.pcc.nhs.uk> from Monday 8 October, as well as supporting information that sets out the principles and eligibility criteria. Existing pilots will have a separate off line process managed by their regional support lead. As before applicants whether existing pilots or new practices will need the support of their commissioner.

Because the new piloting stage starts from 1 April 2013 pilot agreements will be held by held by the NHS Commissioning Board. However, PCTs will be the responsible commissioner during the period pilots are selected and contract variations finalised and there will need to be close working between the programme and colleagues in both PCTs and local area teams over the next six months to support the existing pilots and new applicants. .

We have been very grateful for your and PCT colleagues support through the first stage of piloting. I look forward to your continued support through this next key stage. We will of course continue to keep you informed as the contract reform programme progresses.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Lynam', written in a cursive style.

Elizabeth Lynam

Director of the dental contract reform programme