![Coventry City Council logo] **Coventry** City Council

Briefing note

To: Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5)   **Date: 7 October 2015**

Subject: **Out of Hours Dental Services in Coventry**

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1   Purpose of the Note

1.1   This paper provides a summary of the current service provision for Out of Hours Dental Services, the types of services available and describe the potential future developments for Out of Hours Care.

2   Recommendations

2.1   That the Board note the services available and comment on potential future developments for Out of Hours Care.

3   Information/Background

3.1   **Current Provision**

There is an Out of Hours Dental Service, commissioned by NHS England and provided by a dentist, who operates the service from the Dental Practice on Coundon Road. The service operates Monday – Friday 20.00 – 22.00 hrs, on Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays the dentist triages patients and if they need to be seen, groups patients into a two hour slot to be seen.

For patients in Warwickshire there is a separately commissioned service available.

3.2   **Services Provided Out of Hours**

Whilst recognising that tooth ache is painful for the individual patient it is rarely life threatening. The expectation is that most patients are able to make an appointment to see their own dentist within the standard working week. There are a few exceptions to this and Dentists triage into routine, urgent and emergency categories.

Emergency treatment for a dental problem includes swelling of the face which is increasing and or affecting the airway, haemorrhage, or trauma from, for example, a car accident or other serious event, all of which would require treatment in A&E.

Urgent dental treatment is provided in the primary care setting (in and out of hours) and generally involves relief of pain / pain management, potentially treatment of abscess or infection. There are a limited number of treatments available as described in the Patient Charges Regulations and the GDS contract and regulations. Primarily Out of Hours care is stabilisation of the mouth until routine dental care can be accessed.

3.3 **Accessing Out of Hours Dentists**

The pathway to accessing an Out of Hours Dentist should be through calling 111. This non-life threatening NHS number operates a pathway triage system that identifies if a patient needs advice and guidance, routine treatment, urgent treatment or emergency treatment. Staff operating 111 can then access the Directory of Services (DOS) to identify the nearest location for the type of treatment should the patient require it.

3.4 **Future Developments for Out of Hours Dentistry**

NHS England are committed to reviewing all aspects of Urgent & Emergency Care. A national programme is being led by Sir Bruce Keogh (Medical Director for NHS England). The proposal over the next 3 to 5 years is to develop a new dialogue with the public built on the foundations of 111.

The future proposal is that 111 would have greater access to the IT systems of a wide variety of NHS providers. So having triaged a patient as needing Pharmacy advice, or for a dental appointment, the 111 provider would be able to directly book patients an appointment with a Pharmacist or with their own dentist for the following working day. For dental issues this would provide people with the reassurance that they will get prompt dental treatment the following working day. NHS England believes this model is some 3 to 5 years away from implementation.

More locally the Out of Hours Contract will be renewed during 2016, this provides NHS England with another opportunity to review uptake, access and need before re-procuring the service for the short term until the Urgent and Emergency Care changes are implemented.

Good oral hygiene and regular visits to the Dentist should be promoted and NHS England does work with Public Health colleagues to promote prevention in the first instance.

NHS England has welcome the invite from Health Scrutiny Board as it has supported a review of provision and a greater consideration of options for the future.

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