

Information sheet - Urgent Dental Care

What is meant by urgent dental care?

It is important to note the differences between dental emergencies, urgent and general dental access and to consider services that meet these definitions. There are three categories of need:

- **dental emergencies:** recommended treatment time of up to two hours from the point of calling NHS111), with provision at A&E (and nearest A&E or urgent dental care provider for reimplantation of avulsed teeth). Examples of dental emergencies are: uncontrollable dental haemorrhage following extraction; rapidly increasing swelling around the throat or eye; and trauma confined to the dental arches.
- **urgent dental care:** recommended treatment time of over two hours and up to and including 24 hours, from the point of calling NHS 111, with provision from contracted urgent dental care providers; Urgent dental care includes: severe dental and facial pain not controlled by over-the-counter preparations; dental and soft tissue acute infection/swelling (which is not rapidly increasing around the throat or eye).
- **general dental access** for routine dental conditions.

Use of 111 to seek urgent dental care

People should only ring 111 or access via NHS 111 online to seek urgent dental care if:

- They have a regular dentist but that dentist is closed because it is 'out of hours';
- They do not have a regular dentist and it is 'in hours' or 'out of hours'.

NHS 111 Online: <https://111.nhs.uk/>

What is the benefit for patients?

Patients make one phone call to 111. A summarised illustrative patient journey for people requiring urgent dental treatment can be seen at the end of this communication, which highlights the pathway for patients under 5 and over 5.

The change will result in a more equitable distribution of urgent care provision across Yorkshire and the Humber and will demonstrate that there is a consistent approach across the locality.

What is the role of the Dental Clinical Assessment & Booking Service (CABS)?

The CABS role is to assess the caller's need for urgent dental care, deliver advice and to book appointments for urgent dental treatment.

All providers in this pathway, including CABS, will also be able to signpost patients seeking routine dental care to local NHS general dental practices, and signpost to pharmacies where appropriate.

Where will the Urgent Dental Treatment be provided?

The CABS will book patients requiring urgent treatment into:

- Appointments provided by the Urgent Dental Treatment Providers in locations across Yorkshire and the Humber (we will advise you of these when details have been confirmed);
- Appointments provided by GDPs who are contracted to provide urgent dental care appointments;
- Appointments provided by GDPs who contact the CABS service on an ad hoc basis to offer urgent dental slots.

My practice sometimes has unfilled appointment slots, how can I contact CABS to ask them to fill these with callers to NHS111?

CABS can be contacted on dental.lcd@nhs.net. LCD are happy to work with practices who are interested in providing urgent dental treatment slots to patients with urgent needs, either on a regular basis or an ad hoc basis.

My practice is contracted to provide urgent dental care appointments to people who are not regular patients at the practice, will this continue after 1st April 2019?

Yes, these arrangements will continue, please liaise with CABS at dental.lcd@nhs.net regarding these arrangements.

Should GDPs continue to provide urgent dental care to their own routine, regular patients?

Yes, patients in Yorkshire and the Humber who have their own routine, regular dentist should still contact their dentist to arrange for their urgent dental care and treatment. Where a patient has access to a regular dentist, then they should access in-hours urgent dental care through their regular dentist. Out of hours, they should contact NHS111. The GDS Contract clause 75 describes the GDPs responsibility to provide urgent treatment to their own routine, regular patients during normal surgery hours.

How will access to dentistry improve?

In parallel to the urgent dental care pathway is the dental access strategy. This three-year strategy has led to additional investment in several areas in Yorkshire and the Humber that have been deemed to have the highest need for additional investment in primary care dental services.

It is assumed that the demand on the UDC pathway, including the volume of calls, will reduce over time as more people are able to access urgent dental care through their access to a regular dentist, by way of this investment in primary care.

The Urgent Dental Treatment providers will enable and support patients to access general routine care after receiving urgent care, through signposting to local dental practices via NHS Choices and other local arrangements.

Summarised illustrative patient journey for people requiring urgent dental treatment

