



15 January 2015

Dental prototypes in reality offer limited choice for the future of NHS dentistry, says Denplan

Today, the Department of Health has issued a request for expressions of interest in two “prototypes” for a reformed NHS dental contract in England.

Nearly four years after piloting began in this process, and almost six years since Professor Jimmy Steele published his response to criticism of the ill-fated (but now long endured) 2006 contract, it’s questionable how seriously progress is being made.

Roger Matthews, Chief Dental Officer at Denplan commented: “At a time when the parlous state of current and future NHS resource is under daily scrutiny, dentists may wonder why it has taken nearly nine years of an unpopular and inequitable system to arrive at a point where yet further experiment is announced.

“Steele stated that his review offered a “firm basis” for future policy, but the prototypes are a long way from what he envisaged. The delay has accompanied many changes in the wider NHS, increasing frustration for the dental profession and most importantly, little clarity for patients about what NHS dentistry offers and how to find it.

“The call for expressions of interest offers little choice in reality: one alternative is almost the same as the current system, whilst the other is at best a watered-down version of Steele’s proposals.

“With a capped budget, and aspirations to improve access still further, either option is only a future promise – in *real* monetary terms for intending participants – of lower values and greater challenges.

“With the future of NHS dentistry continually hanging in the balance, we would encourage practices to consider making the transition to private dentistry. At Denplan, we have many years



of experience in supporting NHS dentists in making this transition, we only have to look back to 2006, when we helped hundreds of dentists make the switch during the last major NHS reforms.

Denplan 'Principal only Transitions', give dentists the option to retain NHS patients whilst benefitting from all the support and experience they need to choose the right payment plan for them, the practice and their patients. We will continue to support dentists in helping them gain more control over their practice and in giving them the clinical freedom to care for patients in the way they feel is best."

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Notes to Editors:

About Denplan

Denplan Limited is the UK's leading dental payment plan specialist owned by Simplyhealth; with more than 6,500 member dentists nationwide caring for approximately 1.7 million Denplan registered patients. Established in 1986 by two dentists who pioneered the concept of dental payment plans, Denplan has been at the heart of dental care for over 25 years. Today, Denplan has a wide range of dental plans for adults and children, enabling patients to spread the cost of their private dental care through a fixed monthly fee. Denplan supports regular attendance and preventive care, reducing the need for clinical intervention and helping patients to maintain healthy teeth and gums for life. Patient enquiries telephone: 0800 401 402 Dentist enquiries telephone: 0800 328 3223

www.denplan.co.uk

- Denplan Care: all routine and restorative care + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Denplan Essentials: routine care only + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Plans for Children: routine and other agreed care + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Membership Plan: registered with the dentist + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Denplan Emergency: worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover only
- Denplan Enhance: interest-free patient loans of £250 – £25,000 for dental treatment
- Company Dental Plans: company funded, voluntary and flexible benefit schemes

Denplan also provides a range of professional services for its member dentists and their practice teams, including the Denplan Quality Programme, Denplan Excel Accreditation Programme and Denplan Training. Plus regulatory advice, business and marketing consultancy services and networking opportunities.

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About Simplyhealth

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- Simplyhealth is a trading name of Simplyhealth Access, which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and Prudential Regulation Authority
- Simplyhealth as it stands today, now covers nearly four million people with health plans (more than any other company) and helps 20,000 companies with their employees' health
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For further information: newsroom.simplyhealth.co.uk