

Chief Dental Officer England
NHS England
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6 September 2016

Dear Colleague

RE: Avoidance of Doubt - Application of Fluoride Varnish by Dental Nurses

Please find below details of this *avoidance of doubt* notification. It is with regard to the application of Fluoride Varnish (FV) by Dental Nurses (DN) in either a clinical setting (treatment service premises) or in a community setting (for example in a children's centre or nursery):

Clinical Practice Setting

- In line with the General Dental Council (GDC) scope of practice¹ and Primary Care Commissioning guidelines² - DNs who have received appropriate training and who are competent to carry out the procedure may apply a licensed FV, to a named patient, at the direction of the prescribing dentist under Patient Specific Directions (PSD)³.
- DNs applying FV must record in the patient notes that FV has been applied and that post-operative instructions were given. Any relevant aberrations from the normal protocol for applying the FV should be recorded. The entry should be dated and signed.

Community Based Settings

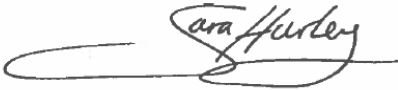
- It is a GDC requirement that community based programmes have clear written protocols and are overseen by a consultant or registered specialist in dental public health¹.
- When prescribed within the programme protocol a suitably trained and competent DN may apply FV to patients³ who have been named by the community programme's supervising practitioner(s)⁴.
- It is recommended that individual patient details and consent are recorded by the supervising practitioner in the Programme's Patient Specific Directions.
- A Patient Group Direction (PGD) is **not** required for application of FV by dental therapists, dental hygienists or suitably trained and accredited DNs working in a

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1. GDC Scope of Practice - General Dental Council, London, Effective Sep 2013
[http://gdc-uk.org/Dentalprofessionals/Standards/Documents/Scope_of_Practice_September_2013_\(3\).pdf](http://gdc-uk.org/Dentalprofessionals/Standards/Documents/Scope_of_Practice_September_2013_(3).pdf)
 2. NHS Primary Care Commissioning. The use of fluoride varnish by dental nurses to control caries July 2009 <http://www.pcc-cic.org.uk/article/guidance-use-fluoride-varnish-dental-nurses-control-caries>
 3. Delivering Better Oral Health: an evidence based toolkit for prevention; third edition 2014
 4. UKMI - Patient Group Directions in dental practice, August 2013
http://www.medicinesresources.nhs.uk/upload/documents/Evidence/Medicines%20Q%20&%20A/NW_QA_346_2_PGDS_in_dental_practice.doc

community setting delivering to a programme protocol overseen by a consultant or registered specialist in dental public health.

In all cases the prescribing dental practitioner remains responsible for the supply of the licensed FV and must be assured that the DN applying the FV has received appropriate training and is accredited to apply FV.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sara Hurley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Sara Hurley
Chief Dental Officer England BDS (UBrist) MFGDP(UK) MSc (UCL) MA (KCL)

NHS England Gateway Ref No: 05723