

## **BAOS Position Statement on Oral Surgery Commissioning**

The British Association of Oral Surgeons is concerned that NHS England are not following best practice in commissioning oral surgery services. The *Commissioning Guide for Oral Surgery and Oral Medicine* was published two years ago after a thorough process of consultation with stakeholders and presents an agreed view of what high quality oral surgery services look like. Sadly, the recommendations made in the Guide are being ignored by Area Teams and contracts are being issued that lack rigorous quality assurance, performance metrics or oversight of non-specialists carrying out level 2 work. We remain concerned that low tariff values of recently awarded contracts such as £120 in Sheffield with no additional fee for sedation. This will reduce access to sedation for anxious patients and the tariff should be at a level which reflects the time, resources and skills necessary to treat patients with compassion and kindness.

Data released by NHS England under Freedom of Information legislation shows that recently awarded contracts do not require the collection of Patient Reported Outcome or Experience measures, lacked a consultant-led triage system and had no requirement for formal appraisal and peer review of providers.

Whilst these examples are disappointing, there are examples of best practice such as in Derbyshire where commissioners have taken considerable trouble to ensure providers meet the standards set in the Guide. The procurement process required an extensive portfolio even for all providers whether on the specialist list or not and formal appraisal and peer review of Tier 2 providers is specified. PROMs and PREMs must be collected by providers in accordance with best practice and arrangements have been made for access to Cone Beam CT imaging. The tariff for these contracts was just under the BAOS recommended minimum of £65 per UDA<sup>1</sup> (equating to £205 per course of treatment).

We urge NHS England to adopt this approach nationally and ensure that oral surgery services are of consistently high quality rather than a postcode lottery.

1. Hierons, RJ, Gerrard, G, Jones, R. An investigation into the variability of primary care oral surgery contracts and tariffs in England and Wales (2014/2015). *Br Dent J* 2017; **222**: 870-877.