

To all referring General Dental Practitioners

January 2018 Update

Dear Colleague

**Re: Oral Surgery Referrals**

[www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/glosmaxfax](http://www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/glosmaxfax)

We are writing to both update and feedback to you on various issues that affect both Primary Dental Care and the Oral and Maxillofacial Department at Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

**Referrals**

[www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/glosmaxfax/referrals](http://www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/glosmaxfax/referrals)

The OMFS Department is struggling to cope with the large volume of referrals from Primary Dental Care. A recent audit demonstrated that up to 40% of referrals were inadequate (poor quality) or inappropriate (not requiring secondary care OMFS input) and were rejected as a consequence.

We would respectfully ask you to ensure referrals are of the quality our patients would expect from a healthcare professional. Full details of how and where to refer including referral proforma are available on our website.

**From the publication of this letter we will require that all referrals include:**

- Reason for referral and reason why treatment cannot be completed in dental practice
- Confirmation that NICE / departmental guidelines have been followed
- Full medical, drug and allergy history
- Good quality and appropriate radiographs (see below)

**New Referral Forms are now live on our website**

We are hoping that we can move to eReferrals and digital radiographs in the future once suitable IT solutions and data protection are in place.

**Cirencester Hospital Treatment Centre**

We now provide a 5-day service at Cirencester Hospital. This includes outpatient consultations, oral surgery under local anaesthetic / IV sedation / day case general anaesthetic and skin cancer surgery under local anaesthetic. The facilities are modern and car parking is free and it is highly unlikely that any operation will be cancelled due to bed shortages.

To this end we would be grateful if you could advise patients when you refer that the consultation and treatment may well take place at Cirencester as the default location. Whilst we retain operating capacity at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, this will be reserved for children and the medically compromised. It is only through using the excellent facilities that we have at Cirencester that we can aim to treat your patients in an effective and timely manner. Your cooperation is very much appreciated.

Chair: Peter Lachecki  
Chief Executive: Deborah Lee  
[www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk)

## TMJ

[www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/glosmaxfax/TMJ](http://www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/glosmaxfax/TMJ)

Following the publication of the RCS Eng FDS TMJ document (available to download from our website) it is now apparent that the majority of temporo-mandibular problems can and should be managed in the primary care environment (dental & medical).

As a result, we will now only accept TMJ referrals when there are the following:

- Intractable TMJ pain or persistent closed lock (<20mm trismus) that has not responded in 3 months to physio / jaw exercise, analgesia and a BRA / splint if indicated by the above guidance
- Diagnostic doubt

Please note we will not accept referrals for clicking joints.

## Anxiety management / General Anaesthesia

Please note that, in accordance with multiple national guidelines / regulations, the default position for anxious patients requiring uncomplicated oral surgery will be the provision of IV sedation. The routine provision of GA for nervous patients is an out-dated practice. There are safer and more efficient ways of dealing with dental anxiety.

Anxious or 'phobic' adults & children requiring 'simple' non-third molar exodontia should be referred to a primary care provider of conscious sedation, of which there are a number in the County. Children may also be referred to Gloucestershire Care Services dental service at "Southgate Moorings, The Docks, Gloucester".

Unfortunately, too many practitioners are advising patients that they can be referred to us to be 'knocked out' or given a GA. Whilst a full discussion of the options is a GDC requirement, the ultimate decision is ours. We would therefore request that GA not be offered and that the provision of IV sedation be discussed in the first instance.

## Radiographs

[www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/glosmaxfax/xrays](http://www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/glosmaxfax/xrays)

Full guidance on how to send images with referrals is detailed on our website. Referrals with poor quality radiographs will be rejected. Images on CD **must** be sent in accordance with these guidelines (data protection law). We cannot accept images by email at the current time for the same reasons.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your help implementing the improvements detailed above. If we fully utilise Cirencester Hospital and reduce inappropriate referrals, we feel that we will be in a position to offer timely assessment and treatment to your patients who need the services of an Oral & Maxillofacial Department.

Yours sincerely

Gloucestershire Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Consultants

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