

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO
THE GENERAL DENTAL SERVICES (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS
(NORTHERN IRELAND) 2009

[SR 2009 No. 263]

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Explanatory Memorandum has been prepared by the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety to accompany the Statutory Rule (details above) which is laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- 1.2. The Statutory Rule is made under Article 61 (1), (2), (2AA), 106 and 107 (6) of the Health and Personal Social Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1972 and is subject to the negative resolution procedure.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. These Regulations further amend the Health and Personal Social Services General Dental Services Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1993, which regulate the terms on which general dental services are provided under the Health and Personal Social Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1972.
- 2.2. The reference to "referral dental officer" has been amended to reflect that from 1 August 2009 they are employees of the Regional Health and Social Care Board.
- 2.3. The period that a patient is registered with a general dental practitioner has been increased from 15 to 24 months.

3. Background

- 3.1. The amendment to the reference to "referral dental officer" has been changed due to them moving from the Department to the Regional Health and Social Care Board as a result of the Review of Public Administration.
- 3.2. These regulations also increase the period that patients can be registered with a dentist, from 15 to 24 months, in order to help address a number of complaints we have received from people who unwittingly reached the end of their registration period and found themselves being deregistered. It will also bring us more into line with the NICE recall guidelines which recommend a check up every 9 to 24 months for most patients.

4. Consultation

- 4.1. The British Dental Association have been consulted on the amending regulations and had no comment to make.

5. Equality Impact

- 5.1. An assessment was not considered necessary as the Regulations are beneficial to all groups of society in Northern Ireland.

6. Regulatory Impact

- 6.1. An assessment was not considered necessary as there are no adverse impacts on business, charities, social enterprise or voluntary bodies.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. Increasing the period that a patient is registered with a dentist will cost an additional £550k per year. This will be accommodated within the existing General Dental services budget. The Department of Finance and Personnel have agreed to join us in the signing of these Regulations.

8. Section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

- 8.1. The proposed legislation is considered compliant with Section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

9. EU Implications

- 9.1. Not Applicable.

10. Parity or Replicatory Measure

- 10.1. These Regulations are specific to Northern Ireland.

11. Additional Information

- 11.1. Not Applicable.