



9<sup>th</sup> December 2009

LINK Governance Group  
Oldham Local Involvement Network  
Ground Floor, Unit17  
Salmon Fields Business Village  
Salmon Fields  
Royton  
Oldham  
OL2 6HT

Dear Ms L Chidgey,

**Re: Accessibility of Dental Practices in Oldham**

Thank you for sending me a copy of your report dated the 5<sup>th</sup> August 2009, which I welcome. I found it both interesting and informative.

I note from your conclusions that 'There was relatively low number of responses received proportionate to the number of surveys distributed' and it appears that there is a more general problem of a lack of awareness on how to access the available dental services in the area.

Brian Durgan has reported on the useful meeting of the group on the 20<sup>th</sup> November that I understand Simon Tiller also attended. Following discussions with Brian and Martin Weavers I am pleased to respond formally on behalf of the PCT to your recommendations as follows:

- NHS Oldham will encourage practices to make structural changes to their premises to improve access, where this is reasonable, and will commission new dental services with due consideration to Disability Access and requiring full DDA compliance for 'new builds'.
- Information will be available on the dental list that shows DDA compliant practices.
- The Dental Help line service will be trained to match practices accepting patients to individual patient's needs as far as possible.
- Homeless people in Oldham can access treatment by phoning the in-hours urgent dental care service on 0161 621 3613
- There is a home visiting service available in Oldham that can be accessed on 0161 621 3612.

- As previously noted in Oldham, all new Health Centres and the ICC are fully DDA compliant and the Oldham Community Health Care specialist special needs dental unit has now moved to the ICC. NHS Oldham will continue to monitor the contacting practices understanding of the DDA, and contractual compliance with the Stainton's recommendations, as part of the rolling process of practice clinical governance visits.

In addition, NHS Oldham will be writing to all the contracted practices to remind them of the availability of referral for special needs to Simon Tiller's service, and their responsibility to advise patients to contact the NHS Oldham help line if the practice is unable to provide treatment. I understand that Brian will also be speaking to a practice that had apparently invested heavily on good physical facilities, but where staff training had apparently fallen down.

I hope that these measures meet the group's expectations and look forward to working closely with Oldham Link in the future.

Yours faithfully,



**Shauna Dixon**  
**Executive Director of Clinical Leadership**