



Introduction to prototypes:

The care pathway approach

The prototypes follow a preventive care pathway approach aimed at providing high quality clinical care based on:

- a more holistic approach to planning care for patients
- promoting a long term preventive approach based on individual need and risk
- focusing on outcomes and effectiveness
- encouraging patients to take responsibility for protecting and maintaining their own oral health with support from the practice dental team

Elements of the care pathway

- **Oral health assessment (OHA) , identifying risk and Red Amber Green (RAG) status**

The pathway starts with a standardised assessment of a patient's oral health. Information including any patient factors that could contribute to current or future problems is collected and used to assign risk in four clinical areas: dental caries (tooth decay)

- periodontal disease (gum disease)
- tooth surface loss (worn down teeth)
- conditions affecting the soft tissues of the mouth, for example oral cancer

From this assessment each patient is given an individual RAG status which along with the dentist's clinical judgement is used to support discussion with the patient about prevention and treatment and informs the recall interval (i.e. date of oral health review) and any interim preventive appointments (if needed) for each patient.

- **Treatment and stabilisation**

Any necessary treatment identified at the OHA is provided. However, in some cases it may be appropriate to stabilise the patient's oral health before undertaking this treatment.

Stabilisation can be supported by the preventive interim care appointment(s) which may be provided by the wider clinical team

- **Self-care plan**

Some risk factors (e.g. diet, smoking, daily oral self care) that influence oral health can be modified if patients change their behaviour. The self-care plan provides patient specific information about risk using the red/amber/green (RAG) traffic light system along with appropriate preventive advice and is a useful resource to help communicate and raise awareness with the patient of their responsibility for self-care.

- **Oral health review (OHR)**

The OHR is an opportunity to refresh and update the original OHA. The planned interval for this is set at the end of the OHA and is based on the risk status (RAG) and the clinicians clinical judgement. The OHR when it takes place re-starts the clinical pathway cycle and resets the start of the capitation period.

- **Preventive actions and advice**

Throughout the pathway, preventive advice is given and preventive action may be taken based on the guidance for high and low risk patients set out in “Delivering Better Oral Health”. Some patients may benefit from additional preventive support in the period between OHA and OHR and this can be provided by interim care appointments.