

Dental merger raises competition concerns in parts of Yorkshire and Derbyshire

Press release

An initial investigation by the CMA into an acquisition of dental practices has found competition concerns in parts of Doncaster, Yorkshire and Alfreton, Derbyshire.



Image credit: CMA

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) carried out a Phase 1 investigation into the completed purchase of Dental Partners Group Limited (Dental Partners) by Riviera Bidco Limited (Riviera) – owner of existing dental practice operator Rodericks Dental Limited (Rodericks).

The investigation looked at the potential impact of the merger in the areas where both businesses currently offer NHS or private dental treatments. While sufficient competition will remain after the merger in most cases, the CMA found that the merger would raise competition concerns in the provision of general NHS dental treatments, such as check-ups and fillings, in areas within Doncaster and Alfreton.

The removal of Dental Partners as an independent competitor could lead to reduced choice for patients in these two areas, where the availability of NHS dental appointments is already limited.

Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, the businesses accepted that the merger would raise concerns in these 2 areas and asked the CMA to move straight to a discussion of potential remedies to address these concerns.

Riviera now has 5 working days to formally offer proposals to the CMA to address the competition concerns identified. The CMA would then have a further 5 working days to consider whether to accept these in principle

instead of referring the case to a Phase 2 investigation.

Sorcha O'Carroll, CMA Senior Director of Mergers, said:

Residents in parts of Doncaster and Alfreton rely on accessing quality NHS dental treatment when it is needed – we're looking at this deal to ensure this can continue.

It's now for the businesses involved to address our concerns, to prevent a loss of competition in these areas and resolve any need for further investigation.

For more information please see the [Riviera Bidco Limited / Dental Partners Group Limited case page](#).

1. More information on the CMA's fast track procedure can be found in section 7 of Mergers: [Guidance on the CMA's jurisdiction and procedure](#).
2. The CMA is, in most cases, required to issue a Phase 1 decision within 40 working days. Merging parties are required to formally offer proposed remedies (undertakings in lieu (UILs)) within 5 working days after receiving the CMA's Phase 1 decision and the CMA then decides, within 10 working days after the Phase 1 decision, whether to provisionally accept the UILs offered. The CMA then has 50 working days (subject to an extension of up to 40 working days) to consider whether to finally accept these remedies.
3. The CMA's concerns relate to the provision of NHS treatment by the parties within parts of Doncaster, Yorkshire and Alfreton, Derbyshire. The cost of treatments through these appointments is strictly regulated by the NHS – so patients will pay the same if they are able to get treatment.
4. All enquiries from journalists should be directed to the CMA press office by email on press@cma.gov.uk or by phone on 020 3738 6460.
5. All enquiries from the general public should be directed to the CMA's General Enquiries team on general.enquiries@cma.gov.uk or 020 3738 6000.

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