

Derby City Dental Access Mini Report October 2021

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Introduction

This report is a snapshot of what the access to new NHS dental provision is in Derby City. The report will be shared with NHSE and NHSI to help them plan improvements to dental provision in the City. The report will be shared with the Derby City Health and Wellbeing board for awareness as well as Joined Up Care Derbyshire for information purposes. The report will also be published with Healthwatch England and on our website for public perusal.

Background

Healthwatch Derby are consistently contacted about how to access NHS dental provision in the City. Up until March 2020 Healthwatch Derby was sent a monthly Dental Access survey by NHS England and NHS Improvement. This provided information on which Dental services in the City were taking on NHS patients. In December of 2018 Healthwatch Derby published Smilewatch (See Appendix 2) which was partly based upon the information provided in the Dental Access Survey's for July through to end of September 2018 . The report found that whilst the service was good it was under pressure due to the lack of available NHS Dental provision across the City, on average only a third of the Cities dentists were taking on NHS patients.

Now

Since March 2020 due to the Covid 19 pandemic the health and social care system has been under extreme pressure. Services have had to change how they do things and how they prioritise workloads and how they keep themselves and the patients they see safe. Dentists were closed during the first lockdown and this along with the updated hygiene matters has led to a backlog for many practices nationally. NHS provision is more prone to this backlog compared to private practice and according to the BDA "because the queue for NHS treatment is longer"
<https://bda.org/advice/Coronavirus/Pages/patients.aspx> (accessed 28/10/2021).

In October 2021 Healthwatch Derby was made aware that patients were unable to find an NHS dentist which was taking new NHS patients on in the City. One patient who had made a complaint earlier in the year had received a response from NHS England Midlands complaints team. Within the response was a list of 15 dentists within a 2-mile distance of the patients post code who have an NHS contract.

After listening to the individuals claims that they still could not get an NHS dentist Healthwatch Derby decided to call the 15 Dentists on the list provided this is almost half of the NHS dental provision in Derby City.

The Findings

The Dental practices were called between the dates of 19/20 October 2021. Of the 15 listed only 14 answered the phone.

Cunnington & Associates

Central Dental Practice

Kedleston Dental Care

Derby House Dental Practice

Dove Dental 33-35 Normanton Road, Derby,

Mackworth Dental Practice

Bridge Dental and Implant Clinic

Trinity Terrace Dental Practice

Normanton Road Family Dental Centre

Allestree Dental Practice

Cavendish dental Practice

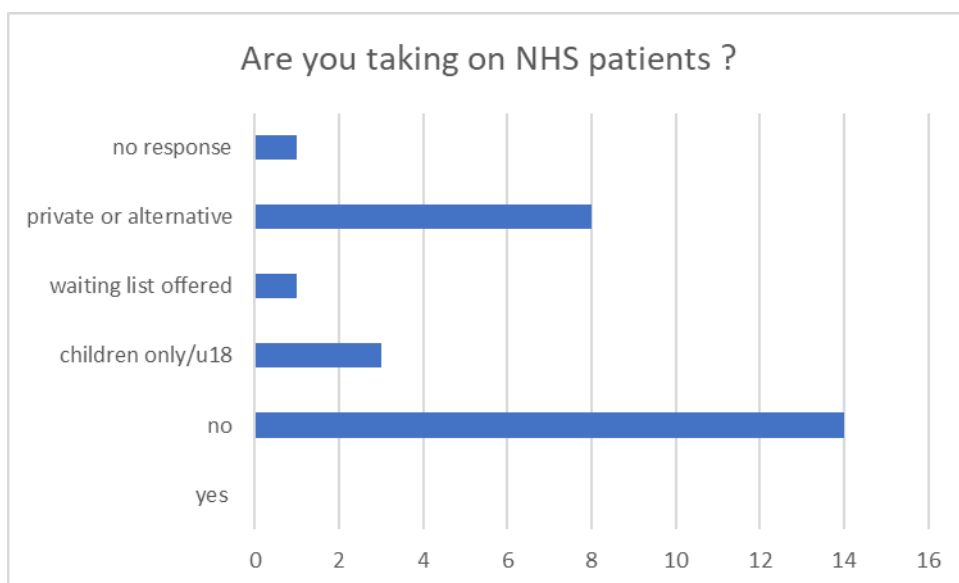
Derwent Valley Dental

Littleover Dental Practice

MyDentist, Harrington Street

Revive Dental Practice

The results are as follows:



None of the 14 dentists that answered the phone were taking on new NHS patients over the age of 18.

Only 3 of those contacted said they were taking on under 18's only.

Only 1 offered a waiting list, but with no guarantees of timescales.

8 of the practices (53% of those asked) offered private only or what they called an alternative scheme. Which ranged from between £30 and £40 as a check-up with additional charges for treatment. One mentioned £60 for Emergency treatment with subsequent costs for other treatment. One of them shared what schemes they had available and the costs (Appendix 3)

The report highlights that access to NHS dental provision in Derby City seems to be falling behind the position it was in at the end of 2018. Past research and reports have identified tooth decay is largely preventable and the most prevalent disease of childhood. Derby City already has a higher level of tooth decay in the under 5's when measured against the national average. The deprived areas of the city had higher levels of dental disease (decay). Other reports have stated that establishing early good oral health habits should save public resources in the long term by minimising treatment need and preventing children from suffering needless pain. In November 2016 Healthwatch England published the Access to NHS Dental Services report. It pointed out some of the barriers for people accessing dental services, whilst a third of those that took part in the research said they were nervous about seeing a dentist, Cost of treatment emerged as a specific issue with 36% of those asked. With the deprived areas of the City already showing higher levels of tooth decay the findings are showing that instead of removing barriers to good oral health the lack of new NHS provision and with more practices seemingly pushing to a more privatised or alternative scheme! Further barriers could be emerging.

Conclusions

- The provision for new NHS patients in Derby City are not sufficient.
- Private or alternative treatments at a higher rate to that of the NHS are being offered more widely than in 2018.
- Further research into the effects and associated costs of poor oral health in the city needs to be undertaken
- Further research into whether the barriers to accessing a dentist are becoming higher if NHS provision is not being offered.

Appendix 1 the Calls

Call to Littleover Dental Practice, Littleover Lane. Not taking on new NHS adults only children.

Call to Harrington Street Dental Practice. Not taking on new NHS patients. You can be seen if you are willing to pay £40.00 for a check-up – part of a scheme they are offering for new patients. Subsequent payments needed for any other treatment.

Call to Revive Dental Centre, Chaddesden. Not taking on new NHS patient. Offering a scheme for new patients to pay £30.00 for check-up and 2 X rays. Subsequent payments needed for any other treatment.

Call to Cunnington and Associates, Ashbourne Road. Not taking on new NHS patients. Can be put on a waiting list but no idea when you will be seen.

Call made to Central Dental now called Remarkable Smiles. Not taking on new NHS patients. New people will be private and offered various choices of membership.

Call to Bridge Dental – private only.

Call to Trinity House – not taking on new NHS patients. New people are offered an appointment for £40.00 and emergency £60.00. Subsequent payments for further treatments.

Call to Derby House – not taking new NHS patients. Scheme called alternative NHS – exam and 2 x rays will cost £33.00. Subsequent payments for further treatments.

Call to Mackworth Dental Practice – not taking on new NHS patients. No waiting lists.

Call to Normanton Road Dental. Not taking on new NHS patients. No waiting list but possibility might take on new patients at the end of November.

Call to Kedleston Dental Practice. Not taking on new NHS patients. Only private.

Call to Allestree Dental – not taking on new patients. No waiting lists. Trying to recruit another dentist.

Call to Cavendish Dental. Only taking on new NHS patients under the age of 18.

Call to Dove Dental. Only taking on new NHS patients under the age of 18. All other private.

Appendix 2



Smilewatch Report
final.pdf

Appendix 3 example of a membership plan

At the moment we are unable to take on any NHS patients, however I am happy to inform you that we are now in a position to start private registrations again.

We have fantastic plans which our private patients join, helping to spread the costs associated with regular visits, as well as making a yearly saving.

Option 1 - Pay as you go

Examination : £45.00

Hygiene Therapy and Airflow (Extensive Stain Removal Treatment) : £113.00

Option 2 - Junior Plan

Price - £9.00 per month

Includes;

- . x2 Examinations a year + a scale and polish with the dentist if needed
- . Free toothbrush
- . £75 per filling for first and £25 for others
- .x1 Emergency Appointment

Option – Pay monthly memberships

Core Plan

Price - £7.00 per month for 12 months

Includes;

- . 2 Examinations a year
- . 5% off treatment excluding orthodontic, implant and facial rejuvenation treatment.
- . 5% off whitening treatment (after 6 months if clinically fit)
- . Access to our online booking portal
- . No additional PPE charges.

Advanced Plan

Price - £16.50 per month for 12 months

Includes;

- . 2 Examinations a year
- . 2 Hygiene appointments a year

- . 15% off treatment (excluding orthodontic, implant and facial rejuvenation treatment)
- . 15% discount with Boutique Whitening (after 6 months if clinically fit)
- . 6 Months access to Loyalty Card offering discounts with local businesses
- . Access to our online booking portal
- . Early morning and late-night appointments
- . Free toothbrush every 6 months
- . No additional PPE charges.

Ultimate Plan

Price - £19.50 per month for 24 months

Includes;

- . 2 Examinations a year
- . 2 Hygiene appointments a year
- . 15% off treatment excluding orthodontic, implant.
- . 50% off whitening treatment and a free yearly top up syringe
- . 5% off facial rejuvenation treatment
- . Full access to Loyalty Card offering discounts with local businesses.
- . Early morning and late-night appointments
- . Yearly General health screening
- . Access to our loyalty club
- . Free toothbrush every 6 months
- . No additional PPE charges.

Membership Terms and Conditions:

The Patient may terminate this agreement at any time by writing to their bank or building society to cancel their Direct Debit and providing one month's notice to [REDACTED] in writing. Note a minimum term of 12 month applies (except for Ultimate Members, where 24 months apply) Failure to fulfil this minimum term will result in full charges of any treatments already received in addition to any monthly membership fee's remaining. Including but not exclusive to discounts used and PPE fees.

Any debt incurred due to early cancellation must be paid immediately. Failure to do so will result in your details being passed to a debt management company, this may incur additional fees and may harm your credit eligibility.

Failure to pay the Direct Debit may result in [REDACTED] terminating this agreement by giving the Patient one month's notice in writing.

Any general changes to your plan may be done annually by [REDACTED] providing the Patient with one month's notice in writing.

[REDACTED] works hard to ensure that patients have their next visit booked. However, the ultimate responsibility lies with the patient to make sure that they book their appointments in advance and within their membership entitlement.

The patient must notify [REDACTED] of any changes to personal details, i.e name, address, telephone number, email address as well as medical conditions.

Failure to attend an examination and/or hygiene therapy appointment will incur in the appointment being classed as your entitled appointment. Your next appointment will be scheduled as set out within your recall.

Failure to cancel an examination and/or hygiene therapy appointment with 48 hours' notice will incur in the appointment being classed as your entitled appointment. Your next appointment will be scheduled as set out within your recall.

If you wish to rebook an appointment you have either failed to attend or not given sufficient notice to cancel will be charged at £2.00 per minute and will be payable at the time of booking the appointment. (example: A filling appointment is 30 minutes, this would equal to a £60 deposit

Any private appointments booked outside of your membership entitlement will require a deposit payment. The equivalent to £2.00 per minute of the booking. Failure to attend or to give sufficient notice to cancel this booking will result in this deposit payment being retained by the practice.

Hygiene Therapy Appointments are part of a maintenance plan and do not treat active periodontal disease.

PPE is not charge to Advanced and Ultimate members (except for orthodontic and implant appointments).

PPE is not charged to Solo and Cheeky members when attending for their Hygiene Therapy Appointments. Private appointments outside of the patient's membership entitlement will incur PPE costs.

PPE is not charged to Core members when attending for their Examinations. Private appointments outside of the patient's membership entitlement will incur PPE costs.

Whitening Discounts can only be taken advantage of once by the patient and are not transferable to another patient.

Whitening can only be carried out to patients who have been deemed clinically fit by their own Clinician.

Whitening discount to Core and Advanced patients will only be offered after they have been on their plan for 6 months or more.

Medical Health Screening results may be shared with your GP if necessary, but this will be discussed with you in advance.

Entitlements not used in any given period will not be carried forward.

This agreement is not transferable from the Patient to any other Patients.

Discounts only apply to treatments carried out by clinicians/therapists at [REDACTED] and are not available on referrals.

The Patient is unable to transfer back to NHS care with [REDACTED] once they have committed to join our private member's plan.

The patient agrees that any service not stipulated in the agreement will incur an additional charge.

The Direct Debit will be taken on the date of joining and this same date every month thereafter.

Response to Healthwatch Derby Mini Dental access report.

Thank you for your email of 29 October and the enclosed Mini Dental Access report which outlines concerns about the current access to NHS dental services in Derby City.

The report provides a useful snapshot of the current situation, which we know remains very challenging. We appreciate the research that you have carried out in this instance along with our continuing dialogue on these matters. We have shared the report with the Local Dental Network Chair for Derbyshire, so that they are aware of the issues raised.

It is important that people with specific complaints about NHS dentistry are directed to the Customer Contact Centre (NHS England » Contact us) to allow us to investigate complaints in detail and take contractual action should a provider not be adhering to their commitments as NHS contractors.

It is unfortunate that a complaint response directed a patient to dental practices which HealthWatch went on to find were not currently seeing NHS patients for routine care. It is a condition of a practice's income that they prioritise all patients, who are known and unknown to the practice, who require urgent dental care if contacted directly or via 111 services.

However, it may currently be difficult to find a dentist who is taking on new NHS patients for routine care/check-ups.

Dental teams continue to face challenges due to the specific infection prevention and control measures essential to ensure the safety of patients and staff. Requirements for social distancing as well as ventilation and cleaning between patients remain in place.

Dentists are continuing to prioritise patients with the highest need or priority, such as those needing urgent care, children, and those most at risk of oral disease. Although the situation is improving there remains a significant backlog of people who will not have seen a dentist recently.

We do understand the frustration of patients who are facing longer waits for routine care, especially as they can now see other areas of society becoming less restricted. Our focus remains to support dentists and their teams to see as many patients as safely possible.

Infection prevention and control means a return to normal practice is not yet possible, but nationally the contractual threshold of activity has been increased, and practices are now required to manage a minimum of 65 percent of pre Covid-19 dental activity, and a minimum of 85 percent of pre Covid-19 orthodontic activity. This will provide access for more patients

whilst ensuring that the practices are supported financially to allow them to stay open and continue providing care.

We expect these measures to be in place until the end of December 2021 when they will be reassessed.

We have commissioned additional weekend sessions in Derbyshire which will also help to improve access and have provided some assistance for practitioners with ventilation and other safety measures to increase the number of patients that providers can safely see in a day.

You may find the attached note useful when responding to the members of the public asking about access to NHS dental care.

Kind regards,

NHS England and NHS Improvement for the Midlands

NOTE

Access to a dentist

We often receive enquiries asking how people can register with a dentist.

It is not necessary to register with a dentist. Unlike GPs, you do not have to be on a dentist's list and can move to dentists that are more convenient or who have been recommended.

There is no formal registration although a practice may choose to accept you on to a list to receive regular care.

However, not all dentists choose to be NHS dentists. Some only take private patients, some undertake NHS work, or a mixture of both NHS and private. It may be difficult to find a dentist who is taking on new NHS patients for routine care

For many dental practices NHS appointments might be booked for some weeks in the future, and people may be told the surgery is full and not accepting new patients. Practices should, however, be prioritising patients with an urgent need regardless of whether or not they are a regular patient –provided they have the capacity to see them.

This will not necessarily be the case for routine check-ups and many practices still have insufficient capacity to be able to see their regular patients as routinely as they would have before the pandemic. Being seen and treated by a practice for an urgent need does not necessarily guarantee that the practice will be able to take that patient on and see them on

an ongoing basis.

Patients should not be pressured into private care where they wish to have treatment on the NHS and it should not be the case that someone is unable to get an urgent NHS appointment where a practice has capacity to offer routine private check-ups.

Find a dentist - NHS (www.nhs.uk) provides a list of local dentists, although not all may currently be taking on new patients. If you have an urgent dental need then you should contact NHS111 who will provide advice and information on services to contact