

Healthwatch York Reports: Dentistry in York: Gaps in Provision

Summary

1. This report is for information, sharing a report from Healthwatch York looking at people's experiences of dentistry in the city.

Background

2. Healthwatch York provides a signposting, information and advice service, helping people navigate health and care. A significant proportion of this work currently is around access to NHS dentistry. As a result we previously published a report about how many NHS dentists were taking on patients in York. This report now looks at people's experiences of dentistry in the city, following a public survey. The survey was very similar to one we conducted in 2018, with the addition of one question about the wider impacts of dental pain.

Main/Key Issues to be considered

3. Our previous work looking at dentistry showed things were very challenging. However, it is clear the position has worsened.
4. Since the report has been published, the situation has deteriorated further, with both York Dental and Perfect Smile contacting patients to let them know they will no longer be seen as NHS patients. This affects around 10,000 patients in York. Healthwatch York has received a high volume of calls and emails from people affected by this change.

Consultation

5. This report provides the results of a survey, alongside further issues reported to Healthwatch staff at engagement activities.

Options

6. Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to note the report, and the 4 areas for action we have identified on pages 57-58 of our report. Namely:
 - a. Rapid and radical reform of the way dentistry is commissioned and provided
 - b. Tackling the twin crises of access and affordability, with particular emphasis on addressing health inequalities
 - c. Improving the clarity of information about NHS dentistry
 - d. Consideration of the role of dentistry to support people's overall health, harnessing opportunities such as the integration of health and care through Integrated Care Systems arrangements, to link oral health to other key issues such as weight management, smoking cessation, cancer awareness and detection, and mental wellbeing.

Strategic/Operational Plans

7. The workplan for 2021/22 has been developed to support Healthwatch York continue to explore issues affecting people when accessing or trying to access health and care services in York, and to connect to key initiatives driving change forward. Problems with accessing NHS dentistry remain one of the key challenges people talk to us about.
8. All partners have identified the need to understand the barriers to accessing care and removing them as essential to the transformation of local health and care through the work of the ICS at place.
9. This report has already been considered by the Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Scrutiny Committee at their January meeting. They have written to the Secretary of State to flag their concerns.

Implications

10. There are no specialist implications from this report.

- **Financial**

There are no financial implications in this report.

- **Human Resources (HR)**

There are no HR implications in this report.

- **Equalities**

There are no equalities implications in this report.

- **Legal**

There are no legal implications in this report.

- **Crime and Disorder**

There are no crime and disorder implications in this report.

- **Information Technology (IT)**

There are no IT implications in this report.

- **Property**

There are no property implications in this report.

- **Other**

There are no other implications in this report.

Risk Management

11. There are no risks associated with this report.

Recommendations

12. The Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to:

- i. Receive Healthwatch York's report, Dentistry in York:
Gaps in provision

Reason: To keep up to date with the work of Healthwatch York and consider what can be done to improve access to dentistry in the city.

Contact Details

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Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Report Approved

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Wards Affected: All

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Annexes

Annex A – Dentistry in York: Gaps in Provision

[Dentistry in York - Gaps in Provision - January 2022.docx \(healthwatchyork.co.uk\)](http://healthwatchyork.co.uk)