

## **Healthwatch York Report NHS Dentistry: A Service in Decay?**

### **Summary**

1. This report is for information, sharing a report from Healthwatch York about the availability of NHS Dentistry in our city.

### **Background**

2. Healthwatch York provides information and advice about health and care services, and signposts people to support. In carrying out this work during the pandemic, we have observed a rise in the number of people seeking an NHS dentist, and being unable to access treatment.
3. We felt it was important to fully understand what was available in York, to support our signposting function, and have shared this report to encourage further discussion of these challenges.

### **Main/Key Issues to be considered**

4. Our survey found there were no dentists currently accepting adult NHS patients. One dentist would take children on as NHS patients if the parents signed up to a private dental plan.
5. Only one dentist in York confirmed they were prioritising their NHS patients.
6. Our previous work looking at dentistry showed things were very challenging. However, it is clear the position has worsened.

### **Consultation**

7. This first report consulted local dental practices. There will be a follow up report later this financial year looking at people's experiences relating to dentistry.

## **Options**

8. There are no formal recommendations within this report. These will be developed once our work for the second report is completed. Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to note the report, and the 4 areas for action we have identified on pages 14-15 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**

9. 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.
10. 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.
11. Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Scrutiny Committee are looking at NHS Dentistry, and we have agreed to present this report (and the second one if completed in time) at their meeting currently planned for 24 January.

## **Implications**

12. 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**

13. There are no risks associated with this report.

### **Recommendations**

14. The Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to:
  - i. Receive Healthwatch York's report, NHS Dentistry: A Service in Decay

Reason: To keep up to date with the work of Healthwatch York

### **Contact Details**

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**Report  
Approved**



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**Wards Affected:** All

**All**



**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

Healthwatch York Evaluation 2020/21

<https://www.healthwatchyork.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/HWY-Evaluation-2021-Final.pdf>

**Annexes**

**Annex A – NHS Dentistry: A Service in Decay**

<https://www.healthwatchyork.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/NHS-Dentistry-A-Service-in-Decay-July-2021-2.pdf>