



# South West LDN Report

July 2023

healthwatch

# Participating Healthwatch

- **Healthwatch Somerset**
- **Healthwatch Gloucestershire**
- **Healthwatch Cornwall**
- **Healthwatch Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire**
- **Healthwatch Devon, Plymouth and Torbay**

# Healthwatch Somerset

Data from April 1 2023 to June 10 2023

## Number of feedback related to dentistry:

- 42 (all negative)

## % of total feedback relating to dentistry:

- 22%

## % of dentistry feedback requiring signposting:

- 35% (to NHS England & NHS 111)

## Trends (comparison to previous quarter):

- A decrease in calls relating to dentistry this quarter by 40%.

## Standout quotes:

The enquirer is unable to find a dental practice that accepts any new NHS patients in the area. **They need to register their two young sons aged 7 and 5** to the dentist. So far after calling several practices in Somerset they have been unable to find a practice that would take care of their dental needs.

They've been told that **the nearest dental practices that are accepting new NHS patients are in Bristol, which is 50 miles away** from where they live, and this is not good enough. **They don't have any means of transport other than public**, and they are a **single parent** of two boys, one of them is suffering with ASD and the other son is under assessment for ASD with a paediatrician. **They can't afford private dental care, what can they do?**

# Healthwatch Gloucestershire

Data from April 1 2023 to June 10 2023

## Number of feedback related to dentistry:

- 22 - all negative.

## % of total feedback relating to dentistry:

- 30.55%

## % of dentistry feedback requiring signposting:

- 72.72%

## Trends (comparison to previous quarter):

- Access to services, lifestyle and wellbeing, cost and funding of services and booking appointments.

## Standout quotes:

**“I was a registered NHS patient. I called to make a routine appointment only to be told that they were converting to private and would not make any new NHS appointments. I then tried to find a new NHS dentist. I contacted 7 dentists in total, none of which were taking on NHS patients. I then contacted NHS England to flag this issue and ask for help finding an NHS Dentist.**

**The response I got was no offer of assistance, only to raise a formal complaint and that in any case, this would not result in my being assigned an NHS Dentist. It appears that although NHS England commissions dental services in England and is required to meet the needs of their local population for both urgent and routine dental care they are failing to do so.”**

# Healthwatch Cornwall

Data from April 1 2023 to June 10 2023

## Number of feedback related to dentistry:

- 18 – largely negative.

## % of total feedback relating to dentistry:

- 15%

## % of dentistry feedback requiring signposting:

- 50%

## Trends (comparison to previous quarter):

- Decrease in volume of feedback relating to access to dentistry.

## Standout quotes:

“Five years ago, I was put on a waiting list for my local NHS dentist. **My teeth were fine, but then I got gum disease and now not being able to see a dentist I have to have 24 teeth removed.**

Emergency NHS treatment only provide antibiotics, they don't have time to do the work.”

“So now I either pay **£2400 to have my teeth removed and an extra £1000 for dentures or I die of infection.** I do not have the money to pay. I'm left in a dangerous situation because the government are messing NHS dentists around for their contracts.”

# Healthwatch Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire

Data from April 1 2023 to April 30 2023

## Standout quotes:

### Number of feedback related to dentistry:

- 21 – All negative except one

### % of total feedback relating to dentistry:

- 21%

### % of dentistry feedback requiring signposting:

- 52%

### Trends (comparison to previous month):

- Small decrease from March from 24 to 21 pieces of feedback.

This individual gave feedback on behalf of her granddaughter who is 17 years old. **Her mum is a single mum on Universal Credit, and they can't afford to have private dental treatment.** They have been trying and trying to get an NHS dentist to no avail. **She has painful teeth and gums.** The granddaughter did have braces, but she now needs a dentist not an orthodontist.

This individual gave feedback that **they host a Ukrainian 3 generation family and are finding it impossible to find an NHS dentist for them. She is particularly concerned about the child's dental which may affect the rest of her life if left with no dentist;** she had a filling in Poland and suffers intermittent toothache in the tooth ever since.

This individual gave feedback that she is **horrified and anxious on receiving the news that this (BUPA NHS St Pauls Inner City, Bristol) practice is closing.** This individual is worried for herself and others, and particularly young children. **She says that it is one of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the city will be left without dental treatment access, and issues with dental conditions can lead to wider health issues.** The nearest alternative dental practice currently accepting NHS adult patients is 12 miles away. Travelling such a distance would be impractical for many patients living in St Paul's and surrounding areas of Bristol.



# Healthwatch Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

Data from April 1 2023 to June 10 2023

## Number of feedback related to dentistry:

- 43

## % of total feedback relating to dentistry:

- 25.15%

## % of dentistry feedback requiring signposting:

- 51%

## Trends (comparison to previous month/quarter):

- The number of enquiries related to dentistry has fallen over the past quarter. The percentage of enquiries relating to dentistry is approximately the same for both periods (25%). The percentage of dentistry enquiries requiring signposting increased by 9%.

## Standout quotes:

“There’s no NHS dentist available in Plymouth. **As a pensioner I can’t afford £75 for a private consultation and £170 for an extraction of a broken tooth. I’m living on pain killers.** How bad things have become, years ago we had NHS dental care it makes me so depressed.”

“Our dentist left in 2019 due to personal circumstances. We have had no check ups, or any advice on what is happening. **I had to have two emergency appointments which have resulted in me being unable to eat now on the side I was attended to.** We have been told we will not have check ups, but we will only have emergency appointments. The practice is a very large one and **oral health amongst the patients is surely deteriorating along with an increase in oral cancer diagnoses.**”