

NHS England - Yorkshire and the Humber

Bassetlaw Scrutiny Committee – Dental Paper

1. Background

NHS England (Yorkshire and the Humber) is responsible for the commissioning and contracting of all NHS dental services across South Yorkshire & Bassetlaw (SY&B). Commissioned dental activity is based on Courses of Treatment (CoT) and Units of Dental Activity (UDAs). Depending on the complexity of the treatment, each CoT represents a given number of UDAs.

Dental services are:

- Primary care (general high street dentistry)
- Community Dental Services (CDS)
- Orthodontics
- Intermediate Minor Oral Surgery (IMOS)
- Urgent care
- Secondary care

1.1 Key Challenges

- Access/inequalities: NHS England inherited a range of contracts, from Primary Care Trusts, when it was established and these 'legacy' arrangements mean that there is inconsistent, and often inequitable, access to dental services, both in terms of capacity in primary care and in terms of complex and inconsistent pathways to urgent dental care, community dental services and secondary care.
- Primary care national contract: rolled out in 2006, this is held by a General Dental Practice (GDP) in perpetuity (subject to any performance concerns), with little flexibility for either the commissioner or the provider.
- Procurement: procurement rules introduce further challenges to levers to change to commissioning arrangement; it is not possible to introduce innovative ways of working without testing the market.

2. Dental Provision in Bassetlaw

NHS England commissions a total of 206,205 Units of Dental Activity across the 11 dental practices in Bassetlaw. These are listed in Appendix A.

A number of other services are commissioned by NHS England for Bassetlaw residents including orthodontics, hospital services (provided by Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals), community dental services (provided by Rotherham Hospital) and urgent care; accessed via NHS111

3. Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic

Covid-19 has impacted, and continues to impact, on NHS dental services and there have been a number of changes, since March 2020, to manage services safely through the COVID-19 outbreak for patients and clinicians alike.

At the end of March 2020, following advice from the Chief Dental Officer, dentists were asked to stop routine treatment and provide remote consultations and triage. An urgent dental care system was set up to ensure that patients, who were in pain, could access (face to face) treatment where it was clinically necessary and appropriate, and following the remote triage.

Since 8 June 2020, dental practices have been able to re-open, to resume NHS dental services in accordance with advice set out by the Chief Dental Officer and Public Health England. However, to ensure that clinicians and patients are safe, all practices must follow the stringent infection prevention and control measures published by the Chief Dental Officer and Public Health England. This is impacting on the level of service that can be delivered by dentists and is as low as one-fifth of the activity that was being delivered prior to Covid at some practices.

All dental practices are expected to follow the guidance outlined in Standard Operating Procedures, including:

- Being open for face to face care unless there are specific circumstances which prevent this.
- To prioritise patients with urgent care needs. NHS England advice is that the sequencing and scheduling of patients should take into account the urgency of needs; the particular unmet needs of vulnerable groups and practices' available capacity to undertake activity.
- Patients requiring an urgent appointment should be offered an appointment, whether or not they have been treated on the NHS previously at the practice
- There is an expectation that priority must be given to patients in pain, irrespective of whether they are new patients or not to a practice over the provision of routine dental

3.1 Impact on patients

Practices are prioritising urgent dental care for those patients who require immediate attention. In addition, they are also prioritising the health and safety of both patients and staff. The nature of the treatments involved means adhering to strict infection control procedures between appointments, this reduces the number of patients that are able to be treated on a daily basis.

The other impact is on those patients wishing to resume their routine dental check-ups and treatments. Practices have been asked to prioritise those patients in urgent or emergency dental need. Therefore, patients requiring routine dental care such as check-ups and scale and polish will inevitably experience longer waiting times.

3.2 Current advice on accessing urgent dental advice/treatment

- Anyone with an urgent dental issue should telephone their dental practice (or any NHS practice if they don't have a regular dentist) for advice on what to do next.
- They will be triaged first over the telephone. If they need face to face care, they will be given an appointment and encouraged to attend as long as they do not have any COVID-19 symptoms.
- Anyone requiring treatment will be given clear instructions by the dental practice on what they need to do prior to their face-to-face appointment and once they get to the practice.
- If after telephone triage the clinician decides the issue is not deemed urgent, the patient may be given advice on how to self-manage their dental problem. They will be advised to make contact again if their situation changes

4. Resumption – General Overview

The focus of NHS England's dental commissioning team - at this time - is to support providers to resume services, in line with Standard Operating Procedures and IPC guidance.

Primary Care

All primary care providers are open and providing services outlined in national Standard Operating Procedures. Urgent care is the priority for all dental care at this time and there are 2 ways of accessing care, i.e. via a high street dentist or via NHS111.

Community Dental Services – Rotherham Foundation Trust’s Community Dental Service continue to provide face to face treatments.

Orthodontics – Due to the pandemic, routine dental services, including orthodontics, were closed for several weeks in line with government policy at the end of March 2020. From 8 June 2020, dental practices and orthodontists began to reopen to provide face to face appointments.

Secondary Care – Doncaster & Bassetlaw Hospitals dental specialties (oral surgery, orthodontics and restorative) continue to provide care. The Trust has reported that services have recommenced and that they are accepting new referrals which are clinically triaged and have a prioritisation model in place.

5. Communicating with the public

NHS England has been posting messages on social media platforms on a weekly basis. Examples of these (local) posts are shown below.

Tweet: Please be aware that dentists are currently prioritising those patients with urgent dental needs; it is therefore unlikely that routine dental care such as dental check-ups will be available at this time. #helpushelpyou



Urgent dental care during COVID-19  

If you think you need urgent dental treatment:

- call your regular dentist or if you do not have one, call any NHS dental practice.
- if you cannot contact a dentist, go online to 111.nhs.uk or call 111.
- if a clinical appointment is necessary, this will be arranged at your dental practice or a local UDC.
- please do not visit A&E departments or your GP with dental problems.



Accessing dental care  

Dental Practices are open, however practices will need to prioritise patients with the most urgent need.

If you need help from a dentist:

- Contact your regular dentist or if you do not have one, call any NHS dental practice.
- You will be given advice or offered an appointment if appropriate.
- For urgent dental care, out of hours or at weekends that cannot wait, please ring NHS111 or use the NHS111 online service

Please do not visit your dental practice unless you’ve been advised to. This will ensure the practice can continue to provide essential care safely.



Report prepared by:

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Dental Practices in Bassetlaw (as of November 2020)

Contract	Address	Postcode
Whitecross Dental Care (My dentist)	Doncaster Road Dental Practice Doncaster Road, Langold	S81 9RJ
Number 9 Dental Care	Dental Surgery 9 Newcastle Street, Worksop	S80 2AS
Wright Dental Care Ltd	Lyndholme, Newcastle Street, Worksop	S80 2AS
The Dental House	37 Carlton Road, Worksop	S80 1PD
Kaye and Rafferty Ltd	Dungannon, Watson Road, Worksop	S80 2BE
P B Robinson Ltd	Dental Surgery 7 Market Place, Retford	DN22 6DR
Whitecross Dental Care (My dentist)	Dental Surgery 53 Grove Street, Retford	DN22 6LA
D the D Ltd	Churchgate Dental Clinic Rear of 35 Churchgate, Retford	DN22 6PA
Retford Dental Care	Dental 22Crown House, Chapelgate, Retford	DN22 6NX
Carl Godfrey	Dental Surgery 32 Chancery Court, West Street, Retford	DN22 6ES
P B Robinson Ltd	Dental Surgery 89 Scrooby Road Harworth	DN11 8JN

