

Sheffield City Council Health Scrutiny Sub Committee
Dentistry workshop, Sheffield Town Hall, Thursday 11th July 2024

Event Report

Present:

Cllr Ruth Milsom (Chair)	Cllr Steve Ayriss (Deputy Chair)
Cllr Laura McClean	Cllr Rob Bannister
Cllr Ann Whitaker	Lucy Davies (Healthwatch)
Debbie Stovin SY ICB)	Margaret Naylor (SY ICB)
Sarah Robertson (NHSE)	Deborah Glen (SCC officer)

Introduction

The purpose of the workshop was to follow up on the Sub-committee's survey on Dentistry, that had been running on the Council's Have Your Say website since February 2024. Respondents to the survey had been invited to take part in the workshop to enable representatives from both the Sub-committee and the Dentistry team for NHS South Yorkshire, to hear first hand about experiences of members of Sheffield's communities. This would then feed into a final report, bringing together the findings of both the workshop and the survey, to present a comprehensive picture of how service users experience dental services in Sheffield.

The even was organised as follows:

1. A brief presentation on the findings of the survey to date (the survey was still live at the time of the workshop)
2. Round table discussions, including a mix of Councillors, Members of the public and NHS representatives.
3. Plenary – feed back from each table raising the key issues they had discussed
4. Question and answer session with NHS representatives

The following represents a summary of the key issues and the areas for discussion, raised during the workshop:

1. How the survey was conducted.

- Lack of specific engagement with under-represented groups, eg; People with Learning Disabilities, Asylum Seekers. There are 2 dental services with contracts to support asylum seekers and refugees, sex workers, and gypsy, Roma, traveller and showpeople communities. These are based at Darnall Dental Care and Abbeydale Road family dental centre in Sheffield (these projects were not live at the time of the workshop)
- The survey was purely electronic, it would have been useful to have paper questionnaires made available and a wider distribution across communities
- Did we reach out to enough people?

2. Key information that would be useful to have.

- Information from the survey by postcode – this was addressed via the survey
- What is being done regarding dental health promotion and education? Toothbrushing clubs and the importance of healthy diet in schools (this would be under the remit of the City Council's Public Health Team, not the SY ICB)
- Is there any specific support for Domestic Abuse survivors? This can have a big impact on teeth and ability to attend appointments. For anyone who ends up in a women's refuge there are 2 specific dental services for those experiencing homelessness in Sheffield. One is based at the Cathedral Archer project, and the other is Abbeydale Road Family Dental Centre.
The number of dentists in Sheffield, both NHS and private. NHS, the number of practices providing GDS mandatory services in Sheffield is 62 . Number of private practices is 17.

3. Questions and clarifications

- How private dentists are monitored: CQC would be the body responsible for this.
- How to raise concerns about dentists and practices such as declining patients such as children, differing charging structures, doing unnecessary work: Firstly to the practice, asking for second opinions. Ultimately the monitoring of their contracts.
- No sub-contracting to the private sector takes place.
- How to ensure accessibility of buildings: Positive examples of small changes – no reflective glass for lip readers, induction loops, ground floor access.
- How do dentists meet the needs of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) children? For example quiet areas for Autistic people. Concern expressed that the website is not transparent about waiting lists and the choice of accessible dentists. The find a dentist website is a national website and cannot change the layout of it locally. <https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/find-a-dentist> The Sheffield Community and special care dentistry service provides specialist care for those with additional needs. <https://www.sth.nhs.uk/services/a-z-of-community-services?id=38>
- Terms and conditions for Dental nurses and practice staff. The average pay grades will vary considerably.
- Do the ICB have powers to contract directly with Primary Care to provide services? The ICB does contract directly with NHS dental practices. However, they have a fixed financial budget so cannot set up new practices, unless finances become available.

4. Things to consider for the future

- Could more research be done on this for the future via Healthwatch; deep diving into specific cohorts e.g SEND
- Could we assess the impact of the Westfield Scheme? The SY ICB dental commissioning team do not have any direct links with the Westfield Scheme. It is organised by individual employers and used as appropriate by the recipient.
- Look into the powers that the ICB have to improve services and set targets. SY ICB is continually looking to improve oral health and dental access and reduce oral health inequalities.

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