

**West Yorkshire Joint  
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Scrutiny of Access to NHS Dental Services**

**1. Background**

- 1.1 Currently, accessing routine NHS dental services is difficult for some people in West Yorkshire, particularly in Bradford and north Kirklees areas. NHS England also report that demand for unscheduled dental care (UDC) in West Yorkshire is rising year on year, an indication that an increasing number of people have to access emergency dental services because they can't get registered with an NHS dentist. This has resulted in a UDC overspend of £1.5m across West Yorkshire (2014/15). UDC services are due to be re-contracted in 2017 <sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2 In response to concerns raised directly by patients, access issues have also been highlighted by both local and national Healthwatch organisations (see Key Documents section 4 below).
- 1.3 On 6 October 2016 NHS England reported to Bradford Council Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee that it had established a task and finish group to look at how to improve access to NHS dental services and UDC across West Yorkshire. While the group had proposed a number of pilot projects to improve access in West Yorkshire, particularly for vulnerable groups and people in Bradford and north Kirklees, a decision had been made not to proceed due to resource constraints and to allow for work to take place comparing West Yorkshire to other areas of Yorkshire and Humber.
- 1.4 The Bradford Council Health and Social Care OSC resolved:
- (1) That the Committee expresses its disappointment that no action has been taken by NHS England to progress the pilot scheme in Bradford as put forward by the NHS England Task and Finish Group.*
- (2) That the Committee's Members of the West Yorkshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (WYJHOSC) raise the issue of access to NHS Dentistry to be considered at a sub-regional level.*
- 1.5 In line with resolution (2) above, a Committee Member raised the issue at the meeting of the WYJHOSC held on 18 November 2016. It was agreed that the issue be included in the forward plan for the Joint Committee.

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<sup>1</sup> Report of NHS England – North (Yorkshire and Humber) to the meeting of the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 06 October 2016: Dental Commissioning Update <https://bradford.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s11059/Hlt6OctDocM.pdf>

## **2. Key Lines of Enquiry**

The proposed key lines of enquiry are:

- 2.1 To receive an update on the work of the task and finish group, including any proposed pilot projects;
- 2.2 To receive information on demand for, and provision of, unscheduled dental care and proposals for the re-contracting of the service;
- 2.3 To examine the impact/pressures on other parts of the health and care system when people are unable to access routine NHS dental care;
- 2.4 To explore possible new models for delivering dental care in communities.

## **3. Indicative list of interested parties**

- NHS England – North (Yorkshire and Humber)
- West Yorkshire Healthwatch organisations
- Local Dental Committees (dentists)
- Local Care Direct (111 service)
- Yorkshire Ambulance Service
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (primary care and accident and emergency leads)
- Sustainability and Transformation Plan leadership

## **4. Key Documents**

- Report of NHS England – North (Yorkshire and Humber) to the meeting of the Bradford Council Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 06 October 2016: Dental Commissioning Update.
- Report of Healthwatch Bradford and District to the meeting of the Bradford Council Health and Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee to be held on 6th October 2016: Access to NHS Dentistry in Bradford District.
- ‘Why can’t I find an NHS dentist in Kirklees?’ Healthwatch Kirklees (2014).
- ‘Access to NHS Dental Services: What people told local Healthwatch’ – Healthwatch England Evidence Review (November 2016).

## **5. Indicative arrangements and timescale**

- 5.1 It is proposed to hold a special, single issue meeting of the WYJHOSC to be held in Bradford before the end of April 2017.

- 5.2 The Committee will receive reports and make any recommendations it considers appropriate.
- 5.3 The Committee will consider the most appropriate approach and timing for receiving responses to any agreed recommendations and subsequent progress monitoring. This may include monitoring progress via regular business meetings of the WYJHOSC.