
Report of Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support

Report to West Yorkshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 8 April 2019

Subject: Access to Dentistry

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to introduce an update from NHS England regarding access to dentistry across West Yorkshire.

Background

2. In March 2017, the Joint Committee considered a range of information and contributions in relation to access to NHS dental services across West Yorkshire – as requested by scrutiny members from Bradford and Kirklees.
3. At that time, it was reported that accessing routine NHS dental services was difficult for some people in West Yorkshire, particularly in Bradford and north Kirklees. NHS England also reported that demand for unscheduled dental care (UDC) in West Yorkshire had been rising year on year, an indication that an increasing number of people having to access emergency dental services because they could not register with an NHS dentist. This had resulted in an over-spend for UDC of £1.5m across West Yorkshire in 2014/15. It was reported that UDC services were due to be re-contracted in 2017 ¹.
4. At its meeting in July 2018, the Joint Committee considered a further update from NHS England regarding NHS dental services. This focused on primary care dental services and unscheduled dental care (UDC) and reported the following:

¹ 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>

Access

5. NHS England (Yorkshire & the Humber) had completed a review of the availability of access to dental services and developed a strategy to improve this across the region.
6. Additional funding had been identified to support the commissioning of an increase in primary care capacity in 20 constituencies – 7 in West Yorkshire. Dental practices in these areas had agreed to offer additional appointments to new patients commencing in July 2018. This approach would be reviewed in early 2019.

Urgent Care

7. NHS England was leading a procurement to secure services for call handling and urgent treatment provision to be in place from 1 April 2019. The main aims of the procurement process being to ensure providers could deliver a model to meet the demands for urgent dental care treatment across the locality and to ensure:
 - Opening hours that fit with demand.
 - A number of clinics across Yorkshire and the Humber to ensure equity of access.
 - The provision of timed appointment.
 - Call handling arrangements clinically assess 75% of calls.
 - Partnership working with other providers across the urgent care system.
 - A minimum dataset, as agreed by the overarching urgent care system management boards.
 - All patients are encouraged to source a regular dentist.
8. Following that meeting, the Chair of the Joint Committee raised a series of supplementary questions with NHS England. These are summarised at Appendix 1, along with the associated response.

Summary of main issues

9. Representatives from NHS England have been invited to provide the Joint Committee with a further update on improving access to dental services across the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership area.
10. Earlier in March 2019, the Chair of the Joint Committee also wrote to NHS England following concerns raised about changes to the provision and location of Urgent Dental Care services in some areas across West Yorkshire. A copy of the letter is attached at Appendix 2.
11. NHS England has also been invited to provide an overall written response in advance of the meeting to provide an overall update on improving access to dental services and the specific issues regarding urgent dental care services.
12. Appropriate NHS representatives have also been invited to attend the meeting to discuss the details presented and address questions from members of the Joint Committee.

Recommendations

13. That the West Yorkshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the details presented in this report and associated appendices, and agrees any specific scrutiny actions and/or future activity.

Background documents²

14. None.

² The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.