

## ADULTS AND HEALTH SCRUTINY REVIEW BOARD 30 January 2024

### Minute Extract

## 20/23 Dentistry Update

The Board received a presentation on Dentistry in Derby. This was presented by the Senior Commissioning Manager.

It was noted that a governance structure had been agreed that enabled the ICB to set the annual plan and strategic direction of the Dental function and to make localised decisions where possible. It was noted that the current dental commissioning team (who were hosted by Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICB on behalf of the 5 ICBs in the East Midlands) were enabled to deliver day to day contracting and commissioning functions. It was reported that the process had been designed to ensure minimal disruption and smooth transition to support both services and patients.

The Board noted that challenges with access to NHS dental services were well documented, with dental access being a key priority for all Integrated Care Boards. It was reported that the lack of new registrations to NHS dentists was a common challenge across all Regions, with the most critical issue being gaining access to NHS Dentistry, as people were reporting that no dentists were taking on patients.

It was noted that national challenges included:

- Challenges for NHS Dentistry existed prior to the pandemic.
- Workforce/Recruitment of Dentists and wider clinical dental team.
- Access issues.
- Profession discontent with current contract.

It was reported that the Secretary of State had taken the decision in January 2020 to centralise water fluoridation functions through the Health and Care Bill which received Royal Assent on 28th April 2022. It was noted that The Act removed all Local Authority responsibilities for water fluoridation, maintained a duty to consult, and transfers funding responsibilities (for operational costs) to central Government (capital costs remained central Government responsibility).

The Board noted that it was estimated that across the Midlands that around 631,000 appointments had been lost in primary care dentistry since the start of the pandemic. The effects had been similar in community and hospital care due to restricted capacity from staff absences or re-deployment to support COVID-19 activities.

It was reported that Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD were working

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closely with the Local Dental Network Chair for Derbyshire to understand challenges at place level where there had been no Expressions of Interest received for Dental Access Initiatives. It was reported that in order to manage the current challenging financial position, Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD were committed to continuing with 2023/24 investment schemes that had already commenced to support with improving access to NHS dental services. It was noted that in addition, any availability of underspend funding would be reviewed for commissioning of additional NHS dental activity.

A councillor commented that existing resources for dentistry weren't sufficient and suggested that £111m was needed nationally to improve the standard of dentistry in the UK. The Board noted that the UDA for root canal treatment was now 7. It was reported that this was still too low as it covered the whole treatment received by patients.

A councillor commented that a NHS dentist in Derby had informed a resident that they needed to go private if they wanted to be seen by a dentist. The Senior Commissioning Manager informed the Board that this was unacceptable and encouraged residents to report dentists who made similar comments to the ICB.

The Board agreed that the Cabinet Member for Integrated Adult Care and Health would be asked to work with the Council's Communications Team to inform residents how they could complain to the ICB and also that they no longer needed to be registered at a dentist practice to be seen there.

A councillor commented that there were 269 dentists in the East Midlands that were not accepting new patients. The councillor put forward a recommendation that Council Cabinet fully supports the call for major reform and investment in Dentistry in this area and throughout the country. That Council Cabinet support the aspiration to achieve 700,000 more urgent appointments and that incentives are put in place for new dentists to work in areas with the greatest need. Council Cabinet support supervised toothbrushing in schools for three to five year-olds, targeted at areas with the most childhood tooth decay. Council Cabinet supports reform of the dental contract to rebuild the service in Derby and throughout the rest of the country so that NHS dentistry is available for all throughout Derby and the country.

The recommendation was put to a vote and was carried.

The Senior Commissioning Manager informed the Board that an oral health needs assessment was being developed and that a report on this would be brought to a future meeting.

### **The Board resolved:**

- 1. to note the update.**

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- 2. to recommend that Council Cabinet fully supports the call for major reform and investment in Dentistry in this area and throughout the country. That Council Cabinet support the aspiration to achieve 700,000 more urgent appointments and that incentives are put in place for new dentists to work in areas with the greatest need. Council Cabinet support supervised toothbrushing in schools for three to five year-olds, targeted at areas with the most childhood tooth decay. Council Cabinet support reform of the dental contract to rebuild the service in Derby and throughout the rest of the country so that NHS dentistry is available for all throughout Derby and the country.**