

Derby City Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Board)

30th January 2024

1 Background and information

- 1.1 The Derby City Adult Board Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) received an in-depth report for the meeting held on 5th July 2022. The report provided information on access to NHS Dental Services with a particular focus on provision and service recovery as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report also included oral health improvement initiatives and activities, which is the statutory responsibility of the Local Authority - Derby City Council.
- 1.2 The Derby City Adult Board Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) requested a further briefing update to provide:
- An update on current NHS dental access position
 - An update on NHS dental access initiatives
 - An update on the new dental contract
 - An update on the strategy for future NHS Dentistry
- 1.3 Further to the last update in July 2022, the commissioning of all NHS dental services was fully delegated to Derby and Derbyshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)/JUCD on 1 April 2023.
- 1.4 A governance structure has been agreed that enables the ICB to set the annual plan and strategic direction of the Dental function and make localised decisions where possible, whilst the current dental commissioning team (who are hosted by Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICB on behalf of the 5 ICBs in the East Midlands) are enabled to deliver day to day contracting and commissioning functions. The process has been designed to ensure minimal disruption and smooth transition to support both services and patients.
- 1.5 The report has been developed by:
East Midlands Primary Care Team Senior Commissioning Manager (working on behalf of Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD).

2 National NHS dental contract

- 2.1 Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD is responsible for commissioning all NHS dental services including those available on the high street (primary care dental services), specialist dental services in primary care e.g. Intermediate Minor Oral Surgery (IMOS) and Community Dental Services (CDS) as well as from Hospital Trusts. Private dental services are not within the scope of responsibility for Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD.

- 2.2 Although Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD is responsible for commissioning all NHS general dental services, there are limitations of the current national contract which may impact on the level of local flexibility which can be applied.
- 2.3 Challenges with access to NHS dental services are well documented, with dental access being a key priority for all Integrated Care Boards. The lack of new registrations to NHS dentists is a common challenge across all Regions, with the most critical issue being gaining access to NHS Dentistry, as people are reporting that no dentists are taking on patients.

Challenges include:

Nationally:

- 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.
- 2.4 NHS Dental Practices are independent contractors who are having to adjust their work balance to remain viable and thus moving towards more private provision (please see section 3.4 for further information on private dentistry).
- 2.5 Dental practices are responsible for patients who are undergoing dental treatment under their care and once complete (apart from further treatment required within two months that falls within the same band of treatment or lower, repairs and replacements that are guaranteed for 12 months which can be replaced), the practice has no ongoing responsibility. However, people often associate themselves with a specific dental practice and are seen as “regular” patients of a dental practice. Many dental practices may refer to having a patient list or taking on new patients, however there is no registration in the same way as for General Medical Practices and patients are theoretically free to attend any dental practice that has capacity to accept them for a course of treatment.
- 2.6 Prior to the pandemic, patients would often make their ‘dental check-up appointments’ at their ‘usual or regular dental practice’. During the pandemic, contractual responsibilities changed, and practices were required to prioritise:
- urgent dental care
 - vulnerable patients (including children)
 - those at higher risk of oral health issues

For many practices, there has not been sufficient capacity to be able to offer routine dental check-up appointments to all those seeking access.

3 Prevention – Water Fluoridation

- 3.1 Water fluoridation schemes involve adding fluoride to community drinking water supplies in areas of low natural fluoride, increasing the level to that known to reduce tooth decay.

- 3.2 The findings of the 2014, 2018 and 2022 health monitoring reports are consistent with the view that water fluoridation is an effective and safe public health measure to reduce the prevalence and severity of dental caries and reduce dental health inequalities.
- 3.3 The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities compares data on the health of people living in areas of England with varying concentrations of fluoride in their drinking water supply, every 4 years. Along with global studies it confirms that water fluoridation is an effective, safe public health measure that is associated with lower levels of tooth decay amongst 5-year-olds; fewer teeth extractions due to decay; and a reduced tooth decay in adults. It supports previous findings that these benefits are greatest in the most deprived areas, thereby contributing to reducing dental health inequalities.
- 3.4 Secretary of State took the decision in January 2020 to centralise water fluoridation functions through the Health and Care Bill which received Royal Assent on 28th April 2022. This will be the first-time central Government has had responsibility for bringing forward new schemes.
- 3.5 The Act removes all Local Authority responsibilities for water fluoridation, maintains a duty to consult, and transfers funding responsibilities (for operational costs) to central Government (capital costs remain central Government responsibility). The first public consultation on fluoridation is expected in north east England in 2024.

We wish to request the support of the Derby City Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to campaign for a consultation on fluoridation in Derby and Derbyshire ICB.

4 NHS Dental Services across Derby City

4.1 NHS Dental Access - Overall

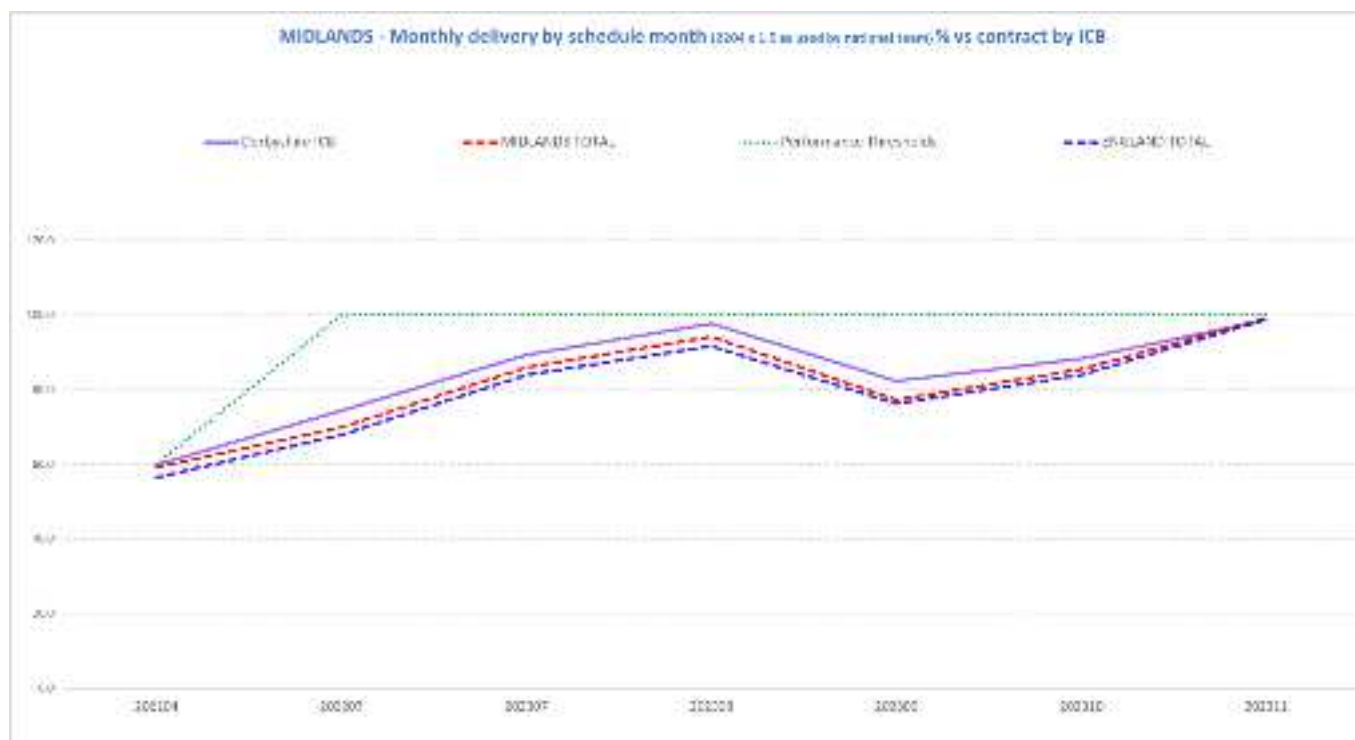
- 4.1.1 Restoration and recovery of NHS dental services since the COVID-19 pandemic has enabled dental practices to deliver increasing levels of dental activity, however the backlog of NHS dental care which has accumulated during the period where dental services have not operated at full capacity is widely recognised.
- 4.1.2 Figure 1 on the next page shows a snapshot of the monthly contract delivery since the pandemic (April 2021) in comparison to the data shared at the previous Derby City Adult Board HOSC meeting in July 2022 and activity as of October 2023). The graph indicates dental activity as follows. Please note that this data is currently not available at a lower level:

Date	Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD (%)	Regional Total (%)	England Total (%)
April 2021	59.8	59.1	56.5
July 2022	74.4	69.8	67.8
July 2023	89.2	86	83.9
August 2023	97.6	94.1	91.7

September 2023	82.2	77.3	76.2
October 2023	88.3	85.5	83.9
November	98.7	99.1	98.8

It is to note that there have been 0 contract terminations within Derby City since July 2022.

Figure 1 – Delivery trend for Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD since the pandemic



4.1.3 It is estimated across Midlands that there are around 631,000 appointments lost in primary care dentistry since the start of the pandemic. The effects have been similar in community and hospital care due to restricted capacity from staff absences or re-deployment to support COVID-19 activities.

4.1.4 Figure 2 on the following page shows the count of new patients seen (not been seen previously in the last 24 months or before) between April 2022 to November 2023 for adults and children in Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD. Please note that this data is currently not available at a lower level.

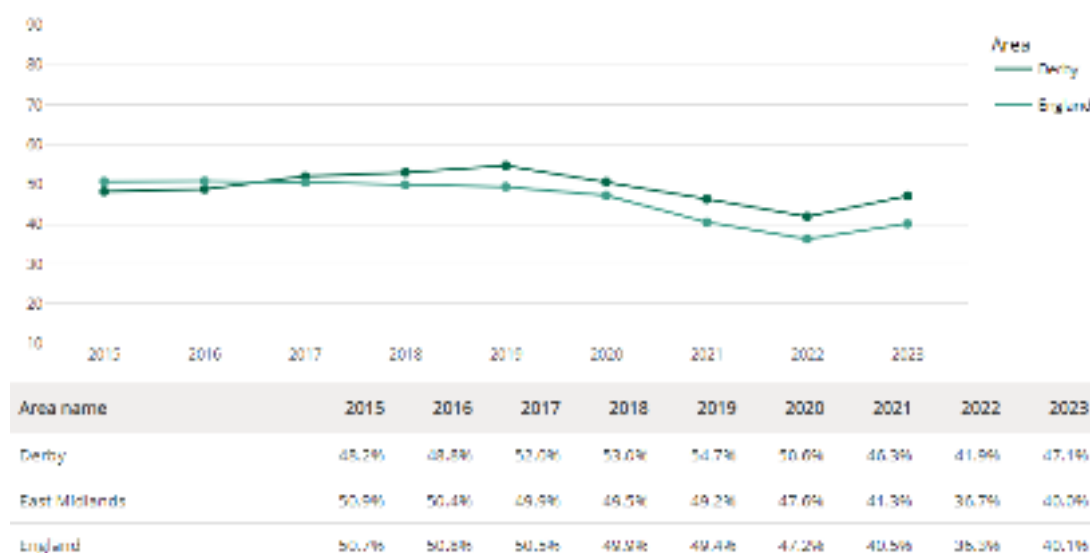
Figure 2 – Number of new patients seen (April 2022 – November 2023)



4.2 NHS Dental Access - Adult

4.2.1 Figure 3 below shows the percentage of adults seen by a dentist pre and post pandemic (2015-2023) in Derby City. The table and chart show data as of June each year.

Figure 3 - Percentage of adults seen by a dentist pre and post pandemic (2015-2023) in Derby City



4.3 Secondary Care: Referral to Treat (RTT) and Referrals

4.3.1 The table below shows the latest position of Oral Surgery in September 2023 for Derby City and the overall RTT position for the Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD. The updated September 2023 RTT position for Oral Surgery within Derby City shows that the recovery in respect of the performance against the 18-week standards remains around an average of 71%. The number of 52-weeks waiters has increased from 18 to 20 patients. The proportion of the total waiting list that has been waiting 52 weeks is at 1%.

4.3.2 Over 104-week and over 78-week waits have remained at 0 in September 2023.

4.3.3 Over 65-week waits has decreased by 1 from the previous month (August 2023). Over 65-weeks wait discussions are being built into the 2023/24 contracting round with assurance that the Trusts Pricing Activity Matrix has sufficient activity to support meeting the target to eliminate over 65 and over 78 week waits by 31 March 2024.

Oral Surgery RTT Data September 2023	% waiting at month end			Over 52 weeks	18+ week backlog	Total Waiting List	% of waiting list that is 52-week waiters	Over 104 weeks	Over 78 weeks	Over 65 weeks
	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Sep-23	Sep-23	Sep-23	Sep-23	Sep-23	Sep-23	Sep-23
UH Derby & Burton FT	71.2%	71.7%	70.1%	20	523	1,751	1%	0	0	4

4.4 Private Dentistry

- 4.4.1 Private dental services are not within the scope of responsibility for Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD, therefore, the ICB are unable to provide any information on activity uptake within the private dentistry sector.
- 4.4.2 It should be noted that dental practitioners are independent contractors to the NHS and therefore many dental practices operate a mixed private/NHS model of care.
- 4.4.3 Some patients who have previously accessed dental care privately may now be seeking NHS dental care due to financial problems related to the current economic situation. This may place additional pressure on NHS services at a time when capacity is still constrained. Although these patients are eligible for NHS dental care, they may have difficulty in finding an NHS dental practice with capacity to take them on.
- 4.4.4 There have been anecdotal reports of some practices reluctance across Derby City in offering NHS appointments (particularly routine) and instead offering the option to be seen earlier as a private patient. Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD do not support any stances of pressuring patients into private dental care. Any such concerns can be raised via a complaint about any specific practice/s by contacting the ICB via email ddicb.pals@nhs.net or telephone 0800 032 32 35.

4.5 NHS Dental Services Recovery Initiatives

- 4.5.1 As shared in the previous Derby City Adult Board HOSC July 2022 report; a number of access initiatives (including patient facing) have been undertaken for 2021/22 to support access to NHS dental services within Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD (extract available under Appendix I).

4.5.2 2022/23

As part of the NHS dental recovery, some of the access initiatives commissioned within 2021/22 was expanded for 2022/23 as follows:

- Weekend Sessions – To enable dental providers to see and treat more patients than they have capacity for during their normal contractual opening hours.

Following the success of the Weekend Access Scheme in 2021/22, further Expressions of Interest were invited for 2022/23. 7 practices were approved for a total of 370 additional sessions at a cost of £185,000. Out of the 7 practices, 1 practice was within Derby City providing 50 additional weekend sessions. A total of 1827 patient contacts were made during this period across Derby and Derbyshire, with 280 patient contacts within Derby City.

- Additional Orthodontic Case Starts - To address lengthy waiting times for orthodontic treatment which has been exacerbated by the CV19 pandemic.

Unfortunately, no Expressions of Interest were received from practices within Derby City.

- Community Dental Services (CDS) Support Practices – To relieve pressure on Community Dental Services by securing additional capacity in child friendly CDS Support Practices, thus freeing up the specially trained staff in the CDS so that they can focus on using the skills to deal with the most complex cases and increase access for children.

The pilot was re-run for financial year 2022/23 and hoped to encourage uptake from NHS dental providers in Derby City, however no Expressions of Interest were received from practices within Derby City.

- Non recurrent investment to support IMOS providers in reducing waiting times for patients to be seen within 6 weeks of referral into the specialist service.

In June 2022, there were 990 Derbyshire patients accepted onto the IMOS pathway and 139 (14%) had been waiting over 6 weeks to be treated. This has been reduced from 628 as at June 2021 when the waiting list initiative was launched. The Derbyshire system has one of the lowest IMOS waiting lists across the East Midlands. As this is a specialist service commissioned on a system area footprint, data for Derby city residents is unfortunately not available.

- Oral Health Promotion and Improvement - Investment from NHS England allocated to Local Authority.

2023 proposed spending of NHS England oral health prevention funding across Derby and Derbyshire:

- Support an integrated partnership approach across the Derby and Derbyshire ICB to improving oral health for example, oral health communication campaigns and workforce training for our childrens' workforce £75,000.
- Purchase and distribution of toothbrushing packs to foodbanks and other venues supporting vulnerable people and families across the ICB footprint £100,000.
- Oral Health Promotion Resources - expenditure to enable the oral health promotion service to expand and improve their resources £5,000. Total £180,000

4.5.3 2023/24

Access initiatives continued into 2023/24 from 2022/23 are:

- IMOS Waiting List initiative
 - to support lengthy waiting times that have been exacerbated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This enables patients to be seen within 6 weeks of referral into the specialist service. As of November 2023, there were 749 patients accepted onto the IMOS pathway by the

Derbyshire system providers and 111 (15%) had been waiting over 6 weeks to access treatment. The Derbyshire system has one of the lowest IMOS waiting lists across the East Midlands. As this is a specialist service commissioned on a system area footprint, data for Derby city residents is unfortunately not available.

- Community Dental Services (CDS) Support Practices
 - To relieve pressure on Community Dental Services by securing additional capacity in child friendly CDS Support Practices, thus freeing up the specially trained staff in the CDS so that they can focus on using the skills to deal with the most complex cases and increase access for children. No Expressions of Interest were received from practices within Derby City.
- Vulnerable people and SMD groups (SMD Pilots)
 - Recurrent investment of £200,000 per annum has been secured to commission an East Midlands pilot scheme for delivery of dental treatment and care specifically to individuals who are vulnerable due to multiple deprivation and/or homeless. The pilot has one mobile dental unit in Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD. The mobile dental unit commenced delivering services with effect from 1st July 2023. During the period 13th September to 2nd November, 11 sessions have been delivered and 16 people were seen.

4.5.4 Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD are working closely with the Local Dental Network Chair for Derbyshire to understand challenges at place level where there have been no Expressions of Interest received for Dental Access Initiatives.

4.5.5 Commissioning objectives, priorities, and investment plan for the financial year 2023/24 was shared with all 5 East Midlands ICBs with governance approval granted in August 2023. The recommendations within the investment plan are for patient facing initiatives to improve dental access for all patients including vulnerable groups. Access initiatives include some of the investment schemes detailed within the previous paper plus some new investment schemes.

4.5.6 Since the approval of the paper, and despite the positive development, unforeseen circumstances have arisen making the financial position significantly challenging for the NHS, thus impacting on Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD to continue with the approved plans.

4.5.7 To manage the current challenging financial position, Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD are committed to continuing with 2023/24 investment schemes that have already commenced to support with improving access to NHS dental services. In addition, any availability of underspend funding will be reviewed for commissioning of additional NHS dental activity.

4.6 Commissioning and Procurement Plans

4.6.1 National Dental Contract Reform

The [National dental contract reform](#) changes announced in July 2022 has provided an initial start to the shift in the emphasis of financial rewards and the re-orientation of clinical activity to those patient who need it most, whilst increasing access to NHS dental care.

4.6.2 Where changes from the National dental contract reform have made some impact, it is recognised that there is still more work to do. This includes [further change](#) to boost dental workforce and increased access to NHS dentistry which is currently on-going with the Government.

4.6.3 A [framework](#) was published on 9th October 2023 by NHS England on the opportunities for flexible commissioning in primary care dentistry which provides an outline to ICBs of the legal requirements of the national dental contractual framework whilst highlighting the key considerations associated with procuring additional and further services which were previously termed 'flexible commissioning'.

Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD are currently reviewing this framework, whilst working collaboratively with Dental Public Health Consultants and the East Midlands Primary Care Team to determine how best to commission additional NHS dental access within the framework guidance.

4.6.4 A strategic review of dental access is underway for 2023/24 and the East Midlands Primary Care team have access to a new mapping tool which will help to identify local areas which may have specific issues in order to assist with a more targeted approach in tackling issues identified. This review will additionally include collaborative working with our Consultants in Dental Public Health.

4.6.1 This review will also incorporate the findings from a Rapid Oral Health Needs assessment which is currently being developed in conjunction with the Dental Public Health consultant and Local Dental Network (LDN) chair to understand the impact post the pandemic.

4.6.2 The review recommendations will inform the general dental services procurement programme and commissioning requirements for Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD. The East Midlands Primary Care Team are working collaboratively with all ICBs within East Midlands to develop a procurement plan for early 2024/25 to support the difficulties in accessing NHS dentistry.

4.6.3 Procurement of public sector services are due to change in 2024. The [Provider Selection Regime \(PSR\)](#) regulations will come into force on 1 January 2024. This means that NHS services will be decoupled from the existing Public Sector Procurement Regulations 2015 in favour of a more flexible and pragmatic approach.

- 4.6.4 The PSR is intended to remove unnecessary levels of competitive tendering, removing barriers to integrating care and promote the development of stable collaborations.

5 Supporting Information

- Appendix 1
Extract from previous Derby City Adult Board HOSC (July 2022): Access initiatives (including patient facing) undertaken for 2021/22 to support access to NHS dental services within Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD.

6 Contact Points

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Appendix 1:

Extract from previous Derby City Adult Board HOSC report (July 2022): Access initiatives (including patient facing) undertaken for 2021/22 to support access to NHS dental services within Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD.

2021/22

A large financial investment has been made to facilitate initiatives designed to increase access across primary, community and hospital dental care, as follows:

- Weekend Sessions – General Dental Services
Across the Derbyshire system, 11 NHS general dental practices have been contracted to provide 96 additional sessions at a cost of £62,784. Out of the 11 practices, 2 practices are within Derby City providing 44 additional weekend sessions.
- Weekday Sessions – General Dental Services
Across the Derbyshire system, 11 NHS general dental practices have been contracted to provide 1,047 additional sessions at a cost of £68,016. Out of the 11 practices, 2 practices are within Derby City providing 14 additional weekday sessions.
- Dedicated Urgent Care slots during surgery opening hours – General Dental Services
Additional NHS dental capacity has been contracted in order for NHS 111 to be able to signpost patients who do not have a regular dental practice requiring urgent dental care. Six practices across the Derbyshire system are taking part and providing extra appointments. Two practices are within Derby City offering 20 additional urgent care appointments per week.
- Additional NHS dental sessions – 8-8 NHS Dental Providers
Across the Derbyshire system, 2 NHS general dental practices have been contracted to provide 62 sessions at a cost of £40,548. One of these practices is located in Derby City.
- Oral health improvement funding for local authorities
 - £150,000 recurrent for 2 years to support oral health improvement initiatives and activities.
 - £40,000 non-recurrent to support purchase and distribution of toothbrushing packs to food banks and other venues.
 - £5,000 non-recurrent to support Oral Health Promotion training resources to improve delivery of services.

The above funding has been jointly allocated between Derby City and Derbyshire County Councils. Agreement on the spending of the funding is being discussed and agreed at the Derby and Derbyshire Oral Health Steering Group to ensure alignment with oral health needs of the area.

- Support Practices - Community Dental Service:
NHS E/I have commissioned a number of dental practices across the Midlands to work collaboratively with local dental providers delivering special care dental services. This pilot is intended to provide additional capacity to assist in routine review and support the management of special care dental

patients who are in the system. Unfortunately, there was no uptake from NHS dental providers in Derby City, however NHS E/I are currently trying to secure additional funding to re-run the pilot for financial year 2022/23 and hope to encourage uptake from NHS dental providers in Derby City. NHS E/I has been trying to understand the reasons for the lack of interest and at present the main reason appears to be the lack of practice capacity.

- Waiting list initiative - Community Dental Service:
Non-recurrent investment of £27,390 was secured for the Derbyshire system Community (Special Care) Dentistry provider in reducing the waiting list in 2021/22. The waiting list initiative has been running additional sessions for new referrals, first and follow up appointments for patients with open courses of treatment. Furthermore, additional dental hand pieces were also purchased to support improving efficiency of dental clinics resulting in reduced fallow time between patients. Prior commitment has been secured for 2022/23 to support reducing the General Anaesthetic waiting list, subject to securing additional sessions at the hospital trust.
- Waiting list initiative - Intermediate Minor Oral Surgery (IMOS)
Non recurrent investment was secured to support IMOS providers across the East Midlands to enable them to over perform against 2019/20 baseline (paid on cost per case) in order to reduce waiting lists. This enables patients to be seen within 6 weeks of referral into the specialist service. As at February 2022, there were 1,268 patients accepted onto the IMOS pathway by the Derbyshire system providers and 143 (14%) had been waiting over 6 weeks to access treatment. The Derbyshire system has one of the lowest IMOS waiting lists across the East Midlands. As this is a specialist service commissioned on a system area footprint, data for Derby city residents is unfortunately not available.
- Waiting list initiative – Hospital Dental Care
Trusts are monitored on referral to treatment (RTT) within 18 weeks, 52 weeks and due to the impact of the pandemic, on 104 weeks. All Trusts are required to clear any 104 week waits by July 2022. As at January 2022, there were 21 patients waiting over 104 week waits for Oral Surgery and the two trusts have plans in place to clear this within the target deadline. Please see Appendix 3 for Midlands Oral Surgery RTT trends but as this service is commissioned on a system area footprint, data for Derby city residents is unfortunately not available. Referrals into secondary care have started to recover (Appendix 4), however, these remain lower than previous levels due to the reduction in routine appointments in primary care. There has been a non-recurrent investment of £386,913 to address the 104 and 52 week waits across the secondary care dental specialities e.g. orthodontics, Oral Surgery and Maxillofacial. Prior commitment of £365,738 has also been secured for 2022/23 to continue to support the waiting list initiatives.