

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

18th January 2024



Derby City Council

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ITEM 06

NHS Dentistry: Oral Health and access to NHS Dentistry

Purpose

- 1.1 NHS Derby and Derbyshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)/Joined Up Care Derbyshire (JUCD) have been invited by Derby Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) to provide an update on:
 - Derby City population - current oral health
 - NHS dentistry access provision
 - Commissioning and Procurement plans/Mitigation.
- 1.2 This report provides this update to the HWB.

Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the contents of this report.
- 2.2 To support the campaign for a consultation on fluoridation in Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD.
- 2.3 To recognise that Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD are diligently navigating a challenging situation, particularly with financial constraints, while ensuring patient access and striving to improve oral health outcomes.

Reason

- 3.1 To ensure that the HWB is aware of the oral health of the population of Derby and access to NHS Dentistry in Derby. This supports the HWB in its responsibilities to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities in the city.

Supporting information

Derby city population - current oral health

- 4.1 The most recent survey of 5-year-olds showed that Derby has amongst the highest level of dental caries in children in the ICB, and the most severe degree of disease.

- 4.2 Derby City was also found to have by far the highest levels of acute dental problems in children (requiring urgent treatment).
- 4.3 A significant proportion of Derby City is classed within the 10% most deprived in the Index of Multiple Deprivation. There is a strong link between this index and childhood caries. As a result, according to the Marmot principles, special efforts should be made to target these areas in order to reduce health inequalities.

Prevention – Water Fluoridation¹

- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 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.
- 4.6 The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) compares data on the health of people living in areas of England with varying concentrations of fluoride in their drinking water supply, every four 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.
- 4.7 The 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.
- 4.8 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.
- 4.9 We wish to request the support of the HWB to campaign for a consultation on fluoridation in Derby and Derbyshire ICB.

NHS Dentistry Challenges

- 4.10 Challenges with access to NHS dental services are well documented, with dental access being a key priority for all ICBs. The lack of new patients 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.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-fluoridation-health-monitoring-report-for-england-2022>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-fluoridation-statement-from-the-uk-chief-medical-officers/statement-on-water-fluoridation-from-the-uk-chief-medical-officers>

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.

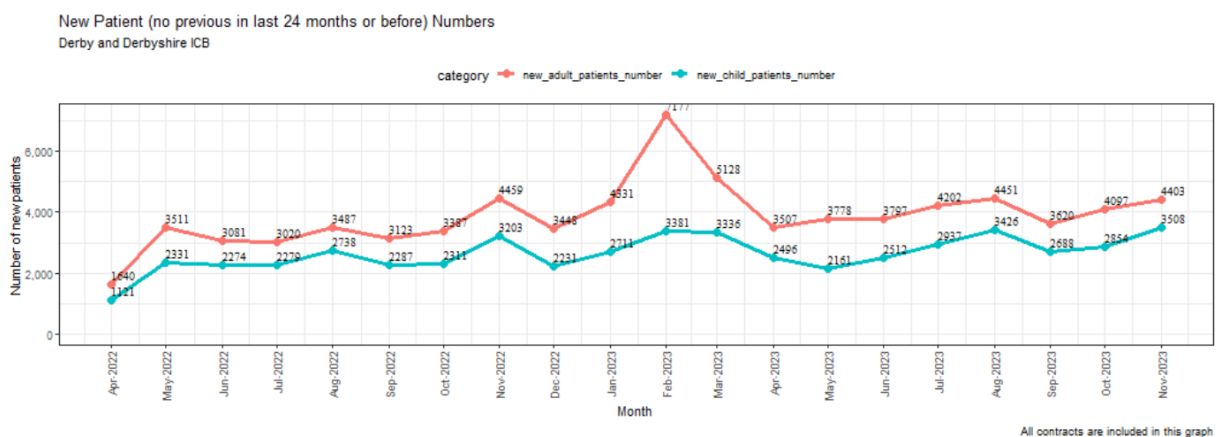
- 4.11 NHS Dental Practices are independent contractors who are having to adjust their work balance to remain viable and thus moving towards more private provision.
- 4.12 Private dental services are not within the scope of responsibility for Derby and Derbyshire ICB/Joined Up Care Derbyshire (JUCD), therefore, the ICB are unable to provide any information on activity uptake within the private dentistry sector.
- 4.13 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.

NHS Dental Services across Derby City

NHS Dental Access - Overall

- 4.14 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.
- 4.15 It is estimated across the Midlands that there are around 650,000 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.
- 4.16 Figure 1 below shows the count of new patients seen (not been seen previously in the last 24 months) between April 2022 to October 2023 for adults and children in Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD. Data is currently not available on a lower level.

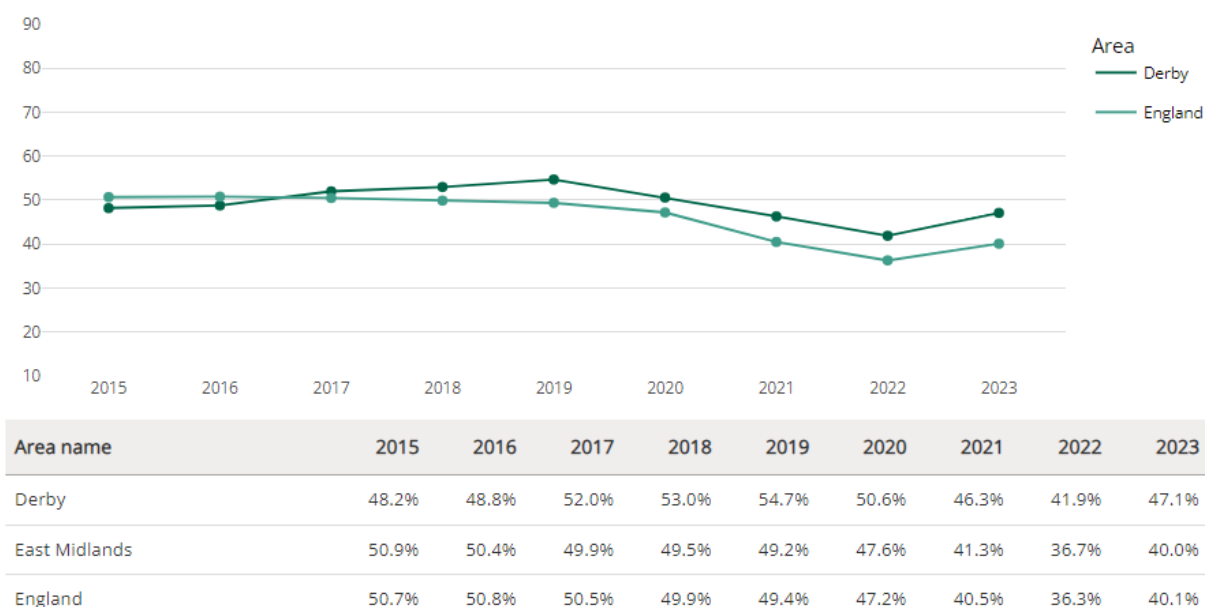
Figure 1 – Number of new patients seen (April 2022 – November 2023)



NHS Dental Access - Adult

- 4.17 Figure 2 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. It is to note that the data is published a quarter ahead of activity data to coincide with [NICE guidelines](#) on intervals between oral health reviews.

Figure 2 - Percentage of adults seen by a dentist pre and post pandemic (2015-2023) in Derby City



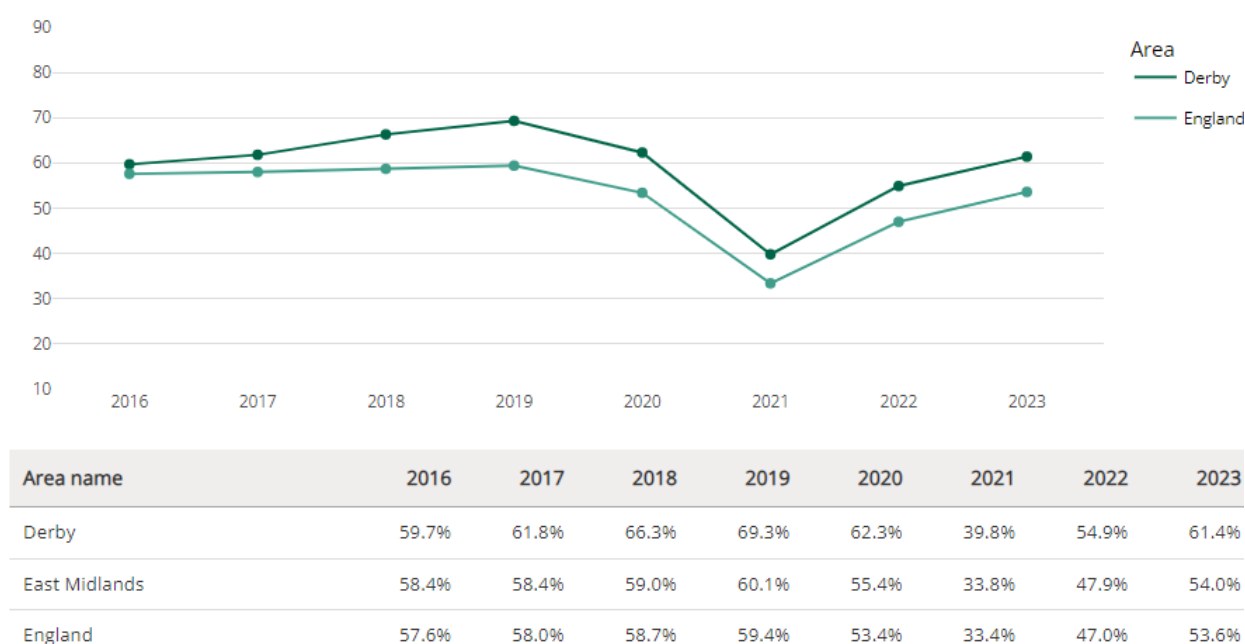
NHS Dental Access - Children and Young People

- 4.18 It became apparent early in the COVID-19 pandemic that NHS dental access for children and young people had been particularly badly affected. This was both due to dental practices focusing on urgent dental care and on parents being hesitant (or reluctant) to take children to medical and dental appointments – this pattern was consistent across other services too.
- 4.19 The National Dental Epidemiological Oral Survey is conducted each year and funded through the Public Health Grant. During the school year September 2021 to July 2022 a sample of 5-year-olds were examined in schools; 401 children from a population size of 3386. 21.1% of 5-year-old children examined had evidence of decayed (into the dentine layer), missing or filled teeth. This compares to 23.7% in England and is similar to results in previous years. Although this level of oral disease is consistent with many other areas, it indicates the significant need within this age group of children. The September 2022 to July 2023 survey was conducted in the year 6 age group and findings are expected to be reported in 2024.

A survey of parents of reception children starting school in September 2022 found that, for those that responded, 31% of children did not have a dentist.

- 4.20 The National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) does not support routine six-monthly dental check-ups universally for all patients. It recommends that dentists should take a risk-based approach to setting the frequency of dental check-ups appropriate to the needs of individual patients.
- 4.21 The shortest interval between oral health reviews for all patients should be 3 months and the longest interval between oral health reviews for patients younger than 18 years should be 12 months.
- 4.22 Recall intervals of no longer than 12 months give the opportunity for delivering and reinforcing preventive advice and for raising awareness of the importance of good oral health. This is particularly important in young children, to lay the foundations for life-long dental health. There is also evidence that the rate of progression of dental decay can be more rapid in children and adolescents than in older people as it seems to be faster in primary (baby) teeth than in permanent (adult) teeth (see the [full guideline](#)). Periodic developmental assessment of the dentition is also required in children.
- 4.23 To coincide with NICE guidance on intervals between oral health reviews, Figure 3 below shows the percentage of children and young people 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 children and young people seen by a dentist pre and post pandemic (2015-2023) in Derby City



Commissioning and Procurement Plans/Mitigation – Recovery Initiatives

- 4.24 Several access initiatives (including patient facing) have been undertaken to support access to NHS dental services within Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD.
- 4.25 Access initiatives continued into 2023/24 from 2022/23 at present are:
- IMOS Waiting List

- to support lengthy waiting times for orthodontic treatment that have been exacerbated due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Community Dental Services 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.
 - Vulnerable people and Severe Multiple Disadvantage (SMD) groups
 - 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 includes a mobile dental unit in Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD; the mobile dental unit commenced on 1st July 2023. During the period 13th September to 2nd November, 11 sessions have been delivered and 16 people were seen.
- 4.26 Access initiatives (including patient facing) undertaken for 2021/22 and 2022/23 to support access to NHS dental services within Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD can be viewed within Appendix 1.
- 4.27 Commissioning objectives, priorities, and investment plan for the financial year 2023/24 was shared with all five 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 Appendix I plus some new investment schemes.
- 4.28 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.
- 4.29 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.

Commissioning and Procurement Plans

National Dental Contract Reform

- 4.30 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.
- 4.31 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.

- 4.32 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'.
- 4.33 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.
- 4.34 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.
- 4.35 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.
- 4.36 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.
- 4.37 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.
- 4.38 The PSR is intended to remove unnecessary levels of competitive tendering, removing barriers to integrating care and promote the development of stable collaborations.
- 4.39 Attached for further information, Appendix 1 - Access initiatives (including patient facing) undertaken for 2021/22 and 2022/23 to support access to NHS dental services within Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 No specific public or stakeholder engagement undertaken in relation to this report. It is, however, requested that the HWB supports a campaign for a consultation on fluoridation in Derby and Derbyshire ICB.

Other options

6.1 None considered.

Financial and value for money issues

7.1 None arising from this report.

Legal implications

8.1 None arising from this report.

Socio-Economic implications

9.1 None arising from this report.

Climate implications

10.1 None arising from this report.

Other significant implications

11.1 None arising from this report.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal		
Finance		
Service Director(s)	Clive Newman, Director of Primary Care (Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD)	20/12/2023
Report sponsor	Caroline Goulding, Head of Primary Care (East Midlands Primary Care Team)	
Other(s)	Allan Reid, Consultant in Public Health (Derby City Council)	02/01/2024

Background papers:	N/A
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 - Access initiatives (including patient facing) undertaken for 2021/22 and 2022/23 to support access to NHS dental services within Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD

Appendix 1:

Access initiatives (including patient facing) undertaken for 2021/22 and 2022/23 to support access to NHS dental services within Derby and Derbyshire ICB/JUCD.

Highlighted access initiatives denote continuation into 2023/24.

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. Midlands Oral Surgery RTT trends is commissioned on a system area footprint, data for Derby city residents is unfortunately not available. Referrals into secondary care have started to recover, 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.

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.

- 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 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.

- Waiting list initiative - Intermediate Minor Oral Surgery (IMOS)
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 children's 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.