

Dental qualitative feedback 2021/22



- Healthwatch North Somerset received 30 pieces of feedback about access to NHS dentists and requests for help to find services.
- 348 pieces of negative feedback sent to us from across Healthwatch Bristol, North Somerset and South Glos have been compiled into reports.
- We have been sharing these reports and making recommendations to NHS England/Improvement South West and our Local dental Networks. We have sent out letters to all Dental Practices.
- Nationally Healthwatch England has published recommendations and reports to highlight the desperate need for reform.
- <https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/news/2022-05-09/lack-nhs-dental-appointments-widens-health-inequalities>

Themes

De-registration;

'Patient says they were struck off dental practice in 2020. Caller said it was because they have a 7-year-old autistic child and a 4-year-old and together they were all removed from patient list.'

Difficulty booking an appointment;

'Grandchild could not be registered with an NHS dentist as they said none were available. Child waited 5 weeks with a toothache before they finally saw someone.'

'Patients in their 70s have rung around many dentists, to try to find NHS treatment. They have not been able to get themselves on a dental list.'

Pressure to go private;

'...when they contacted practice to book an emergency appointment, they were told they could only access private care.'

People struggling to pay for dental care;

'Patient moved to Weston and needs emergency dental treatment but could not get an NHS dentist. Patient cannot afford private care.'

Lack of care leading to more serious problems;

'it looks as though the only realistic option is to stop seeing a dentist, with the impact that will have on the ongoing health of my teeth.'