



Experiences of Dentistry Poll

Published – April 2023

Introduction

Our rationale for exploring dentistry experiences in Sussex

Healthwatch in Sussex (Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and West Sussex) have been collaborating over the last two years to develop a Sussex-wide understanding of people's experiences of accessing or seeking to access dentistry, especially NHS services.

Following announcements by the government and NHS of changes to support improvements in dentistry provision [announced](#) in November 2022, we wanted to learn whether these changes had been implemented and if they led to any change in the experiences of patients and the public in their ability to access NHS dental services when they need them.

We also wanted to gauge the recent experiences of people so that we could share this with NHS England and Sussex Integrated Care System (ICS) decision-makers responsible for commissioning local NHS dental services in Sussex and help them respond accordingly.

Our aims were to:

1. Determine levels of public satisfaction with local NHS dental services, including accessibility and wait times, information quality and availability, and quality of services.
2. Assess current and future levels of public confidence in accessing NHS dental services.
3. Identify any barriers that may or have limited people's ability to access NHS dental services.

Tell us your experiences of NHS dentistry since 1st December 2022

Complete our 5 question poll so that we can hear how things are for you.

We want to know:

- Who is trying to use NHS dental services?
- People's levels of satisfaction with NHS dentistry
- Confidence about using NHS dental services in the future

Tell us here:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/HWISDentistryPollJan2023/>



What we did

Between the 1st and 31st January 2023, Healthwatch in Sussex ran a short five question public web-based poll to capture a snapshot of people's experiences of NHS dental services in Sussex since 1st December 2022.

We focused on:

1. Who is trying to use NHS dental services?
2. People's levels of satisfaction with NHS dentistry
3. Confidence about using NHS dental services in the future

Our poll was widely promoted through newsletters, bulletins, social media, staff, volunteers and partner networks.


We heard from 81 people in Brighton & Hove

This report summarises the experiences of the respondents from Brighton and Hove. You can read the full Healthwatch in Sussex report here which includes our conclusions.



What we heard – Our key findings


What you told us about experiences of Dentistry in Brighton & Hove since 1st December 2022

- We heard that most people (**75.3%**) were accessing dentistry on their own behalf, with **27.2%** supporting others to do so (children, family members, friends or as carers) and in a few cases (2.5%) staff were supporting people to access to dental services.
 - Most people (**68.8%**) were **Not Confident** about their ability to access NHS dental services over the next 12 months, either for themselves or others. A fifth (**20.0%**) were **Very Confident/Quite Confident**.
 - Nearly two-thirds of the people we heard from (**65.2%**) told us they were **Dissatisfied/Very Dissatisfied** about their **ability to find a dentist offering NHS treatments**.
 - Nearly three-in-five (**57.4%**) were **Dissatisfied/Very Dissatisfied** with the **waiting times to see someone** [NHS dental services].
 - Three-in-five of respondents (**58.2%**) were **Dissatisfied/Very Dissatisfied** with **information on services being accurate and up-to-date**.
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What we heard – Our key findings

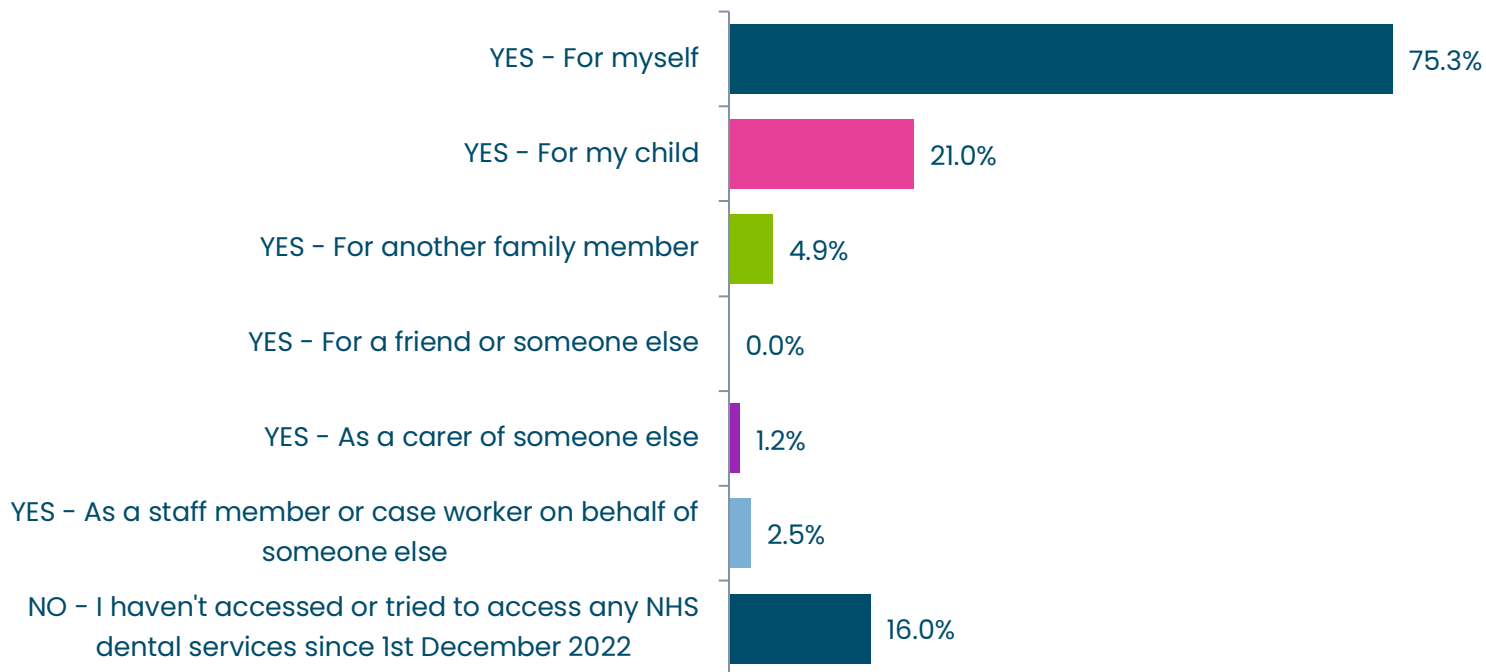
What you told us about experiences of Dentistry in Brighton & Hove since 1st December 2022

- Once accessed, **more people were Satisfied/Very Satisfied (35.3%)** than **Dissatisfied/Very Dissatisfied (26.5%)** with the **treatment they received**, when they were able to access it.
 - **22.8%** had accessed NHS dental treatment **without any issues**, but **53.2%** respondents were **unable to receive NHS dental treatment** as they had been unable to find a dentist able to offer it.
 - One-in-ten people (10.1%) needed dental treatment but were **unable to afford to pay the NHS dental charges**.
 - Over a quarter of people (**27.8%**) told us they had **paid for treatment privately** because they had been unable to find or access a dentists able to provide NHS treatment.
 - Some people (5.1%) had **paid for private** dental services, so they were able **to receive an appointment or treatment faster** than via the NHS.
 - A few people (4) told us that they had **paid for treatment privately** so that their **child could access NHS dental services**.
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What you told us about dentistry services in Sussex

Your experiences of dentistry in Brighton & Hove since 1st December 2022

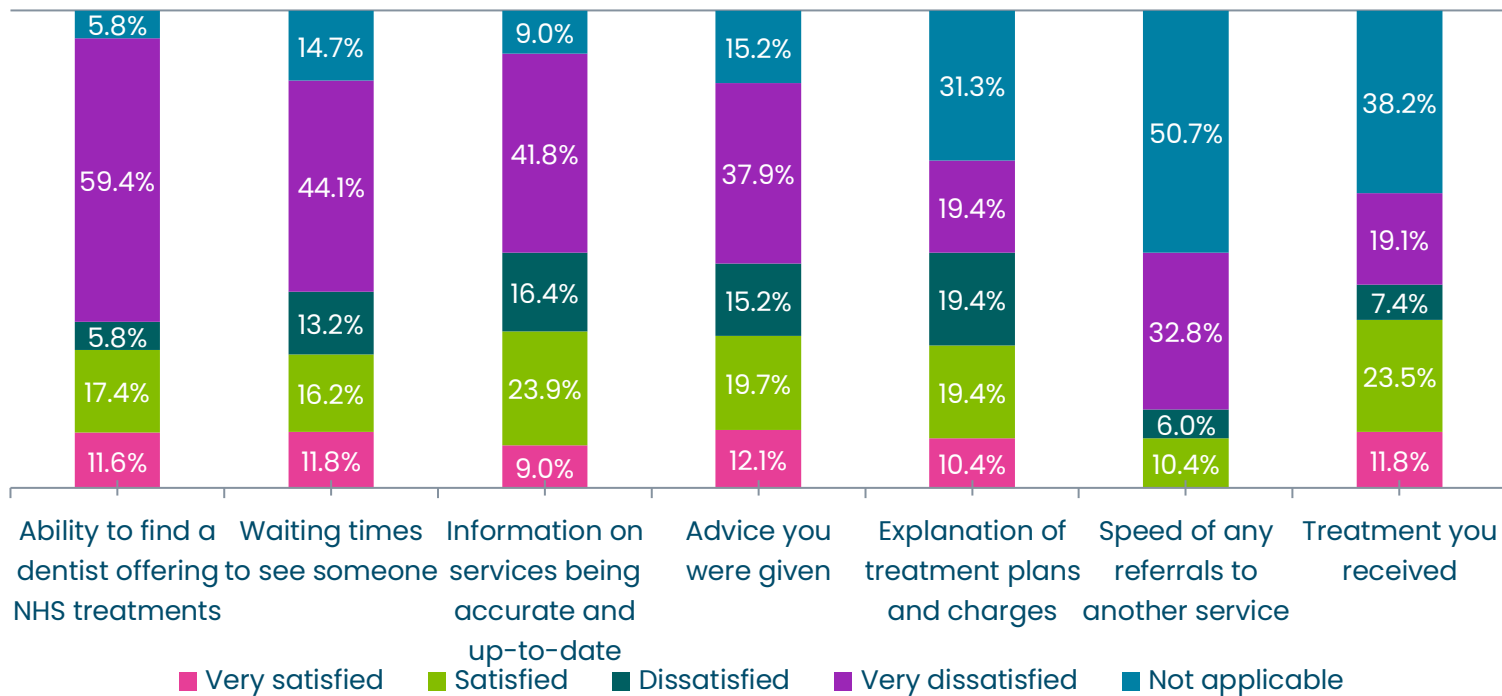
Have you accessed or tried to access any NHS dental services since 1st December 2022?



Please note people could tick more than one answer. Percentages are shown as a proportion of all 211 poll respondents.

What you told us about dentistry services in Brighton & Hove

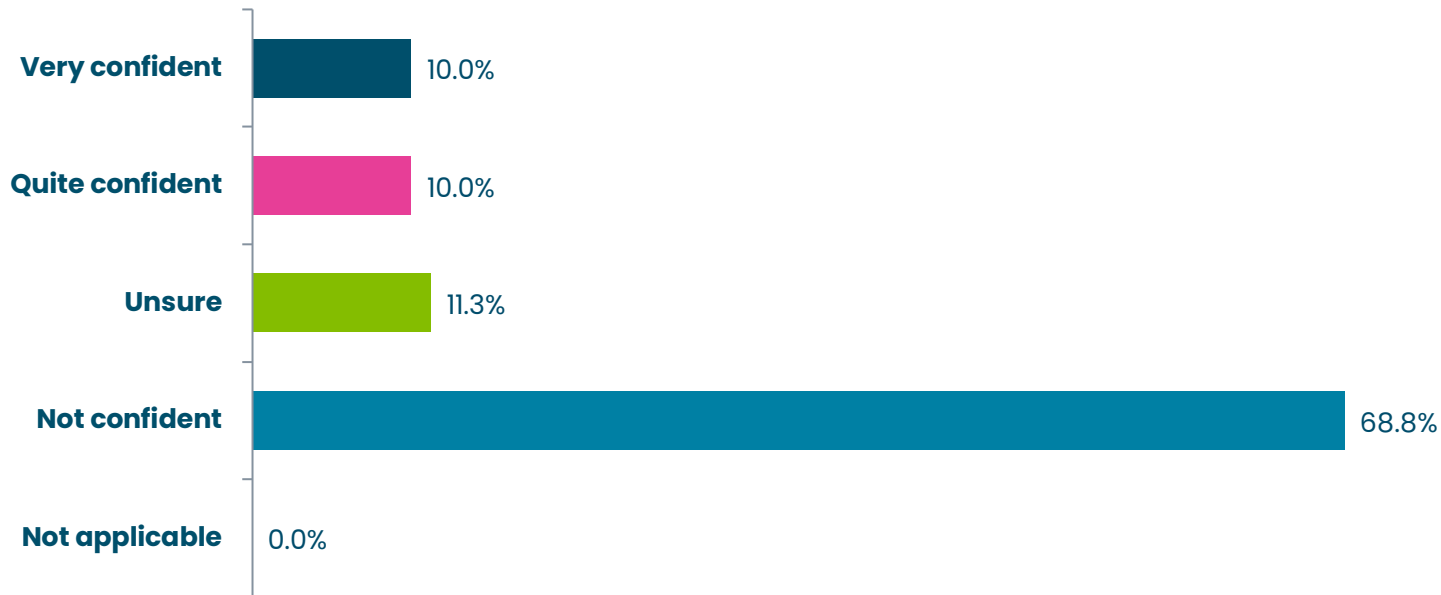
If you answered YES to Q2, how satisfied were you with your experience of NHS dental services?



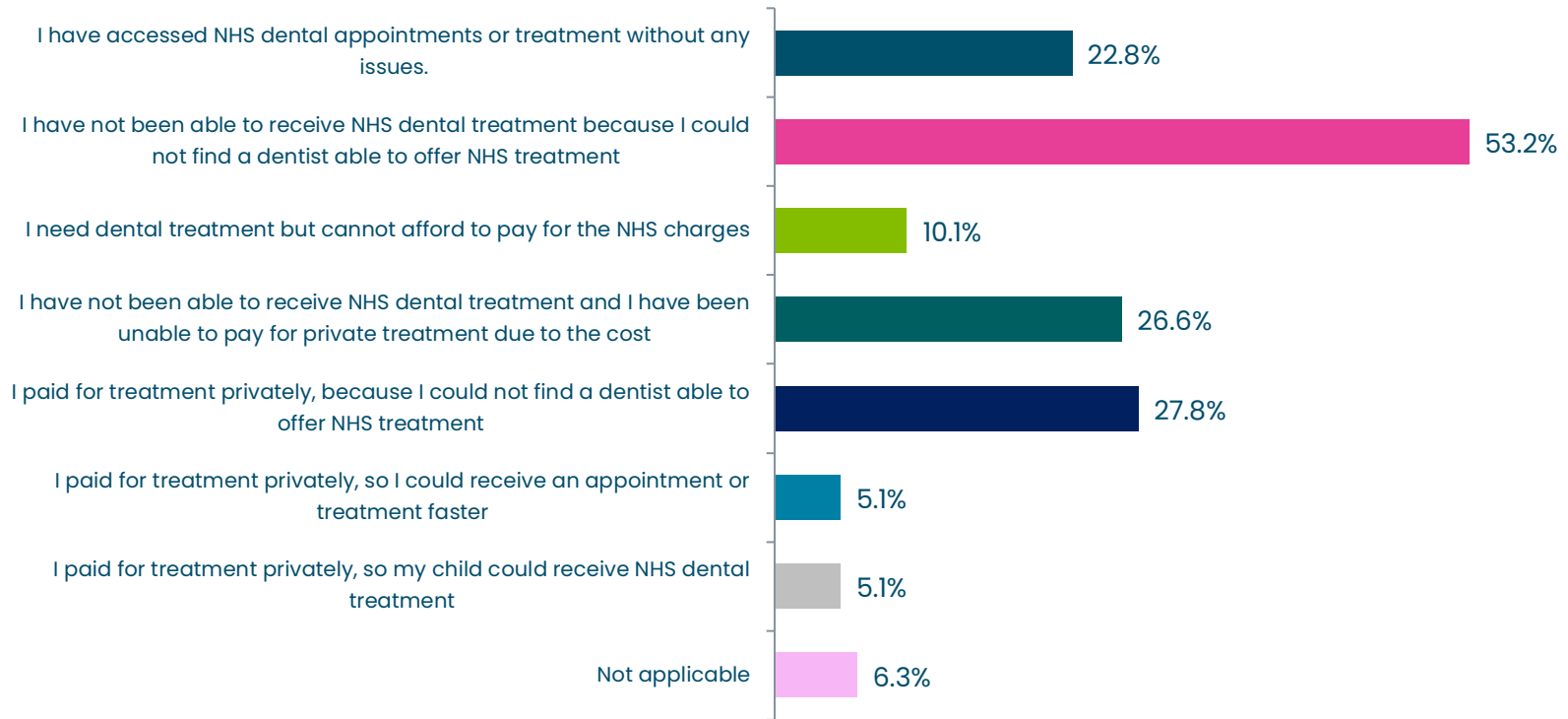
What you told us about dentistry services in Brighton & Hove

Your experiences of dentistry in Sussex since 1st December 2022

Thinking about the next 12 months, how confident do you currently feel that you will be able to access NHS dental services for yourself or on behalf of someone else when you need them?



Please tell us if you have experienced any of the following since 1st December 2022?
Please tick all that apply



Please note people could tick more than one answer. Percentages are shown as a proportion of all 211 poll respondents.



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