

DENTISTRY BRIEFING

June 2021

Introduction

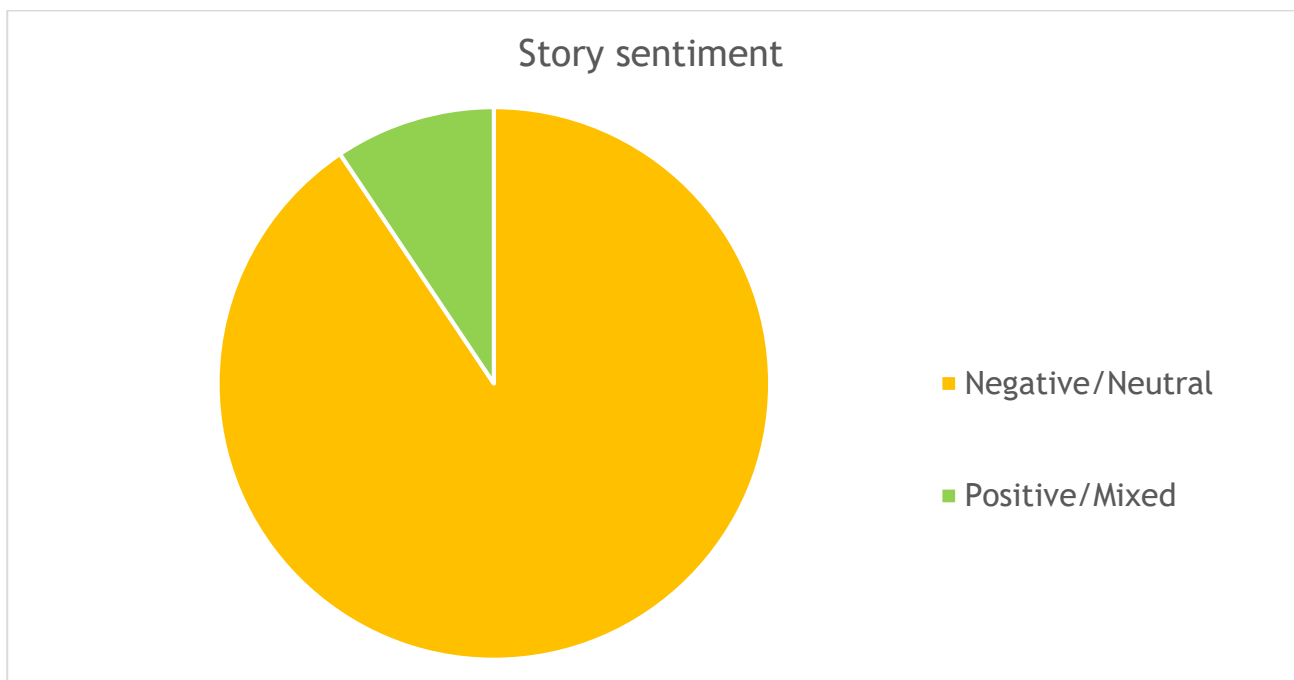
This briefing contains the experience-based insight gathered by **Healthwatch West Sussex** from January to June (15) 2021. This was shared with us directly rather than resulting from a project or survey.

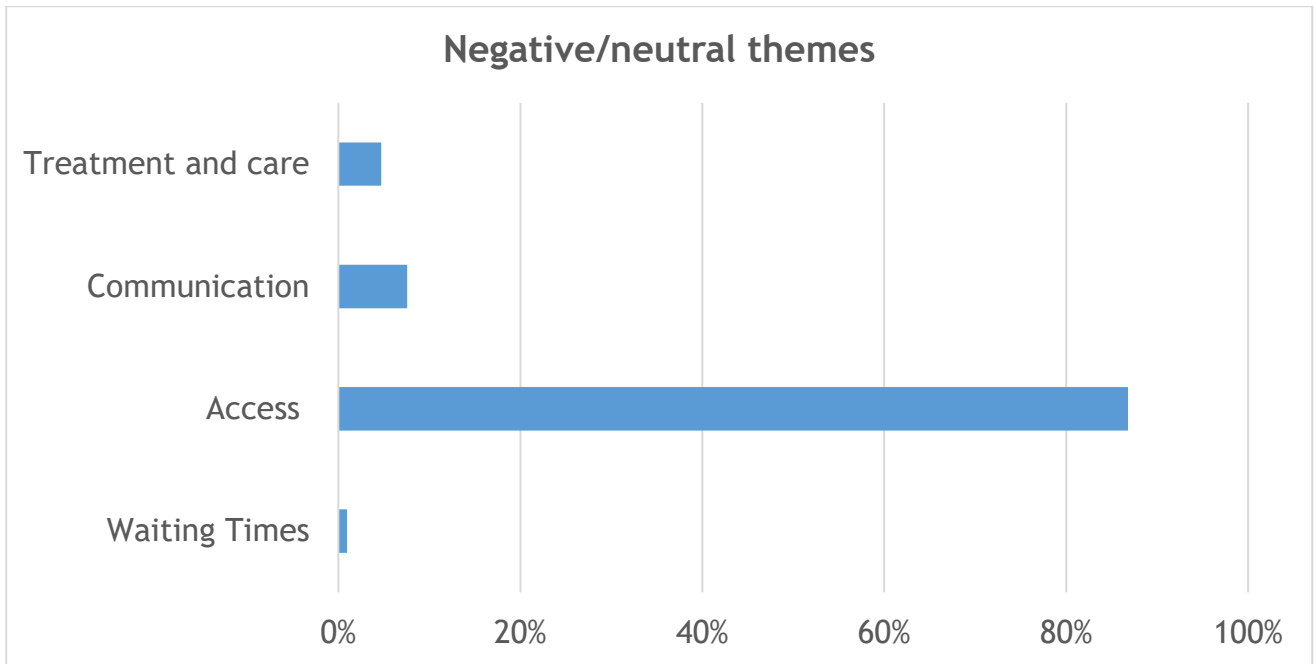
Local Healthwatch gathers feedback about a wide range of health and social care services. Each year, we receive thousands of lived experience accounts and stories from members of the public. These come through various sources including our website, telephone Helpdesk, through engagement activities and our volunteers, as well as through our numerous partnerships with the community and voluntary sector organisations.

We have put this briefing together to again highlight concerns that many people are **still not able to access any non-emergency/preventative NHS dental treatment in a timely manner** and many people cannot find a dental practice to register them for NHS treatment.

Themes

Total of 108 themed records.



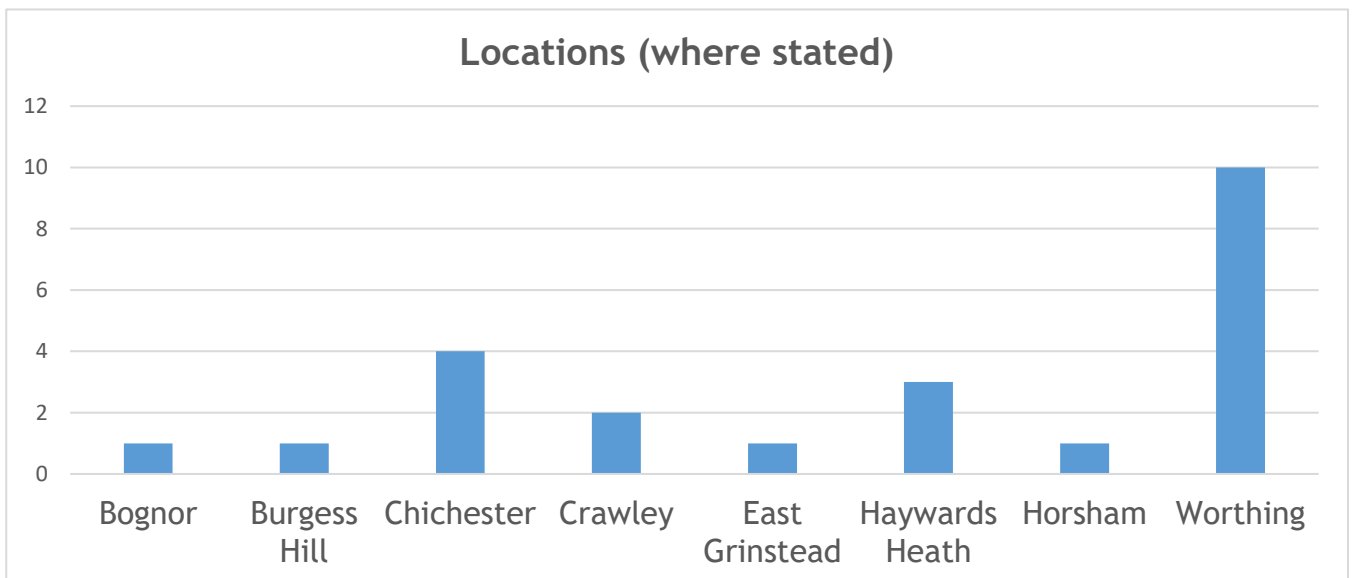


Access to NHS dental care remains the key theme.



I have been searching high and low for an NHS dentist that is taking on new patients since March last year. I lost a filling (since then another 2). I've broken a tooth, I've been on six different batches of antibiotics, taken codeine a lot more than is recommended, not to mention the paracetamol, ibuprofen and naproxen. The agony I've been in at least once a month has been monumental, leading me to cry and beg to every single NHS dentist in Worthing for an appointment - not ne will see me. The one time I managed to get an emergency appointment the Dentist I saw was horrendous, she was mean and dismissal.

(Worthing resident, March 2021 - 00152233)



Pregnant women are not getting access to the dental support they need on the NHS.



I am pregnant so aware I am entitled to dental care, I also have an 18 month old who would be great to get in and have her teeth checked and my husband also.

(Hayward Heath resident, February 2021 - 00151280)



People are **struggling with the idea of waiting two years for a *routine* appointment.**

Others have found themselves **being ‘deregistered’** (as they perceive it or have been told by the dental practice).



I am being told I have been kicked off the books because my dentist has left and I cancelled an appointment. I did not miss the appointment I called to say I was going to be late as I don't know the area well and I couldn't find the place. I am now left without a dentist and nowhere is taking on NHS patients. I've asked them for the complaints procedure as I feel like I am being neglected not being able to get treatment for a toothache as any dentist.

(Pagham resident, March 2021 - 00152413)



Root Canal treatment does not seem to be available on the NHS this year, is available privately, if people can afford to pay. This has been raised to NHS England's Regional Team as an issue.



I am struggling to find a practice that accepts new NHS patients. I've recently had a dental infection and after 2x emergency dental appointments I had no choice but to pay privately to have a surgical extraction which was extremely expensive and difficult to pay for. I have been told that I require root canal treatment asap on another tooth and I cannot find an NHS dentist to register with.

(Chichester resident, March 2021 - 00152602)



Dentists continue to prioritise private patients over NHS. In some cases are forward charging with no refund for cancelled check-ups (00155783, May 2021).



I was pleased with my treatment however, I felt that private treatment was being pushed quite heavily. I was told that I would get my final treatment much faster if I went privately. And also the choices of crown - the private options were promoted more. In fact the NHS option looked rubbish compared to them.

(West Sussex resident, February 2021 - 00151688)

