

Accessing NHS Dental Treatment in St Helens.

November 2023

Report produced by the
Healthwatch St Helens
Support Team



Background

The Healthwatch network across Cheshire & Merseyside has repeatedly raised concerns with NHS England about the lack of NHS dentists and the struggles that people are facing to find affordable dental treatment.

Over the last few years, there has been a massive increase in the number of enquiries we have received about dental treatment in St Helens. The people we have spoken to are struggling to find a dentist who can provide NHS treatment with some people considering taking out loans in order to pay for dental treatment. Many are suffering in pain, and some are facing serious health implications as a result of not being able to have the dental treatment they need.

There was a massive backlog of patients waiting to access NHS treatment nationally. This began with the COVID-19 pandemic which led to practices offering considerably less appointments each day due to the cleaning that was required between each patient being in the surgery. However, we also know that there are huge issues with how NHS dentists are funded.

What did we do?

- We highlighted this issue to local Councillors, who invited us to attend a 'Spotlight on Dentistry' held by the Health Scrutiny Committee.
- Along with colleagues from the Healthwatch network, attended a 'Dental Deep Dive' with the Cheshire & Mersey Integrated Care Board to look at this issue in more detail.
- Made regular contact with NHS England to highlight cases that came in to us. This is ongoing and we will continue to raise concerns.
- We contacted all dental practices in the borough to find out what the situation was with each practice, whether there are taking on new patients and whether they have a waiting list. We also highlight which practices are dementia friendly. You can find the list at the end of this report.

What difference have we made?

- Local Councillors have committed to putting pressure on NHS England to increase funding for NHS Dentists.
 - The Cheshire & Mersey Integrated Care Board has committed to agreeing and implementing a Dental Recovery Plan since dentistry became part of their remit on 1st April, 2023.
 - By regularly revising our booklet about accessing NHS dental treatment, local people have the most up-to-date useful information and contacts.
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What you should do if you need dental treatment.

To find a dentist in your area go to: www.nhs.uk

For emergency dental treatment you should call the emergency dental helpline on: 0161 4769651.

(This is part of a dental network offering emergency appointments across Cheshire and Merseyside. It has a Manchester number but is charged at local rate. It is usually easier to get through on the telephone in the mornings.)

They have been recent changes in how emergency dental treatment is offered. The service no longer sits with just one practice but is spread across a number of practices, who will provide emergency treatment and any follow-up treatment that is required.

You can contact practices in your area directly, to ask whether they offer emergency dental treatment.

For anyone who is housebound, severely disabled or is unable to access dental treatment, in exceptional circumstances:

- **Special Care Dental Service - 01744 731 395**
This has very strict criteria and requires a referral from someone such as a medical professional or care worker.
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Dentists in St Helens

Dental Surgery	Contact No.	Taking on NHS Patients	Reason	Waiting List
Lauren Villa 261 Prescott Road St Helens WA10 3HG	01744 24631	Not taking on at the moment	Full	No waiting list
Newtown Dental Centre 161 Cambridge Road St Helens WA10 4HA	01744 20299	Not taking on at the moment	At capacity	Waiting list closed as at capacity
Windle House 1 Spray Street St Helens WA10 2NN	01744 820404	Not taking on at the moment	Full	Waiting list closed as at capacity
Corner Dental Surgery 146 Duke Street St Helens WA10 2JL	01744 23677	Not taking on at the moment	Full	No waiting list, but there is an enquiry form on the website
Corner Dental Surgery 89 Atherton Street St Helens WA10 2DS	01744 23677	Not taking on at the moment	Full	No waiting list, but there is an enquiry form on the website
Lowe House Dental 103 Crab Street St Helens WA10 2DJ	01744 750701	Not taking on at the moment	They are a dentist down at the moment	Waiting list closed as very long, but hoping to open up again soon
St Helens Family Dental 36-38 Claughton Street St Helens WA10 1SN	01744 28225	Not taking on adults, under 18's only	Full	No waiting list
Barrow Street Dental 20 Barrow Street St Helens WA10 1PX	01744 26566	Not taking on – only seeing emergencies, if in pain and have a space on the day	Full	No waiting list

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Victoria Square Dental Practice St Helens WA10 1HQ	01744 371628	Not taking on at the moment	Currently full	Waiting list closed
183 Dental 183 Warrington Road, Prescot L35 4AF	0151 426 5474	They are a private practice. Only taking on NHS Children	Currently full	Waiting list for children
Prescot House Dental 3 High Street, Prescot, L34 3LD	0151 426 6460	Not taking on at the moment	Currently full	No waiting list
My Dentist Warrington Road Rainhill, L35 4LL	0151 426 7931	Not taking on at the moment, but do have an affordable MyOptions service	Full	No waiting list at present but reviewing in April
Parr Dental Surgery Talking Teeth Practice 162 Parr Stocks Road St Helens WA9 1PB	01744 738385	Not taking on adults at the moment just children under 16	Currently full	No waiting list – may open up again at the end of March
Alverna House Dental 45 Blackbrook Road St Helens WA11 9QA	01744 739600 Dementia- friendly	Not taking on at the moment	Currently full	Waiting list closed they have over 700 people on it
Origins Dental Whiston Primary Care Resource Centre Whiston L35 3SX	0151 426 4066	Not taking on at the moment	Currently full	No waiting list
Junction Lane Dental 40 Junction Lane St Helens WA9 3JN	01744 810563	Not taking on at the moment	Currently full	No waiting list
Haydock Dental Practice 252 Church Road Haydock WA11 0LE	01942 725306	Not taking on at the moment	Currently full	No waiting list

Rainford Dental Practice 13 Church Road Rainford WA11 8HE	01744 882222	They are an Orthodontist, work on referrals only	Full	No waiting list
My Dentist 14 Greenes Road Whiston Prescot L35 3RF	0151 430 9373	Not taking on at the moment but do have My Options service which currently has a 2 week wait	Full	Waiting list closed
The Alders Dental 82 Cross Lane Newton-le-Willows WA12 9QB	01925 225997 Dementia- friendly	Not taking on at the moment	Currently full	Waiting list closed as at capacity
Newton Dental Practice 67 Wargrave Road Newton-le-Willows WA12 9RH	01925 225971 Dementia- friendly	Not taking on adults at the moment just under 16's	Currently full	Waiting list closed as at capacity
High Street Dental 62-64 High Street Newton-le-Willows WA12 9SH	01925 220486	Not taking on at the moment	Currently full	Waiting list closed as at capacity – need to keep trying

Thanks to colleagues at NHS England and the St Helens Wellbeing services for providing us with information that supported our work.

Thank you to the staff at dental practices who gave us what information they had.

Contact us

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