



Rugby Dental Engagement

May/ June 2023

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Background

Why did we want to hear from people in Rugby?

Following our general, Warwickshire wide, dental survey in 2022, Healthwatch Warwickshire worked with the NHS Dental Commissioning Team on behalf of Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) to find out the views of people in Rugby on dentistry and complex treatments.

What difference will the feedback make?

We wanted to know if needs are being met. The aim is to help the people of Rugby get the dental services they need.

Who are Healthwatch Warwickshire?

Healthwatch Warwickshire are an independent champion for everyone who uses health and social care in Warwickshire. We help people understand the health and social care system through sign posting. Together with our volunteers we make your voice heard to help improve NHS and Adult Social care services, so the care you receive meets your needs.

Engagement and Outreach

Throughout May and June 2023 our Engagement and Outreach Officers visited 28 venues across Rugby Borough including: Children's Centres, Rugby College, Senior's lunch clubs, places of worship, SEND groups, Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre, local businesses and community groups. We listened to people about their experiences of dental care and complex treatment in Rugby and asked them to complete our survey.

We gave out postcards with a QR code link to our online survey. We advertised our survey through our website and social media channels, and a paper version of our survey was also available, including in large print.



We displayed posters in public places e.g., GP surgeries, and with voluntary organisations. All parish councils in Rugby were contacted with information for sharing on their social media channels.



Queen's Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre, June 2023

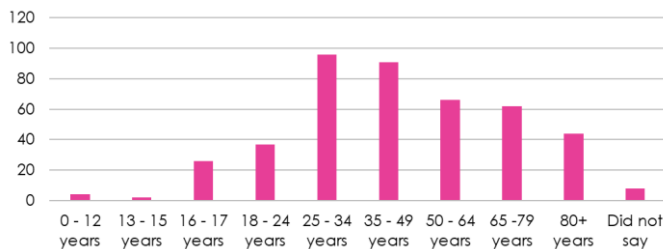


Ryton Pools June 2023

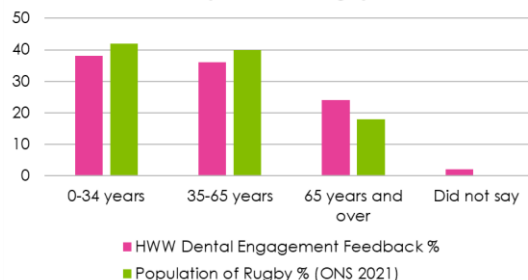
Who we heard from

436 people completed our survey.

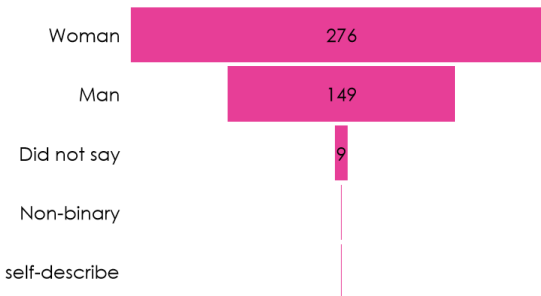
Age of Responders to HWW Dental Engagement Feedback



Comparing Age of Responders to HWW with Population of Rugby



Which gender do you identify with?

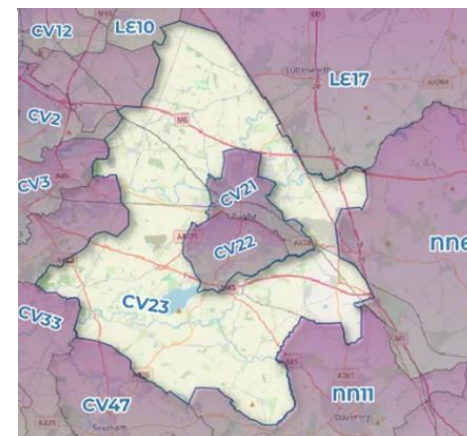
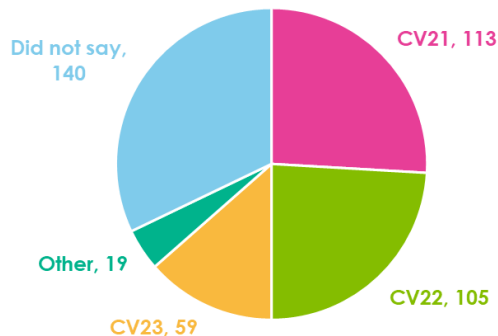


According to the ONS Census 2021 data for Rugby 51% identify as women and 49% identify as men (93.9% of people in Rugby identify as the same sex registered at birth)

The people we heard from told us other things about themselves.

Have a Disability	82
Have a Long Term Condition	87
Am a Carer	46
Am Ex-Armed Forces	3
English not first language	62
Live in Rugby	407
Work in Rugby	71
Friend/family live in Rugby	69
Friend/ family/ neighbour works in Rugby	38
Care for/ support someone who lives or works in Rugby	12

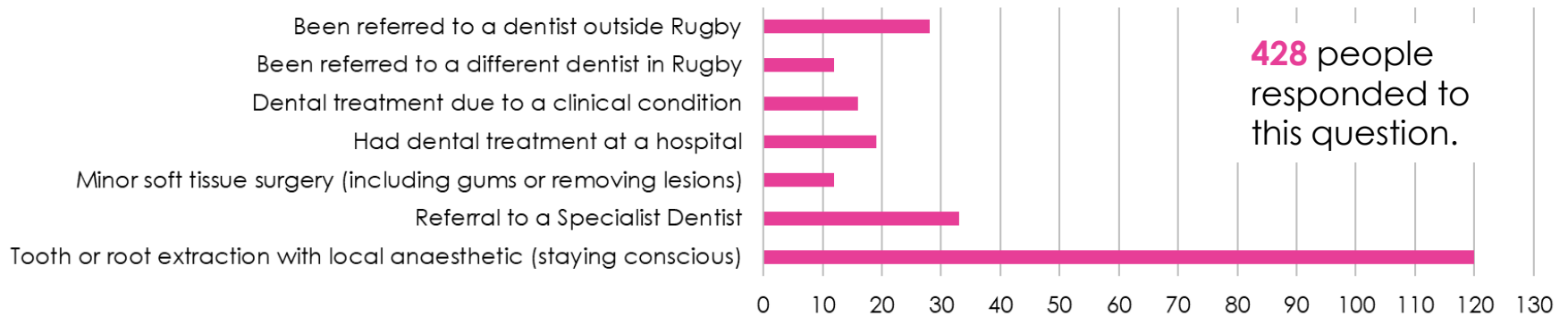
Home Postcode of Responders to HWW



125 of the 140 people who did not say what their postcode is, told us that they live in Rugby. Rugby town centre is situated in CV21.

What we heard: treatment and aftercare

Have you, or someone you know, experienced any of these in the last two years?
(Choose any that apply)



165 people told us that they, or someone they know, have experienced one or more of these in the last two years.

111 people told us about **aftercare advice following oral surgery** in the last two years.

- 84 had aftercare advice shared with them verbally.
- 45 were given an information leaflet.
- 28 were given verbal feedback and an information leaflet.
- None of them were shown an information video.
- 11 people told us they did not receive any aftercare advice.





What people said

Treatment and aftercare

'I go to Orchard Centre due to my needs, phobia of dental work, and in a wheelchair. Orchard Centre is great. Sometimes it can take a few weeks to be seen but that's never been an issue.'

'Our family use private dental healthcare in Rugby. We were unable to access an NHS dentist. Our dentist requires us to pay extra by having hygienist appointments on top of regular dentist visits in order to stay on their books.'

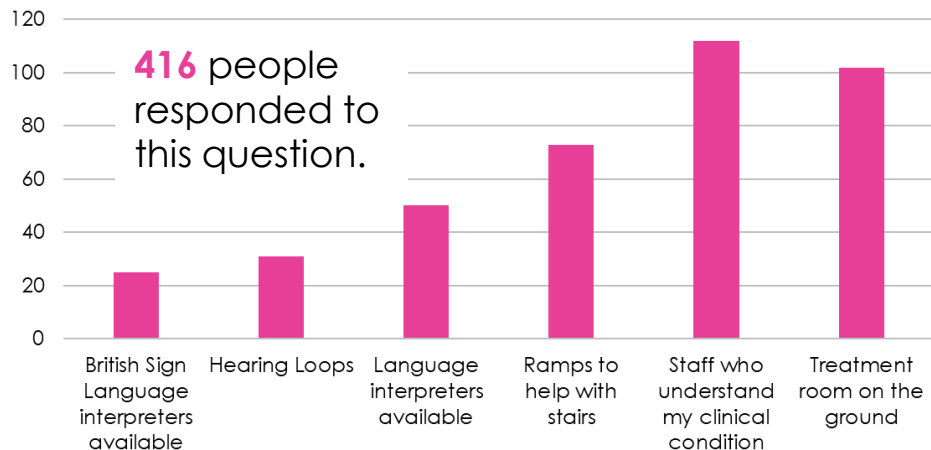
'I have had very good experience of dental services in Rugby - I was able to register my child at the practice I use, and we have both been able to book a regular check-up appointment when needed. We received a reminder that it was due. I saw the dentist I usually see.'

'I was referred to a dentist in Coventry. The dentist was really informative as I had issues with clotting. They called back and were really helpful. they contacted a local practice to ask them to give me wads which they did as I can't easily get to Coventry.'



What we heard: accessibility

Which of these are important to you in a dental practice?
(Choose any that apply)



- The most common response overall, including from those with a Disability, is that people think it is important that dental staff understand their clinical condition.
- Having a treatment room on the ground floor of a practice is seen as important by people with a Long-Term Condition, a Disability, those aged 25 years and above, and someone who told us they are ex-armed forces.
- People also told us that having pushchair access (9), being able to communicate with their practice digitally (6) and having larger print signs and leaflets (4) is important to them.

	People who told us they have a Disability (82)	People who told us they have a Long Term Condition (87)	People who told us English is not their first language (62)	0-12 year olds	13-15 year olds	16-17 year olds	18-24 year olds	25-34 year olds	35-49 year olds	50-64 year olds	65-79 year olds	80+ year olds
British Sign Language interpreters available	3	7	3	2	0	2	1	4	9	4	2	1
Hearing Loops	10	10	3	2	0	1	3	3	7	4	4	6
Language interpreters available	7	9	27	3	0	3	7	11	15	5	4	1
Ramps to help with stairs	31	23	6	2	1	1	3	20	11	11	8	15
Staff who understand my clinical condition	39	37	17	2	1	2	5	23	26	20	20	12
Treatment room on the ground	38	38	11	2	0	2	4	23	17	14	15	24
None of these	17	24	16	1	1	18	21	45	45	34	32	14



What people said

Accessibility

'I am over 80. They have 22 steps and no lift. We told them I couldn't make it up the steps because I had a stroke, use a walking frame and can't use the banisters to support myself upstairs. They said they have never been told I had a stroke, well it happened years ago. They suggested I go to Special Dental Care, and I have been referred but we haven't heard from them yet.'

'I have epilepsy and due to my seizures damaged my teeth, no financial help for surgical work which is very sad as I can't afford to get my teeth fixed.'

'My children have ASD; my current dentist is very understanding but refers to specialist for treatment.'

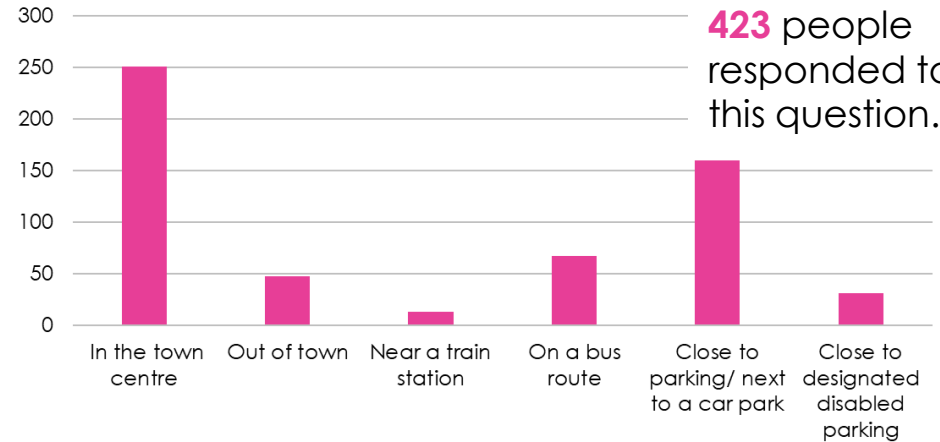
'A member of staff was bilingual, so I was able to understand what was happening and how to look after my teeth.'



What we heard: location

- The most common response from people who live in CV21 and CV22, closest to Rugby town centre, was they would prefer to access dental treatment in the town centre. 20 people said 'within walking distance' would be preferred.
- People who live in CV23 or outside of Rugby, told us they would prefer to access dental treatment close to, or next to, parking. Three people also told us they would prefer free parking due to the costs involved with dental care.

Where would you prefer to access dental treatment?
(Choose any that apply)



	CV21	CV22	CV23	Live in Rugby but did not share their post code	Other post codes	People who told us they have a Disability (82)	People who told us they have a Long Term Condition (87)	People who told us they are Carers (46)
In the town centre	76	60	25	83	5	55	57	9
Out of town	10	14	8	8	5	8	7	2
Near a train station	4	3	1	3	0	1	2	2
On a bus route	16	13	4	31	2	20	16	6
Close to parking/ next to a car park	41	41	27	38	8	33	40	26
Close to designated disabled parking	6	10	4	9	1	19	15	8
I don't mind where it is	19	17	20	20	6	9	10	5



What people said

Location

'I'm currently struggling with huge tooth ache but can't get treatment anywhere in Rugby and difficult for me to travel.'

'I drive outside Rugby to get dentist treatment; it is not really comfortable with a new-born baby. I feel disappointed to have limited access to dental services. Even outside Rugby , I've been waiting for more than half of the year for my appointment.'

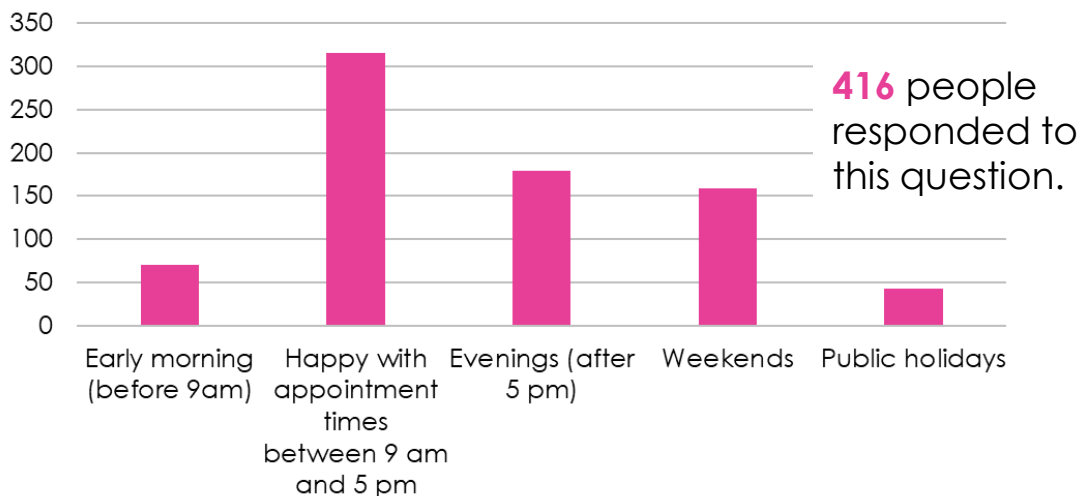
'We go to a practice in the town centre, which has nearby parking and can be reached by bus if necessary.'

'I had a maternity exemption certificate, but it did not give me anything. I prefer to go back to my country as I know they will do it properly and I won't need to pay so much.'



What we heard: appointments

When would you want dental appointments to be available? (Choose any that apply)



- The most common response from people of all ages, and Carers, was that they are happy with appointment times between 9 am and 5 pm.
- Appointment times after 5 pm and on weekends were the second most common responses across the age range and with Carers.
- Three people told us it is difficult for them to take time off to attend appointments during their working day.
- Six people said they have difficulty booking appointments when trying to avoid school hours.

	0-12 year olds	13-15 year olds	16-17 year olds	18-24 year olds	25-34 year olds	35-49 year olds	50-64 year olds	65-79 year olds	80+ year olds	Carers
Most common response										
Second most common response										
Early morning (before 9am)	2	0	1	5	19	22	11	4	4	9
Happy with appointment times between 9 am and 5 pm	3	2	15	28	59	58	49	58	42	34
Evenings (after 5 pm)	2	0	11	20	49	55	26	10	5	23
Weekends	2	1	8	14	50	47	22	8	6	24
Public holidays	1	0	0	6	14	10	6	2	3	3



What people said

Appointments

'Takes a big chunk out of my working day to go to the dentist as nothing available locally.'

'I have been seeing the same Dentist for many years, because of dental issues I have seen them quite frequently -often at short notice and the practice have always found a time for me to go in. The reception staff are very friendly, professional and helpful.'

'It has been difficult for my family to make appointments out of school hours.'

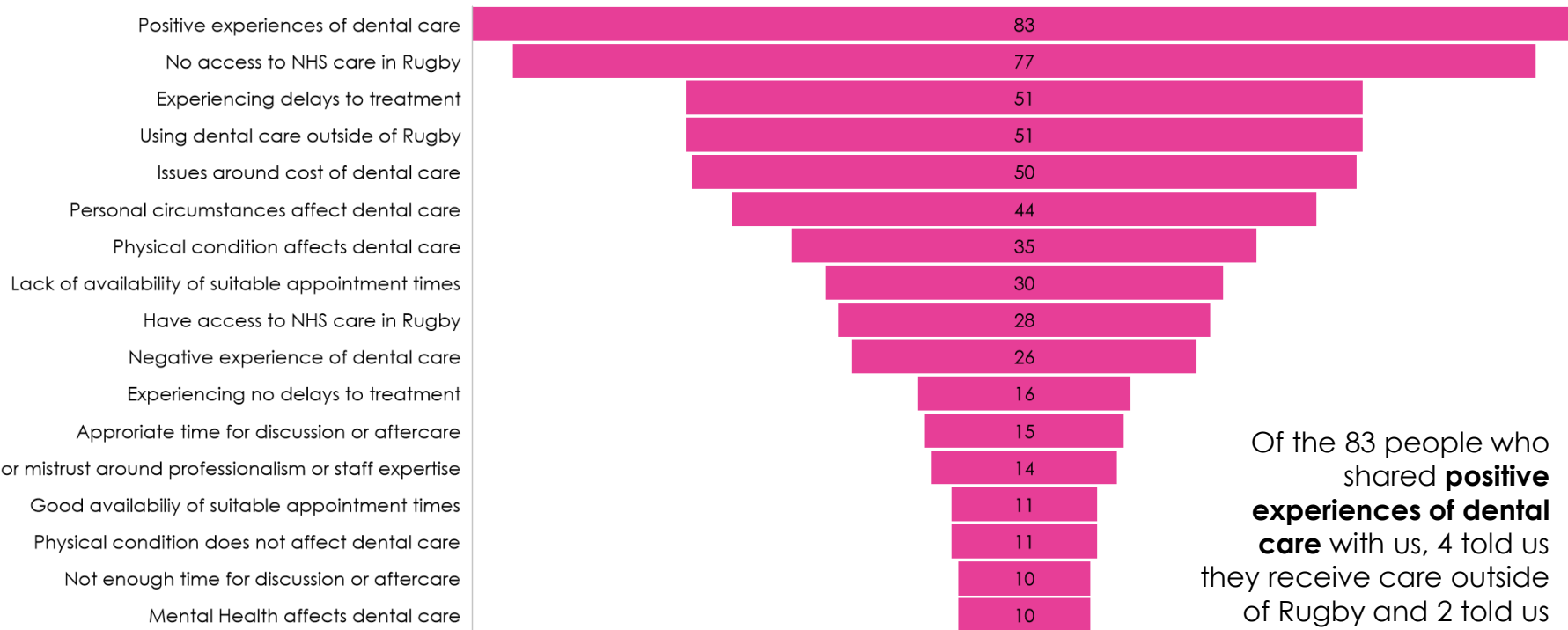
'I have a good experience with the dentist and can get appointments. My child doesn't let me clean their teeth (they have additional needs) and so will be referred to the specialist dentist.'



What we heard: other common themes

Throughout our survey we provided opportunities, using open text response, for people to share their views and experiences with us around choices of dental treatment, personal circumstances that may affect dental care, and any other issues. These comments have been grouped into themes.

Themes that received 10 or more comments



Of the 83 people who shared **positive experiences of dental care** with us, 4 told us they receive care outside of Rugby and 2 told us they pay for private care.

What we heard: concerns/ suggestions

54 people shared their concerns around dental care, or suggestions for improvements, with us.

Concerns

Most commonly, 24 people told us they were concerned generally about a lack of NHS dental care, and a further 14 mentioned the need for more NHS dental care specifically in Rugby.

Other **concerns** included:

- Rising costs and affordability of treatment in the future.
- Delays to treatment due to lack of access.
- Premises becoming harder to access with age.

Suggestions

- Provision of up-to-date lists of practices taking on NHS patients.
- Easier access to emergency appointments.
- Staff training for working with Neurodiverse people.
- Free dental care for children.
- Use of more digital communication by practices.
- A one stop shop for vision, hearing and dental care.
- Improved dental hygiene education for children.

Summary

We heard:

- People are finding it difficult to access NHS dental care in Rugby, particularly those who are new to the area.
- Out of area care has been used, both by people who have failed to access NHS dental care in Rugby and those who have chosen to continue treatment in a native country citing better value or preferred levels of care.
- Parents/carers of neurodivergent children, and those who have anxiety or trauma around dental care, have experienced delays to treatment and tell us they appreciate staff who are trained/experienced in providing appropriate care.
- Grab rails on stairs, lifts and downstairs treatment rooms were all mentioned as being helpful to those with a disability or concerned about access as they become older.
- People are accessing private dental care, despite concerns around costs, in some cases because they are unable to access NHS care.
- Those in employment and students can find it difficult to access appointment times that do not interfere with their commitments.
- People can feel pressurised to pay more than they can afford, particularly to see hygienists.
- Pre-existing conditions can affect appointments and cause delays to treatment.
- People, including new parents, have issues with using exemption certificates.

Response from the NHS Dental Commissioning Team (1)

'The Commissioning Team welcomes this Survey Report which will help to improve the quality of service delivered to patients requiring dental treatment. We are continuously working with our providers to improve dental services.

It is important for the public to realise that registration with an NHS dentist has not existed since 2006. Many dental practices may maintain a list of NHS patients they offer to recall, but patients are unable to register with an NHS dentist in the same way as for a GP. Dentists are commissioned to provide a level of dental activity rather than to care for a specific group of patients.

In all our commissioned services we expect our dental practices to provide equitable access including those who can be considered vulnerable and the standards that govern dental services supports this ambition. This will, for example include things like, access for wheelchair users and mobility challenges, patients requiring interpretation services and so on.

NHS Dental charges can be viewed on <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/dentists/dental-costs/understanding-nhs-dental-charges/> which provides current NHS dental charges including information on patients who are exempt from paying.

It is always the ambition of Commissioners to ensure that dental services are conveniently situated for patients but also having regard that they are sustainable to ensure that the public are getting better value for their money and that the service continues to provide dental services for generations to come...

Response from the NHS Dental Commissioning Team (2)

...Dental services have been significantly affected by the pandemic, but we have seen improvements and recovery in dental services. We know there is more work to be done including recruitment and retention of more clinical dental workforce. However, we have seen promising results in Warwickshire even though some members of the public may not experience it yet.

We know that some parts of the County like Rugby, will need more to be done and we are committed to ensuring that improvements in dental access are felt across the area, but we will need the public to be patient as some of the solutions will take time to bed in.

If a patient does not have a regular NHS dentist, they should contact NHS 111 who will be able to signpost to a dentist. For people with an urgent dental need the NHS111 Clinical Assessment Service can provide a clinical triage and refer people into a dental service.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Healthwatch Warwickshire for running this patient survey. **We also want to thank all the members of the public who have taken their precious time to participate and give their feedback.'**



Thank you to everyone who supported this work and took part in the survey.

For more information

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