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**Service evaluation of a new unscheduled paediatric dental service in Lothian, Scotland**

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**Background:**

During and after the COVID-19 pandemic, it was difficult to register with a general dental practitioner. A new dental service was developed for unregistered paediatric patients in NHS Lothian in Scotland who required urgent dental treatment. This aimed to provide a safety-net function and reduce attendance at stretched emergency services.

**Objectives:**

To evaluate this new urgent paediatric dental service.

**Methods:**

A retrospective service evaluation was carried out for all children who attended from June 2020 to December 2021. Patient-related experience measures (PREMS) and patient-related outcome measures (PROMS) questionnaires were offered prospectively after all treatments for three months.

**Results**

Over 268 appointments, 158 children were treated. The *was-not-brought* rate was 6.7%. Ages ranged from 1 month to 16 years 11 months (median 7.4 years). Travel distance to the clinic ranged from 0.4km to 39.8km (median 9.5km). A recent change of clinic location reduced median travel distance by 5km. 72% of patients had a Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation code of 1-3, 29% had additional support needs and 4% required an interpreter. Extraction (47%) was the most common treatment and inhalation sedation (47%) the most common modality. 28% of children required referral for general anaesthetic. PROMS and PREMS (N=20) showed that 90% of parents/guardians found it easy or very easy to access the clinic. 100% reported improvement in pain, eating and sleep. 75% of treated children were on a waiting list or registered with a dentist at the review telephone appointment.

**Conclusion:**

This service reduces the burden on community and hospitals by providing a simple, accessible course of treatment to unregistered, often vulnerable children. The clinic is largely meeting its purpose, with patient satisfaction confirmed by PROMS and PREMS.

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