

BASCD 2024 Abstract #12

Waiting list management in primary dental care in Yorkshire and the Humber

Watt, S., Eapen Simon, S.
NHS England – North East and Yorkshire, UK*

Background:

Nationally and regionally people are experiencing difficulty accessing NHS dental services with practices holding extensive waiting lists independently in the absence of national or regional guidance on appropriate management.

Objectives:

The objectives were to survey NHS dental practices in Yorkshire and the Humber (Y&H) to help commissioners understand waiting list management, unmet need and public messaging, and to develop and pilot test a waiting list validation tool for use in primary dental practice.

Methods:

Dental practices in Y&H were funded for training and to report on waiting list numbers, management and workforce. A scoping exercise highlighted there was no appropriate primary dental care validation tool. A waiting list validation toolkit was developed and pilot tested. Ethical approval was not required for this project.

Results:

The survey had a response rate of 55% (331/600 dental practices in Y&H). Waiting list management was inconsistent and patient messaging was ambiguous. Seventy one percent of respondents held an NHS waiting list, half of which (117/235) reported that their waiting lists were not validated. Use of the validation tool led to immediate change in waiting list management; the tool was useful, acceptable to dental practices and provided reassurance to patients.

Conclusions:

The project has supported Integrated Care Boards to have a better understanding of unmet need in Y&H. The waiting list validation toolkit, shared nationally, helped standardise management of waiting lists and improve patient messaging for the first time nationally and regionally. A waiting list initiative utilising the validation tool and sessional payments to improve access for patients on waiting lists is currently being piloted in practices in West Yorkshire.

Funding source:

NHS England - North East and Yorkshire (Yorkshire and the Humber)

Correspondence to:

Samantha Watt

Email: samantha.watt1@nhs.net

https://doi.org/10.1922/CDH_BASCD24_Abstract12