

BASCD 2022 ABSTRACT 02

The health service impacts of alternative options to paediatric dental general anaesthetics

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Background:

Historically, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHS GGC) has had high numbers of paediatric patients waiting for dental procedures under general anaesthetic (GA). Reduced access to theatre lists during the COVID-19 pandemic became a driver to introduce alternative treatment modalities for these patients, including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Silver Diamine Fluoride, and use of the Dental Wand for local anaesthetic.

Objectives:

To explore the impact of introducing alternative treatment modalities on the dental system in NHS GGC during the COVID-19 pandemic for patients referred for paediatric dental GA.

Methods:

Routinely collated data on paediatric GA waiting lists were collated for descriptive analysis by total patient numbers, and proportion of patients waiting >12 weeks. This was compared to reported data for NHS GGC and other areas of Scotland from June 2019 to June 2021 in conjunction with additional service level information to understand any differences observed between the datasets.

Results:

In June 2019, NHS GGC had the highest absolute count of patients waiting >12 weeks (n=201), and proportion of Scotland's overall total of patients waiting >12 weeks for paediatric dental GA (66.6%). Following introduction of alternative treatment modalities, by June 2021, there were significantly reduced numbers of patients both waiting >12 weeks for GA (n=92) and proportion of Scotland's total waiting list (14.4%).

Conclusion:

COVID-19 related service pressures in NHS GGC for paediatric dental GA were reduced. The alternative treatment options delivered better outcomes. Further evaluation leading to expanded use should be encouraged moving forward.

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