



healthwatch
South Gloucestershire



ACCESSING DENTAL SERVICES

BY THE LEARNING DISABILITY COMMUNITY

A summary from oral health and dental services
engagement

ACCESSING DENTAL SERVICES

BY THE LEARNING DISABILITY COMMUNITY

The Hive Day Centre and Healthwatch have received feedback from the learning disability community about their understanding of oral health, and experiences of dental services.

Information was received from twelve South Gloucestershire and forty Bristol residents who use the The Hive. Information received included;

- How, and where from, people get information on maintaining healthy teeth and mouths, including how to clean teeth
- Who makes appointments for people for dental services and why?
- Experiences of dental services
- Changes that would improve dental services for this community

The full Hive report, including participant comments will be available on the Healthwatch South Gloucestershire website (www.healthwatchsouthglos.co.uk) and circulated to our mailing lists via the monthly e-bulletin.

You Said.....

1. The majority of respondents know how to keep their teeth and mouth healthy, and how to clean their teeth. This information comes primarily from dentists and Carers.
2. The majority of respondents know what food and drink is bad for their teeth. Focus group respondents were also surprised about the levels of sugar 'hidden' in certain foods such as processed food and fruit juice.
3. Most respondents clean their teeth twice a day, and visit the dentist twice a year; many visit once a year. Appointments are mostly booked by Carers and family for the patient as they do not feel they have the knowledge or confidence to do so themselves.
4. Most respondents feel the information they have from dental services is understood. Further investigation is required into whether this is because Carers share information from dental letters, or whether the information is in an accessible format.
5. Experiences of visiting the dentist: 48 comments received



Although twenty seven people are happy or okay with visiting the dentist, twenty one people are worried about visits. Those that are happy visiting their dentist were so because they like the dentist. Those who were worried were anxious about the waiting times, waiting rooms and lack of information about procedures.

Five themes have been identified from the feedback;

- More information is required about hidden sugars within food and drinks.
- Long waits to see the dentist increases patients' anxiety.
- The primary worry about visiting the dentist was the possibility of procedures taking place which patients do not have information about.
- Changes to facilities in the waiting rooms and dental surgery may help reduce anxiety about visiting the dentist and possible treatment.
- Changes to how information is shared with patients, such as using Easy Read, would mean they are more able to access information about their treatment and could be more likely to make their own appointments.

Healthwatch will....

Included information from the extended report in the Healthwatch South Gloucestershire's Quarterly Report. Healthwatch will be sharing this report with partners including the South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group, South Gloucestershire Council, the Care Quality Commission, NHS England and Healthwatch England. The report will also be presented to the Healthwatch South Gloucestershire Advisory Group to propose further uptake of the issues identified in this report.

Looking forward....

Plans for future work between Healthwatch South Gloucestershire and The Hive: Healthwatch Volunteer Champions from the Hive will visit two dental surgeries, one in South Gloucestershire and one in Bristol, to look at the accessibility of the surgeries, including the availability of easy read information.

Tell Us Your Story...

Healthwatch South Gloucestershire wants to hear from you about your experiences so that we can tell services your needs to create the best local services.



Text us - text SG followed by your message to 07860 021 603



Email us at info@healthwatchsouthglos.co.uk



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Or visit our website to see more at: www.healthwatchsouthglos.co.uk

