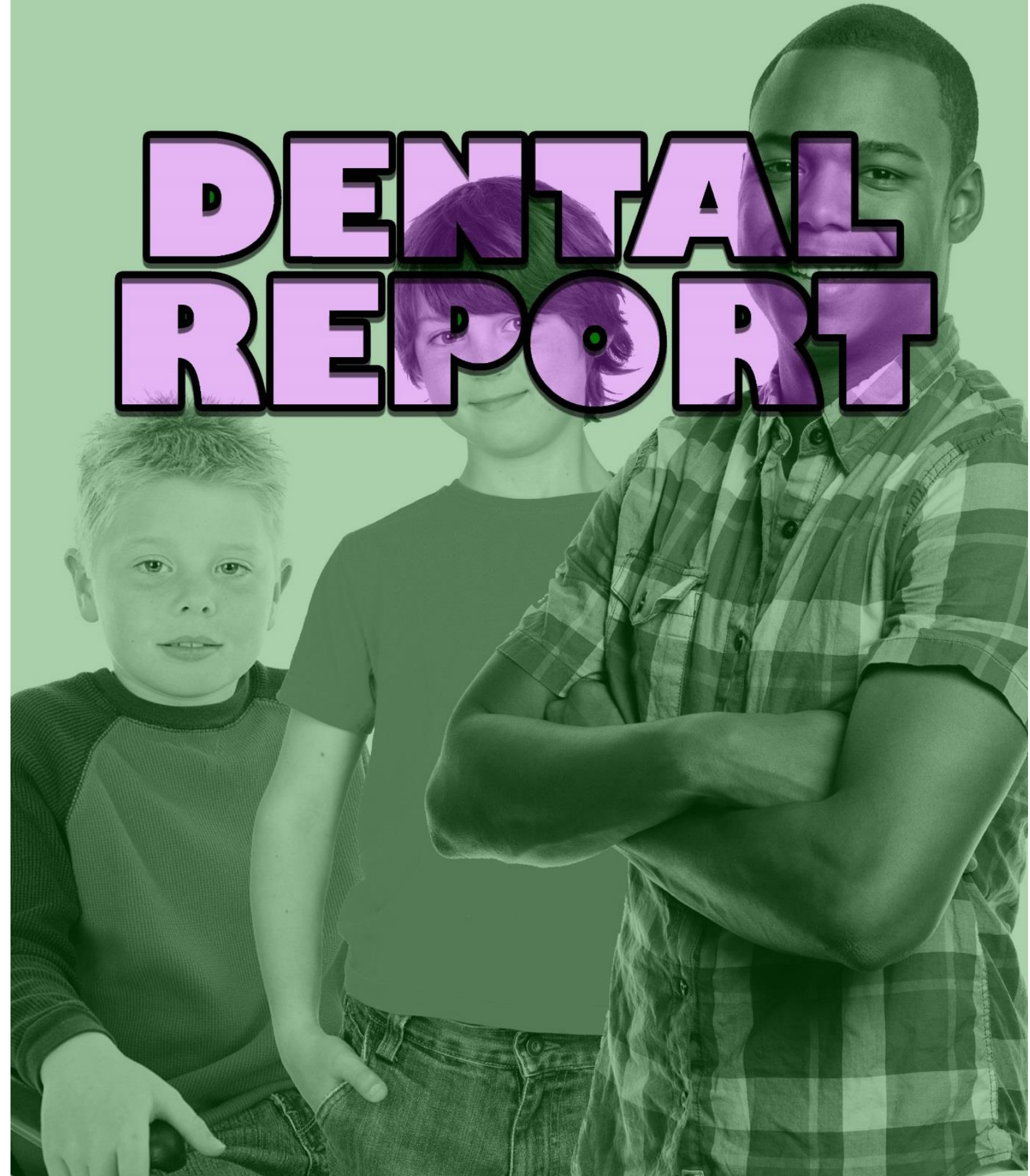


DENTAL REPORT



About Healthwatch and our role in the community

Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire works to help local people get the best out of their local health and social care services. Whether it's improving them today or helping to shape them for tomorrow, Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire is all about local voices being able to influence the delivery and design of local services. Not just people who use them now, but anyone who might need to in the future.

This report will focus on three questions that as the voice of the community we want to put forward.

1. Why is this issue important?

Healthwatch want to identify if young people under the age of 25, living in the East Riding are getting access to dental care and if not why not? Highlighting what young people would improve about their service is also important as it means we are directly listening to the service users to help shape and guide the transition of services.

2. What did young people tell us about their dentists?

Healthwatch rolled out a survey to young people to ask them about their dental services. What did young people have to say on this subject?

3. What can we all do about this issue locally?

Healthwatch will provide recommendations to local service providers on how they can improve where and when appropriate.

Why is this issue important?

Why dental health?

Practicing good oral health and taking care of your mouth, teeth and gums is crucial for everybody but never more important than with young people. Trying to build habits and routines that encourage young people to utilise health services and dentists as they transition into adulthood has never been more important.

Some of the health effects from poor oral health include bad breath, tooth decay and gum disease. All these are paramount if young people wish to keep their teeth and have good oral health in later life.

Some of the facts

In 2015 the *Faculty of Dental Surgery* published a report titled “The State of Children’s Oral Health in England”¹ this report highlighted some gaps in the overall service which included:

- Between 2011-2014 nearly 30% of children did not see an NHS dentist
- In some areas there is a shortage of paediatric dentists
- Not enough statistics showing how frequently children are accessing services.
- Not enough education around oral health to both children and parents nationally.

These are some of the findings from the report that help paint the picture of children’s dental services across the country.

Reason for the investigation

The information provided from the Faculty of Dental Surgery highlighted some gaps nationally. It is important for Healthwatch as a children and young people’s advocate to investigate if these national trends are found locally.

In 2014 Healthwatch ran a survey aimed at young people where they could identify areas of the health and social care sector that hold significant importance to them. The “What Matters” Report was a document that highlighted in a ranked order the areas young people wanted Healthwatch to investigate.²

In that original Survey, Dentistry was named near the top of the list. In 2015 and as part of Healthwatch’s Strategic plan set out by our Advisory Body, Dentistry was again chosen as an area to investigate.

¹ <https://www.rcseng.ac.uk/fds/policy/documents/fds-report-on-the-state-of-childrens-oral-health>

² <http://www.healthwatcheastridingofyorkshire.co.uk/resources/what-matters-report>

Healthwatch East Riding work to the patients' needs and concerns. This report is not aimed at identifying bad practice or finding venues that are not up to standard, the report aims to find out what young people think of their dentist, do they go on a regular basis and do they even have a dentist? If not, why not?

Research methodology.

Objective

To find out if young people are accessing their dentist and if so are they attending on a regular basis? If young people have not got a dentist what are the reasons behind this? What would young people change about their dentists?

Timescale

Information was collected over a four month period from September - December 2015

Recruitment & Publicity

Healthwatch wanted to ensure that we spoke to a wide range of young people across a wide geographical area. Healthwatch made sure that young people could access our survey online through social media. We also promoted the survey to our schools mailing list for the students to participate in. Overall we spoke to over 600 students with 137 young people completing the dental survey for us.

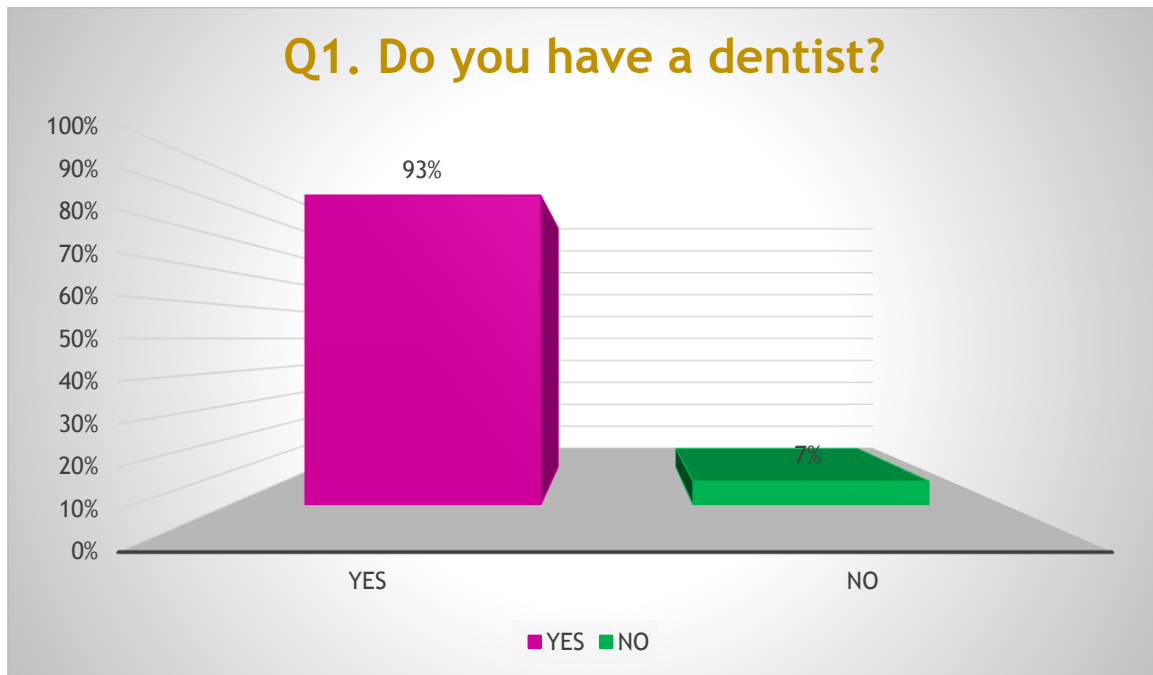
Criteria

The survey was available for anybody under the age of 25, living within the East Riding. The survey was inclusive of everybody regardless of gender, religion, race or physical ability.

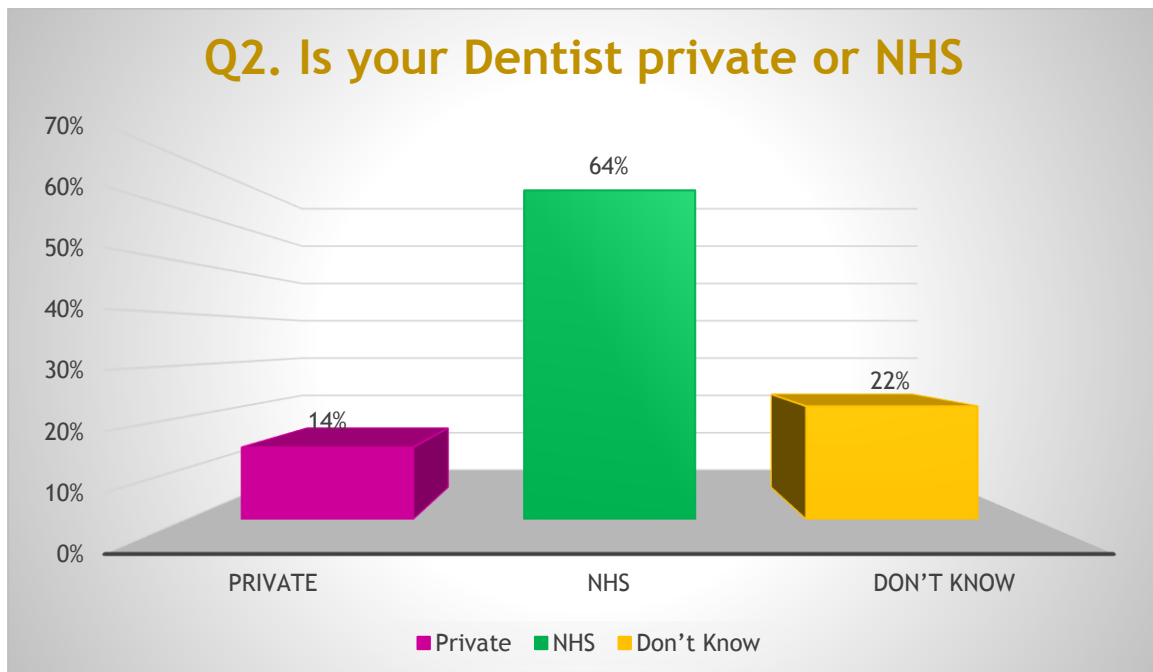
Data Protection

All surveys completed remained anonymous as the information being collected was sensitive and private to young people. Privacy was maintained throughout the entire process. This report will not publish any names of young people who participated.

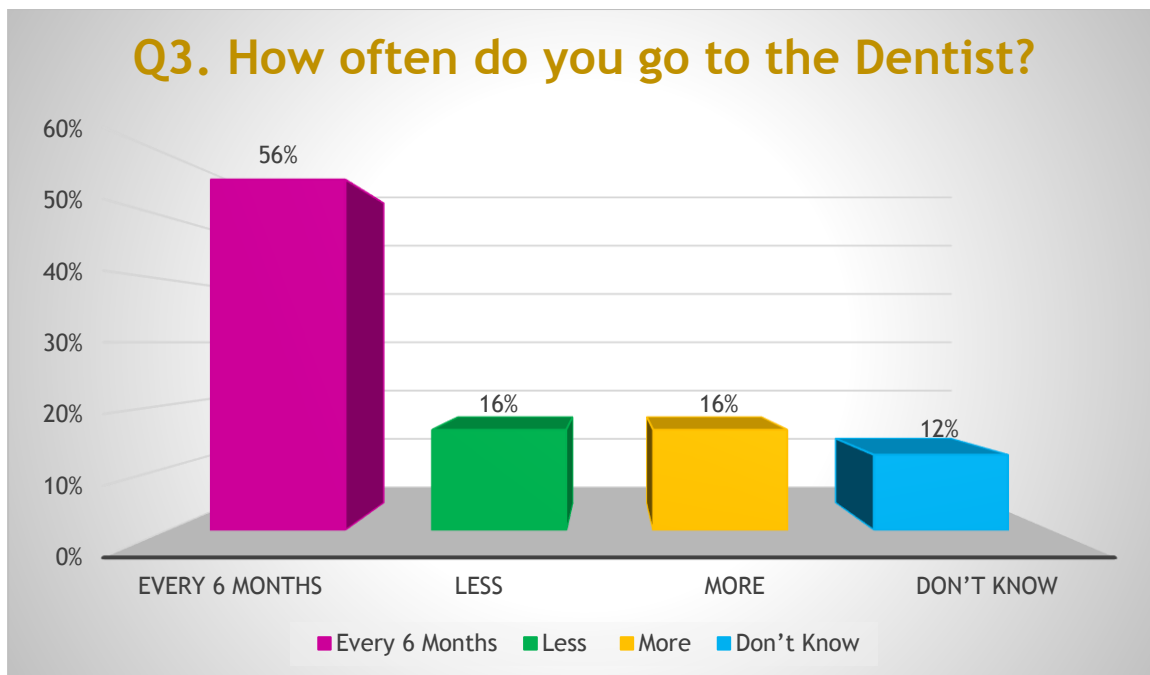
Results of the Dental survey.



This question was asked as part of finding out if you people have access to their local dentist. With only 7% of young people claiming they do not currently have a dentist in the East Riding.



We wanted to find out from the 93% who did have dentists if they were private or NHS. 64% of young people claim they have an NHS dentist with only 14% being private. A further 22% did not know.



This question was asked to follow up on finding out the access young people have. Do young people get to see their dentists on a regular basis? According to the statistics received, over half of the young people surveyed see their dentist every 6 months, compare this with national guidelines on the *NHS Choices* website which state young people should visit the dentist once a year and the East Riding are doing very well. ³

Question 4.

If you could change one thing about the Dentist what would it be?

Young people gaining access to their local dentist clearly is not a significant issue amongst the people we spoke to. But what do young people think of their service? We asked what young people would change about their service. The results were mixed and offered an insight into what is paramount to those using the service.

No change needed:

52% of those who responded to this question stated there is nothing that they would change to their service. Overall young people feel they benefit greatly from the service they receive and only had praise for their local dentist.

Cost of the service:

Young people did have some mild concerns with the cost of the service. Most of the individuals were getting a free service because of their age. However those who had to pay wanted an exemption due to their employment status, some young people as students who were above a certain age did not want to have to pay for what was called “an expensive service.”

³ <http://www.nhs.uk/chq/pages/1780.aspx?CategoryID=74&SubCategoryID=741>

Manners and approach:

Those who answered this question also pointed out that they can feel uncomfortable whilst at the dentist and on some occasions the dentists can be quite rude and lack manners. Again as you can see by the responses below this is not a common occurrence.

Small issues:

Other things highlighted in this question are all very small issues that young people have. These range from the environment such as the waiting area or the car park, to the rate of appointments they are able to receive.

Please see below for all the comments made in response to question 4.

Nothing
Nothing
Better waiting area
More appointments
How long you wait
I don't no
A lady dentist
Nothing, good dentist
Nothing
Extend free dental services
More frequent
Nothing
Nothing
Softer approach
Give advice
My dentist
Nothing
Location
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Give more help
Nothing, there ok
Right treatment
Impressions

Nothing
TV on the chair while your teeth are getting done
I don't no
Smell better
Could smell better
Have some more English dentists
Nothing
Bad customer service
Nothing
Make all braces free. mine were far to expensive
Nothing
Nothing
Make it cheaper for adults
I would make it free for unemployed and students
Nothing
Parking
Good
Good
Nothing
Nothing
More frequent
Go more frequent
Nothing
Nicer
Be a little more reassuring
Nothing
Nothing, good dentist
Nothing
Language issue
Nothing
Clearer accent
The smell
Nothing
Waiting room is not big enough

Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Location
Nothing
Nothing
Better waiting area
Dentist is really clean and friendly
Brutal
Nothing
Free stickers at any age
Nothing
Speed of service
Nothing
Nothing
Be more polite
How expensive
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing, good dentist
Nothing
Nothing
Free sweets
Nothing
Smell
Nothing
Stinks in there
The smell is really bad
The language they use.
Nothing

Conclusion

The reality is, according to the young people who spoke to us and took part in the survey, there really is not much wrong with the dental services being offered to young people in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

At the time of starting this investigation access was an issue that we felt young people needed addressing. Certainly in some individual cases there are examples of lack of appointments or young people not being able to register with a dentist. However, across the board the majority of results indicate that not only do young people under the age of 25 have access to their dentists but they also think that they run a great service.

This report can serve as an example of good practice as seen from the perspective of the young people who use the local dental services.

Recommendations

- Healthwatch to make report available via the website and also send the report to dental practices across the East Riding.

References

- a) The State of children's Oral Health in England:
<https://www.rcseng.ac.uk/fds/policy/documents/fds-report-on-the-state-of-childrens-oral-health>
- b) The "What Matters" Healthwatch Report
<http://www.healthwatcheastridingofyorkshire.co.uk/resources/what-matters-report>
- c) Question 3 - National Comparison by NHS Choices
<http://www.nhs.uk/chq/pages/1780.aspx?CategoryID=74&SubCategoryID=741>