



Dental practices in Newcastle:
What is NHS Choices saying about you?

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1. About Healthwatch Newcastle

Healthwatch Newcastle is one of 152 local Healthwatch organisations established throughout England on 1 April 2013 under the provisions of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. We have a dual role to champion the rights of users of publicly funded health and social care services for both adults and children, and to hold the system to account for how well it engages with the public.

We collect feedback on services from people of all ages and from all communities. We do this through our network of voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations; comments cards at events; regular drop-in sessions and listening events at a range of venues across the city; social media; callers to our ‘Just ask’ helpline; and online through the feedback centre on our website and app. As part of the remit to gather views we also have the power to ‘enter and view’ services and conduct announced and unannounced visits.

2. Introduction

In 2015 Young Healthwatch Newcastle (our group run by young people aged 13–25 years) produced a report highlighting a lack of information for young people accessing dental services in Newcastle¹. The research found that information often seemed to be missing or incorrect on the NHS Choices website.

The NHS Choices website contains a directory of information about all NHS service providers in England in a standardised format, including dental practices. The site aims to help service users make informed choices about which service is best for their needs. It includes information such as contact details, directions, opening hours and service/treatment offered.

The website is hosted and managed by the NHS, but it is the dental practices themselves that are responsible for keeping their information up-to-date.

We decided to complement our report by investigating how useful and complete the information is for the 42 dental practices in Newcastle listed on the NHS Choices website.

3. How we conducted the evaluation

From January to March 2016 eight reviewers, comprising mostly Healthwatch Champions and Young Healthwatch Newcastle volunteers, were each given between four and six Newcastle dental practices’ NHS Choices webpages to review. An evaluation was carried out to see if:

- The information displayed online was complete
- The quality of information would allow patients to make informed choices

¹ ‘Young people’s dental health project in Newcastle’ <http://tinyurl.com/ze5w3fs>

- There were any gaps in the information provided and whether it had recently been updated

A standard template was developed and completed for each dental practice. (See appendix 1)

We also wanted to understand some of the issues that dental practices may experience using NHS Choices so we asked them for their views on the NHS Choices website and its ease of use.

4. Summary of findings

i. Information hasn't been updated

We found that many webpages had not been updated since the site was populated five years ago. We have not verified whether the data has remained accurate. The website loses its value to the public if it is not regularly maintained with accurate up-to-date information.

ii. Comprehensive information

There were some gaps in the information for the dental practices we reviewed:

- Overview section – less than half (16) of the 42 practices provided 'friends and family' test information
- Departments and services section – few practices (8) provided a list of services
- Facilities section – just over one third (15) of practices displayed complete information about accessibility for patients with a disability
- Staff section – only two practices gave information about the names of dental nurses at the practice
- Reviews and ratings section – 28 practices had received reviews from service users, but only 10 of these dental practice had responded to the comments made.

iii. Best practice

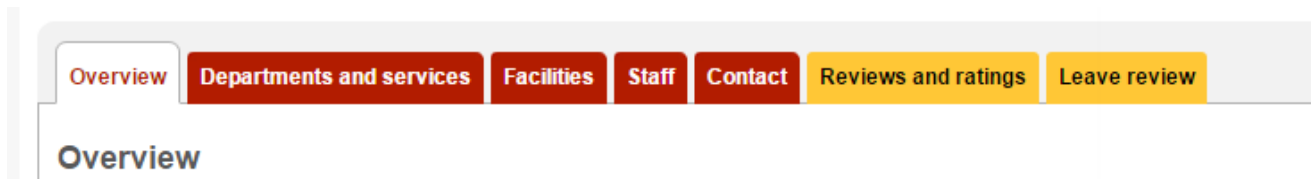
Some webpages contained information which we believe is especially useful for service users, including:

- Patient reviews, with responses from the dental practice to both positive and negative comments
- Details about access for people with disabilities including people with visual impairment
- How to travel to the surgery by both private and public transport
- Details about other available languages

Although it was not part of the review, some reviewers looked at the practices' own websites and in some cases found them more helpful than NHS Choices. However, many dental practices which had their own website did not publish their website address on the NHS Choices webpage.

5. Findings in detail

NHS Choices information about service providers is divided into the following tabs: Overview, Departments and services, Facilities, Staff, Contact, Reviews and ratings and finally Leave review.



This report will go through each webpage tab by tab and share the most and least complete information, and provide examples of best practice where available. For a copy of the template we used to review the pages, complete with the summary data collected. (Please see appendix 1)

i. Overview tab

Key information about opening times, address, telephone number and which 'patients they are currently accepting' were all, or almost all, complete.

Only 16 of 42 practices had Friends and Family Test information displayed. (NHS survey question asking patients if they would recommend a service to their friends and family)

Best practice

mydentist at Kenton Park had a helpful introduction written by the practice manager, as well as details of the range of services on offer and how to make an online appointment, all of which were updated in 2016.

mydentist, Kenton Park, Gosforth
0191 285 3303
1-2 Kenton Park Shopping Centre, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE3 4PL
<https://www.mydentist.co.uk/newcastle-upon-tyne-696>

★★★★★ **Leave review**
Based on 25 ratings for this dentist

Overview | Departments and services | Facilities | Staff | Contact | Reviews and ratings | Leave review

News: Toothache??? Your NHS Treatment could be FREE! Book an appointment online

Overview

Welcome to mydentist, Kenton Park, Gosforth. Our friendly local practice offers a wide range of dental services and our clinicians have a wealth of experience enabling them to provide advice and treatment on all aspects of dental care from General Dentistry to Hygienic Services, Cosmetic Dentistry, Dental Implants and Teeth Whitening.

Over seven million people in the UK trust mydentist with their dental care and we remain committed to providing the latest treatments and helping the nation to continue to improve their oral health.

We believe in being honest with our customers about the treatments they need and the potential costs involved and we also believe that customer care shouldn't end once you've left our practice. As a practice team and a company we're always on hand to help with any questions or concerns you may have and would love to receive any feedback about your experience in our practice so we can continue to do review and improve the services that we provide.

If you would like to book an examination appointment with us please give the practice a call or alternatively we also have online booking available through the mydentist website above.

We look forward to seeing you in practice

Opening times

Monday	09:00 - 18:00
Tuesday	09:00 - 20:00
Wednesday	09:00 - 20:00
Thursday	09:00 - 20:00
Friday	09:00 - 18:00
Saturday	09:00 - 14:00
Sunday	Closed

Last verified on 10/12/2016

Departments and services

We're proud to offer the full scope of NHS treatment to our patients and complement this with a full range of Private Treatments which include:

- Implants, Crown Whitening, Quick Straight Teeth, Invisalign, 16 Month Smile and Facial Aesthetics.

To search for a specific treatment, use our [full list of departments](#)

New NHS dental patients welcome

Come in and speak to our friendly receptionists

{my}dentist

NHS patients this practice is currently accepting

- Free-paying adults
- Charge-exempt adults
- Children aged 0-10 years
- Urgent dental care patients
- Only by referral from a dental practitioner

Last verified on 10/12/2016

Latest reviews of this dental practice

★★★★★
Appointment booking
I rang to rearrange my children's appointment a week in advance. The receptionist was rude and unhelpful and I failed to make a further a...
5 September 2016

★★★★★
Everything a modern dentist should be - outstanding!
After poor experiences elsewhere with dentists who really don't value my business, this dentist is a breath of fresh air! I can book onl...
21 August 2016

★★★★★
Dentist ruined my front teeth
I visited this dentist last year to have a small filling on my front tooth. Instead the dentist decided to (without asking) file down bot...
17 August 2016

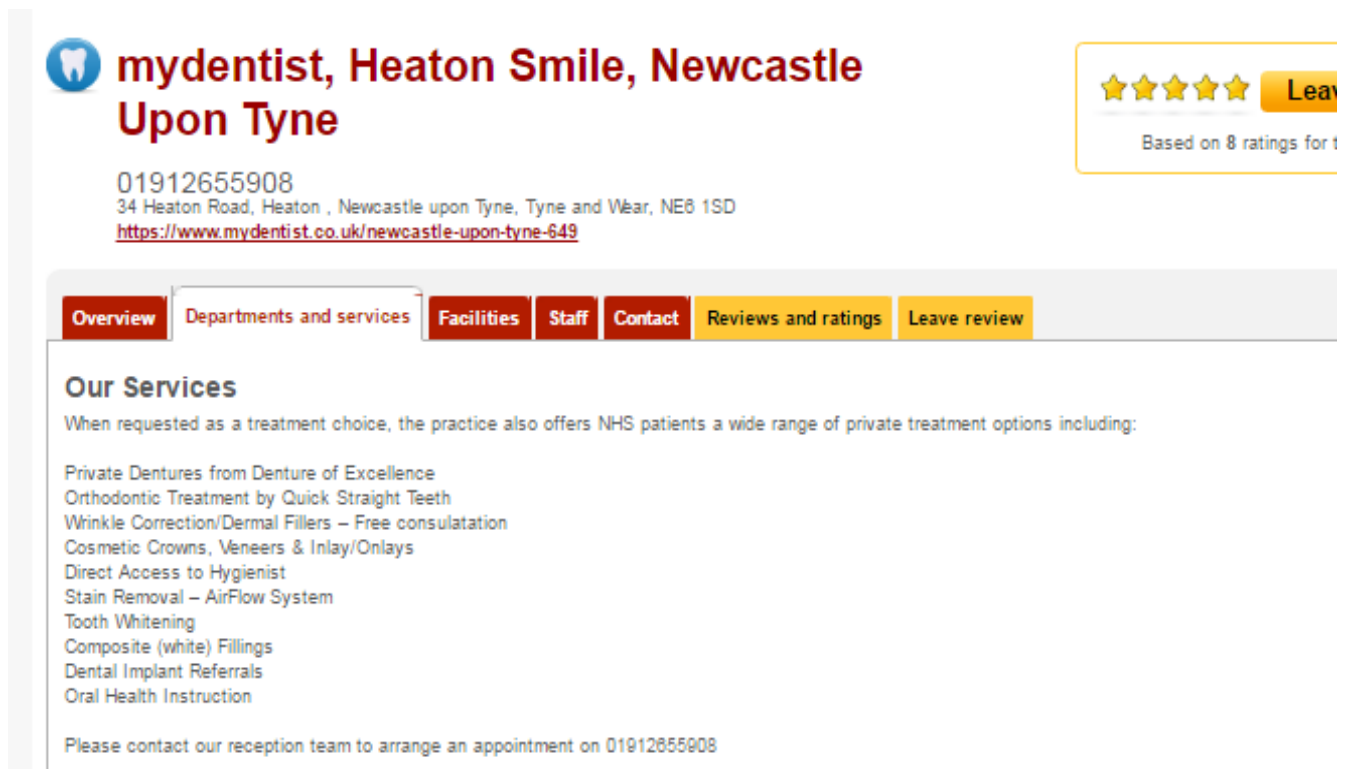
★★★★★
Fantastic

ii. Departments and services tab

This tab is designed to provide a list of services offered, but very few practices (8 of the 42) included a list, and the ones that did tended to provide very little information.

Best practice

Mydentist Heaton Smile, gave a succinct list of available services as you can see below:



The screenshot shows the website for Mydentist Heaton Smile, Newcastle Upon Tyne. The header includes the practice name, phone number (01912655908), address (34 Heaton Road, Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE8 1SD), and website URL (https://www.mydentist.co.uk/newcastle-upon-tyne-649). A navigation menu at the top has tabs for Overview, Departments and services (selected), Facilities, Staff, Contact, Reviews and ratings, and Leave review. The 'Our Services' section lists various treatments: Private Dentures from Denture of Excellence, Orthodontic Treatment by Quick Straight Teeth, Wrinkle Correction/Dermal Fillers – Free consultation, Cosmetic Crowns, Veneers & Inlay/Onlays, Direct Access to Hygienist, Stain Removal – AirFlow System, Tooth Whitening, Composite (white) Fillings, Dental Implant Referrals, and Oral Health Instruction. A note at the bottom of the services section asks to contact the reception team to arrange an appointment on 01912655908.

iii. Facilities tab

This was generally poorly completed. The best completed section was the one for information about parking and public transport. However, this was still completed by fewer than half of all practices (18 of the 42).

Only 15 of the 42 practices provided complete information about accessibility.

Best practice

Again, mydentist Heaton Smile, provided comprehensive information about access as well as information about interpreting services (see next page).



mydentist, Heaton Smile, Newcastle Upon Tyne

01912655908

34 Heaton Road, Heaton , Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE8 1SD

<https://www.mydentist.co.uk/newcastle-upon-tyne-649>



Leave review

Based on 8 ratings for this dentist

Overview

Departments and services

Facilities

Staff

Contact

Reviews and ratings

Leave review

Facilities

Accessibility

- Braille translation service
- Disabled parking
- Disabled WC
- Induction loop
- RNID typetalk
- Signing service available
- Wheelchair access
- Step free access

There is disabled parking to the front of the practice and we are wheelchair accessible with no steps. We have provision of downstairs surgeries for easy access and there is a disabled toilet facility available.

A free interpreting service is available upon request for patients whose first language is not english.



Parking

- Car Parking
- Cycle parking (Don't know)
- Disabled parking

There is disabled parking to the front, on street parking to the front and side of the practice, as well as a large car park with free parking to the rear of the practice.



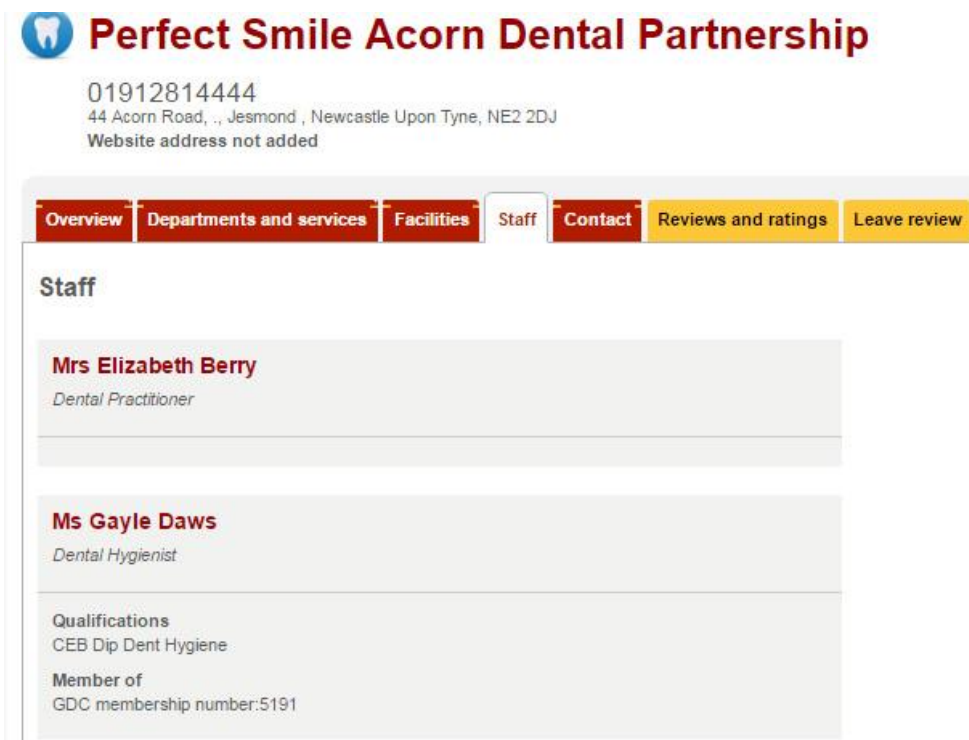
iv. Staff tab

Out of the 42 practices, 39 listed the name(s) of the dentists working there. Unfortunately, this tab hadn't been updated for nearly three years (34 months) on average.

Only two practices listed the names of dental nurses at the practice.

Best practice

The Perfect Smile Acorn Dental Partnership in Jesmond had a complete list of staff and their qualifications as shown below.



The screenshot shows the profile page for 'Perfect Smile Acorn Dental Partnership'. At the top, there is a blue tooth icon followed by the practice name in red. Below this, the phone number '01912814444' is listed, along with the address '44 Acorn Road, ., Jesmond , Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE2 2DJ' and a note that the website address is not added. A navigation bar contains several tabs: 'Overview', 'Departments and services', 'Facilities', 'Staff', 'Contact', 'Reviews and ratings', and 'Leave review'. The 'Staff' tab is currently selected. Under the 'Staff' heading, two staff members are listed: 'Mrs Elizabeth Berry' (Dental Practitioner) and 'Ms Gayle Daws' (Dental Hygienist). Below Ms Daws, her qualifications are listed as 'CEB Dip Dent Hygiene' and her membership with the GDC is noted as 'GDC membership number:5191'.

Perfect Smile Acorn Dental Partnership

01912814444
44 Acorn Road, ., Jesmond , Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE2 2DJ
Website address not added

Overview Departments and services Facilities Staff Contact Reviews and ratings Leave review

Staff

Mrs Elizabeth Berry
Dental Practitioner

Ms Gayle Daws
Dental Hygienist

Qualifications
CEB Dip Dent Hygiene

Member of
GDC membership number:5191

v. Contact tab

This was the best completed section with every practice having good details on how to contact and find the practice. Out of hours information was provided by nearly every practice (39 out of 42). It would be helpful to service users for the dental practices own website address to be displayed in this section, which it often wasn't.

Best practice

Mr S U Chohan and Associates provided a good example of helpful information to reach and contact the practice:

The screenshot displays the website for Mr S U Chohan & Associates. At the top left, there is a logo with a tooth icon and the practice name. Below it, the contact information is listed: telephone number 0191 288 9156, address 359 Stamford Road, Westerhops, NE5 2LH, and website URL http://www.thedentalcareclinic.co.uk. A 'Leave review' button is visible in the top right corner, with a note below it stating 'This dental has not been rated yet.' The main navigation menu includes 'Overview', 'Departments and services', 'Facilities', 'Staff', 'Contact', 'Reviews and ratings', and 'Leave review'. The 'Reviews and ratings' tab is currently selected. The content area is divided into several sections: 'Contact details, map and directions' which includes the practice name, phone, address, website, and email; a Google Map showing the location on Stamford Road; a 'Get directions to Mr S U Chohan & Associates' section with icons for car, bus, walking, and cycling, and a 'Start location' input field; and an 'Out of hours information' section with telephone number 0845 4847 and operating hours from Monday to Friday 9am-5pm. A 'Parking' section on the right provides details about a 5-car parking area in front of the practice, with a table indicating that car, disabled, and double parking are all available.

vi. Reviews and ratings tab

The majority of practices (24 out of 42) had received reviews from services users.

However, of the 24 practices which had service user reviews, only ten practices had responded to their comments.

Best practice

Mydentist Blakelaw, displays patient reviews, together with prompt and courteous responses.

Overview Departments and services Facilities Staff Contact **Reviews and ratings** [Leave review](#)

Ratings (2)

5 Stars ★★★★★ NHS Choices users' overall rating
Based on 4 ratings for this dental

<p>Appointments</p> <p>★★★★★ (4 ratings)</p>	<p>Dignity and respect</p> <p>★★★★★ (4 ratings)</p>	<p>Involvement in decisions</p> <p>★★★★★ (4 ratings)</p>	<p>Information on treatment cost</p> <p>★★★★★ (4 ratings)</p>	<p>Outcome of treatment</p> <p>★★★★★ (4 ratings)</p>
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Reviews 2 total Page 1 of 1

Order by: Subject: [Filter](#)

★★★★★ Allison gave mydentist, Springfield Road, Blakelaw a rating of 5 stars

great dentist

Got an appointment within a few days, dental was really friendly and staff very helpful. Would recommend this practice to anyone looking for a dentist.

Visited in July 2016. Posted on 26 July 2016
[Report as unreliable](#)

mydentist, Springfield Road, Blakelaw replied on 27 July 2016

Dear Patient,

Thank you for your feedback.

I am delighted to hear that you are happy with our practice.

I will share your kind comments with the team who will be delighted and we look forward to welcoming you back to the practice in the future.

Kind Regards,
Patient Support Team
[Report as unreliable](#)

6. Dental practice responses

To gather the perspective of dental practices, we asked them the following four questions:

1. How do you use NHS Choices to promote your dental practice?
2. How easy is it for you to manage your dental practice's information on NHS Choices?
3. What are the barriers or negative aspects you experience when trying to manage your dental practice's information on NHS Choices?
4. Do you think that NHS Choices 3DS is a useful platform for you to promote your services? If not, why not?

Only four of the 42 practices responded to our questions, which have been anonymised and can be read in appendix 2. The responses indicate that practices feel that if they take the time to maintain their details on NHS Choices, the information can be of help and value to both patients and the practice.

7. Our recommendations

Recommendation 1: Dental practices should review their information regularly to make sure it continues to be accurate. NHS Choices and NHS England (which plans and pays for NHS dental services) should monitor that updates are being carried out by dental practices.

Recommendation 2: The webpages on NHS Choices should include sections providing the following information:

- Whether languages other than English are spoken and by which members of staff
- Whether the patient can choose to be treated by a dentist of a chosen sex
- The names of all staff, including dentists, hygienists, dental nurses and administrative staff
- The qualifications of the staff
- Optionally, as additional added value for service users, staff photos

Recommendation 3: Dental practices should respond to reviews received on NHS Choices, to provide richer information to service users.

Recommendation 4: Dental practices should provide full information on NHS Choices about the accessibility of their facilities.

Recommendation 5: Dental practices should update relevant sections on NHS Choices at the same time that they update their own websites. As a minimum, practices should put a link to their website on their NHS Choices webpage.

Appendix 1: Collated information from the dental practices

The template below was used to review the webpages of each dental practice on the NHS Choices website; the summary information for all 42 practices (where available) is included.

Overview tab

	Yes	Any comments?
Is the telephone number provided?	41/42	
Is the address provided?	42/42	
Is the website address provided?	26/42	Some practices had their own website but did not provide the address on NHS Choices.
Are the opening times listed?	42/42	
Is the 'NHS patients this practice is currently accepting' box displayed and completed (i.e. there are no grey question mark icons)?	42/42	
Can you see information about how the practice is performing?	28/42	
Can you see information about the Friends and Family test?	16/42	
At the top of the page next to the blue tooth icon, what name is given for the practice? All 42 practices were completed		
When were the opening times last verified? The range was from two weeks to over five years at the time of this review. The average number of months was 35.2. Many had not updated NHS Choices since the website was first set up in 2010.		
When was the 'NHS patients this practice is currently accepting' box last verified? The average time since this data was last verified was 43 months ago, and many practices had not updated their webpages for over five years.		
When was the page last updated? The range was from two weeks to over five years at the time of this review. The average was 33 months.		
Who supplied the information? Almost exclusively the Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Area Team, as the webpages hadn't been updated since the NHS Choices dental information was input in 2010.		
Was there any further information detailed in this section that you would like to tell us about? No information provided.		
What other information would you like listed in this section? Suggestions included: staff photos and an option to see the page in large print.		

Departments and services tab

	Yes	Any comments?
Is there a list of services in this section?	8/42	
Do you think there is enough information about each service?	3/42	Very low number of sites considered to provide enough information
What services does the practice provide? Specifics of each not shown here		
When was the page last updated? The average number of months since last updating was 50, and many practices had not updated their NHS Choices data since the site was set up in 2010.		
Who supplied the information? Almost exclusively by the Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Area Team, as the data hadn't been updated since the site was established.		
Was there any further information detailed in this section that you would like to tell us about? No information provided.		
What other information would you like listed in this section? One suggestion was that there should be more detailed information on facilities for patients with a disability.		

Facilities tab

	Yes	Any comments?
Is the accessibility section displayed and complete (i.e. there are no greyed question mark icons)?	15/42	
Is the parking section displayed and complete (i.e. there are no greyed out question mark icons)?	18/42	
When was the page last updated? The average number of months was 46 with many practices not having updated their webpages since it was set up over five years previously.		
Who supplied the information? Almost exclusively by the Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Area Team.		
Was there any further information detailed in this section that you would like to tell us about? No information provided.		
What other information would you like listed in this section? No information provided.		

Staff tab

	Yes	Any comments?
Are the dentists listed in this section?	39/42	Given the data concerning lack of frequent updates: (a) Were all the names accurate? (b) Were all the dentists listed?
Are the dentist's qualifications listed in this section?	14/42	
Are dental nurses listed in this section?	4/42	This is not required by NHS Choices but we recommend that it should be.
Are the dental nurses' qualifications listed in this section?	1/42	
Is the reception staff listed in this section?	2/42	This is not required by NHS Choices but we recommend that it should be.
Does it show the latest reviews of the dentist?	28/42	However, of those 28 this was mainly a poorly populated section.
When was the page last updated?		
The average number of months since the information had last been updated was 35, with many practices not having updated their webpages since NHS Choices was set up.		
Who supplied the information?		
Almost exclusively the Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Area Team.		
Was there any further information detailed in this section that you would like to tell us about?		
Two practices included the name of the owner or practice manager.		
What other information would you like listed in this section?		
A full list of all staff, both clinical and administrative.		

Contact tab

	Yes	Any comments?
Is there enough information in this section for you to be able to contact the practice?	42/42	
Is there enough information in this section for you to be able to find the practice?	42/42	
Is the out of hours information displayed?	39/42	
When was the page last updated?		
The average number of months since this information had last been updated was 36, with many practices not having updated their webpages since NHS Choices was set up.		
Who supplied the information?		
Almost exclusively the Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Area Team.		
Was there any further information detailed in this section that you would like to tell us about?		

One webpage gave directions to the surgery from the nearest Metro station. Another gave details of bus routes.

What other information would you like listed in this section?

One suggestion was that it should be mandatory for the webpage to list which languages other than English are spoken by staff.

Reviews and ratings tab

Users can rate the service based on appointments, dignity and respect, involvement in decisions, information on treatment cost and outcome of treatment. They can also write a review.

	Yes	Any comments?
Do you find this section useful?	18/42	
Are there any reviews displayed?	28/42	
Has the dentist responded to any of the reviews?	10/28	
Was there any further information detailed in this section that you would like to tell us about?		
One practice manager responded to both positive and negative comments.		
What other information would you like listed in this section?		
No information provided.		

General questions

	Yes	Any comments?
Did you see any information about patients being able to choose whether to see a male or female dentist?	0/42	This is not required by NHS Choices but we recommend that it should be.
Did you see any information about whether any staff speak additional languages?	1/42	This is not required by NHS Choices but we recommend that it should be.

You have now completed this review.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your review of this practice's information?

Some reviewers looked at the practice's own website and found it more informative and helpful.

Appendix 2: Dental practices' responses

Four of the 42 practices responded to our request for their views. Their responses are given here in an anonymised form.

Question 1: How do you use NHS Choices to promote your dental practice?

Practice 1: We find a large percentage of our patients come to the practice as they have researched on NHS Choices. We try and incorporate as much information as possible onto their website with regards to the practice.

Practice 2: We use our NHS Choices webpage to promote our practice, share patient feedback which we proactively promote in house. We also use to encourage new patients, advertising services, opening hours and our availability for emergency appointments.

Practice 3: We are a long established surgery and the local area has seen an increase of population. For that reason that we have lots of new patients joining in. I'm not sure whether they found us on NHS Choices website or via other search engine such as Google.

Practice 4: We don't really use NHS Choices to promote our dental practice.

Question 2: How easy is it for you to manage your dental practice's information on NHS Choices?

Practice 1: I find it somewhat easy to manage the Practice's information on the website.

Practice 2: Some of our page is managed centrally by our Head Office, but I am able to manage most sections of it. The pages are quite rigid.

Practice 3: I haven't actually tried to edit anything in NHS choices so I can't answer that question. I would presume it is straight forward.

Practice 4: I haven't updated anything on NHS choices for a long time. First time was very difficult but next time was easier.

Question 3: What are the barriers or negative aspects you experience when trying to manage your dental practice's information on NHS Choices?

Practice 1: I would prefer to read reviews and respond to them BEFORE they are published on the NHS website, due to day to day management, it is extremely difficult to respond immediately to comments and when I do manage to access them, I am unable to as the response facility is not there.

Practice 2: There is an option to narrow search options for users i.e. practices open after 6pm, good with anxious patients etc., but it doesn't seem to work. I have reported this and was passed around explaining that it would work eventually. As a practice who attempts to meet the needs of its patients, opening 12 hours a day, weekends and bank holidays, it would be great to feature on this list when users are trying to find a practice to accommodate their needs.

Practice 3: As mentioned previously we haven't tried to edit things so I can't tell any experience in doing so.

Practice 4: All time issues.

Question 4: Do you think that NHS Choices is a useful platform for you to promote your services? If not, why not?

Practice 1: I do find it useful to promote dental services.

Practice 2: Yes, most definitely. With continued work on this site, I have seen an increase in new patients (some who quote parts of my page). Only this morning, I have booked an appointment for someone needing an interpreter which she'd seen we offered on NHS Choices. I think the ability to further narrow search options would be great i.e. disabled access, interpreter services, domiciliary services etc. for service users, other than your average Joe, and people with specific needs.

Practice 3: I certainly think NHS platform is useful however other search engine such as Google is very powerful and popular.

Unless NHS platform is on the top of the Google list, it would take people more effort to find us on Internet.

Practice 4: Unsure whether NHS Choices is a useful platform to promote our business as we have no way of knowing what the general public does with the information. I haven't ever heard a patient comment that they have chosen our dental practice because of NHS choices (audits questionnaires). Most people come to us because of word of mouth. A great many of our patients are students so they come to us because we are near the universities.

Contact details



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HWNewcastle



Healthwatchnewcastle



HWNewcastle



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