

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Heath and Scrutiny Committee
Date: 15th January 2025
Report for: Discussion and Information
Report of: NHS Greater Manchester Director of Primary Care

Report Title

Provision and Access to NHS Dentistry in Greater Manchester
With supplemental information pertaining to Trafford Locality

Summary

This briefing provides an overview of the dental services being delivered across the Greater Manchester City Region. There then features an update on the positive progress made in GM regarding expansion of dental access and provision across Primary, Community and Secondary Care.

This briefing then provides a summary of local programmes which highlight the role of dental services in the reduction of health inequalities and prevention of poor oral health, particularly in service of vulnerable groups.

Finally, this briefing provides an overview of access to services in the Trafford Locality.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

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Background Information

Implications:

Relationship to Corporate Priorities	NHS Greater Manchester Primary Care Blueprint deliverables to improving access to primary care, prevention and reducing inequalities.
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	<i>No decision is required from the Committee however the update provided sets out the alignment to the NHS GM Sustainability Plan, Primary Care Blueprint and Fairer Health For All.</i>
Financial	<i>There are no financial implications to note</i>
Legal Implications	<i>There are no legal implications to note</i>
Equality/Diversity Implications	<i>Commissioning and provision aligned to improving access for all in addition to targeted schemes children and other vulnerable groups, with alignment to Core20PLUS5.</i>
Sustainability Implications	<i>Not applicable</i>
Carbon Reduction	<i>Not applicable</i>

Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	<i>Not applicable</i>
Risk Management Implications	<i>Not applicable</i>
Health and Safety Implications	<i>Not applicable</i>

Provision and Access to NHS Dentistry in Greater Manchester

With supplemental information pertaining to Trafford Locality

Headline messages

This briefing provides an overview of the dental services being delivered across the Greater Manchester City Region. There then features an update on the positive progress made in GM regarding expansion of dental access and provision across Primary, Community and Secondary Care.

This briefing then provides a summary of local programmes which highlight the role of dental services in the reduction of health inequalities and prevention of poor oral health, particularly in service of vulnerable groups.

1. Overview

Patients are not registered with a General Dental Practice (GDP) in the same way as they are with a GP. Any patient may access dental services from any practice in any area. The spend on NHS Dental Services across Primary, Secondary and Community services in Greater Manchester is in the region of £225 million per annum.

In Greater Manchester there are:

- 347 Primary Care NHS Dental Contracts.
- 2 GM Urgent Dental Care providers delivering through 13 sites linked across networked provision for Greater Manchester. Patients can access urgent dental care at any of the sites across GM by ringing the UDC helpline on 0333 332 3800.
- 37 Urgent Dental Care Hubs that provide additional urgent dental care capacity, which were introduced in response to pressures during the COVID 19 pandemic but have been sustained as demand for urgent dental care access has remained high. Currently these are planned to operate until at least March 2024.

Specialised Dental Services

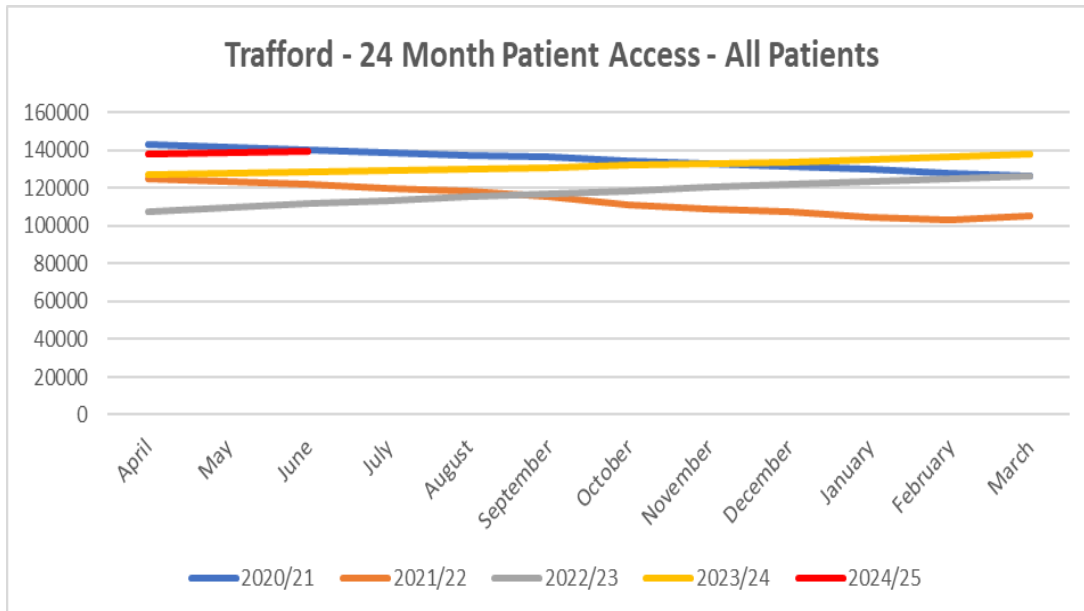
- Community Dental Services (special care and paediatric) clinics delivered by Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS FT, Northern Care Alliance, and Manchester Locality Care Organisation (MFT) – commissioned to provide specialist dental services to children and adults with additional needs on referral with clinics located within the community.
- 40 Orthodontic Contracts.
- 10 Specialist Tier 2 Oral Surgery Contracts.

Secondary Care Dental Services

- 12 dental specialities (including Oral Surgery, Maxillofacial Surgery, Restorative Dentistry, Paediatric Dentistry, Periodontics) available in Greater Manchester, commissioned from Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust, Bolton Foundation Trust, Wigan Wrightington and Leigh Foundation Trust, Stockport NHS Foundation Trust, and Tameside and Glossop NHS Foundation Trust.

2. Improving access to NHS Dental Services – National and Local Schemes

The number of patients accessing NHS dental services across Trafford has continued to increase since the Covid pandemic, as illustrated in the graph below.



In support of improving access to local NHS dental services, GM established a Dental Access Quality Scheme in 2023/24 which has been sustained during 2024/25. On 7 February 2024 the government announced the national Dental Recovery Plan to be implemented from March 2024.

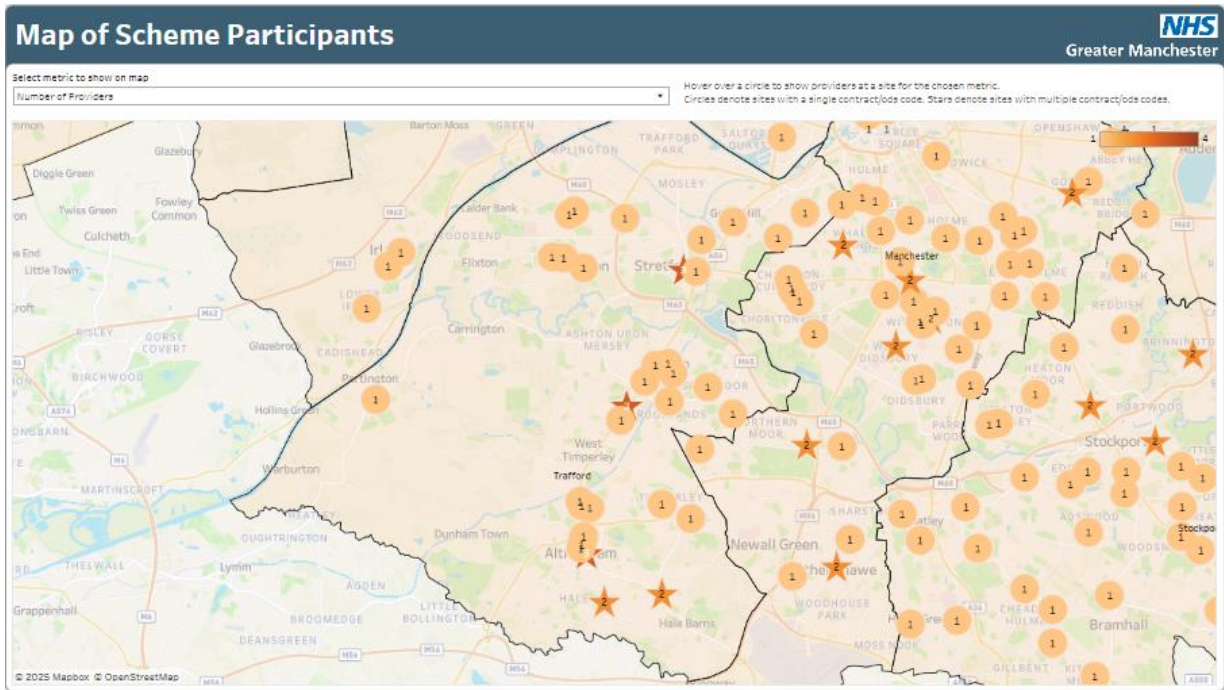
National Dental Recovery Plan

- The National Dental Recovery Plan was launched in February 2024 and is focused on three areas:
 - Prevention: For local government to implement focussing on oral health improvement, working with schools and family hubs.
 - Access: Credited practice with a new patient activity tariff when they see patients who have not accessed services in the previous two years. This New Patient Premium is delivered within the established contracted activity and payments rather than directly attracting additional payment.
 - Workforce: Mirror existing schemes in other contractor areas to support practices to recruit, such as 'Golden Hello's', expand skill mix to increase therapists and hygienist scope of practice.

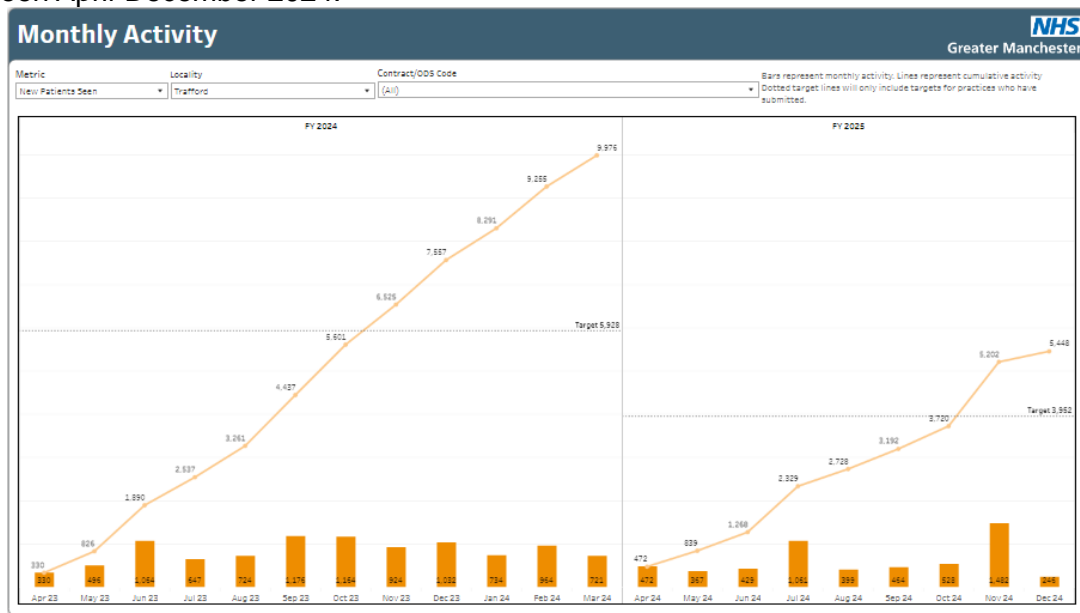
Greater Manchester Dental Quality Access Scheme

- The Greater Manchester Dental Quality Access Scheme was launched June 2023 and at present there are 148 Practices (43% of GM general dental contracts) are signed-up to deliver this scheme. The scheme was developed to support and sustain practices in being able to offer new patient and urgent care access.
- During 2023/2024, the GM Dental Quality Access Scheme supplemented local access by providing 105,133 appointments for new patients, and 96,187 urgent appointments.
- The scheme has continued in 2024/25 and up to December 2024 delivered 61,247 new patient appointments and 51,103 urgent appointments.
- The result of GM practices being signed up to these schemes has resulted in strong performance delivery of contracted activity, with more than 68% of contracts delivering more than 80% of their contracted Units of Dental Activity (UDAs) for the period up to September 2024, higher than 58% which is the national average position. Similarly, less than 3% of GM dental practice had delivered less than 30% of their contract in this period, compared with 6% nationally.

Across Trafford there are 19 (out of 42) dental practices participating in the GM Scheme.



The Scheme has enabled 5,448 new patients to be seen within these Trafford practices between April-December 2024.



However, despite there still be large demand for dental appointments from the public these practices have experienced significant numbers of patients failing to attend, reporting 2,699 in the same period.

3. Specialist Dental Hospitals and specialist dental services delivered within secondary care.

An NHS priority is the restoration of all services to pre-pandemic levels and action is agreed to address the backlog of patients following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Core20PLUS5 is a national NHS England approach to support the reduction of health inequalities at both national and system level. The approach defines a target population cohort and identifies '5' focus clinical areas requiring accelerated improvement. The Children and Young People Core20PLUS5 framework identifies Oral Health as a clinical priority area with a requirement to increase the number of general anaesthetic sessions for children needing dental extractions.

The Greater Manchester Tier 2 Oral Surgery Services delivers services to patients 16 years of age or older, who:

- Demonstrate a high level of anxiety and require conscious sedation as they are unable to tolerate treatments in a general dental surgery
- Require oral surgery procedures (defined as 'Level 2' in the NHS guide for Commissioning Oral Surgery and Oral Medicine, NHS England 2015). Treatment may be with or without sedation.

These services are delivered by oral surgery specialists operating in primary care and reduce demand for patients to have to attend hospital services.

We understand that there are currently circa 1,000 Trafford residents waiting for Hospital Oral Surgery services. Through ongoing work across our providers the waiting lists for oral surgery across GM have reduced by approximately by c.15% over the past 2 years.

4. Strategic Dental Planning in Greater Manchester

The GM Dental Commissioning Team, working with the Dental Provider Board and the Consultant in Dental Public Health, continue to co-develop and implement plans to recover dental services across the whole system. These are within the context and to be delivered via the Primary Care Blueprint for Greater Manchester – the 5-year plan to support the stability and sustainability of primary care services in the city region.

The plan standardises the approach for all dental services and supports opportunities at locality-level for actions to meet local population needs that reduce oral health inequalities.

The purpose of the plan is to reduce oral health inequalities and improve dental access by ensuring patients can receive care at the right time, in the right setting and reduce waiting times. Actions include:

- Continued development of digital with an e-referral management system to support clinical triage to direct referrals to the right setting at the right time, including referrals from non-dental professionals.
- Workforce and training for healthcare professionals.
- Increase Dental Access through continued delivery of the GM Dental Quality Access Scheme and national New Patient Premium.

5. Oral Health Improvement and Prevention – Children and Young People in Greater Manchester

The evaluation of the GM Oral Health Transformation Programme (OHTP) demonstrated the success in delivering at-scale to improve the oral health of our children. The first phase of the GMOHTP programme included:

- Daily supervised toothbrushing in all nursery and reception Early Year settings for children aged 2-5 years (over 58,000 children; 88.4% of population, in 88% of settings).
- Deliver Health Visitor 0-3 years training and fluoride dental packs distribution at 1 year and 2-2 ½ year checks.

There is an identified commitment to continue collaborative working across the Greater Manchester Integrated Care System for systematic oral health improvement.

For the second phase of the programme, NHS Greater Manchester (NHS GM) Dental Commissioning Team have identified funds (£250,000 per annum for three years) from the NHS dental services commissioning budget to support at-scale delivery of a Greater Manchester Oral Health Improvement Programmes (GM OHIP) for children aged 0-5 years-old from 2025 for three years.

The GM Team will purchase take-home dental packs for all ten local authorities to distribute in their areas. There will be 1-2 deliveries of stock per year per locality. These packs will be 1450 parts per million fluoride toothpaste and age-appropriate toothbrushes for children aged 0-two-years and three-five-years with:

- Priority distribution through Early Years' Settings including PVI and reception classes
- Distribution by health visitors and family hubs
- Any remaining stock through voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) .

Funding includes staffing costs for a small, centralised project team within NHS GM who will support central delivery of this programme, working with locality colleagues to develop system-sustainability via capacity and capability building.

It should be noted that a single intervention delivered in the short-term is unlikely to demonstrate a change in oral health outcomes. The evidence recommends a suite of activities to improve oral health and encourage dental access to affect change.

This programme will therefore be considered with a range of oral health improvement and dental access priority actions working with all Local Authority Directors of Public Health and Oral Health improvement teams:

- Distribution of toothbrushing packs
- Supervised toothbrushing in early years settings
- NHS GDS Dental access initiatives
- Workforce development - Oral health improvement training for staff and carers
- Quality improvement initiative on prevention
- *Opportunities to integrate oral health improvement into health programmes and public policies across the life course with cross-cutting strategic approach*

6. Addressing Inequalities through dental access – Child Friendly Dental Practices

The ambition of the Child Friendly Dental Practices Scheme is to manage or stabilise the oral health of high-need paediatric patients, typically referred directly to specialist dental services within Community Dental Service (CDS) or Hospital Dental Service (HDS) settings, through timely access to primary care clinicians who are confident and experienced in treating children. The expectation is that rapid access to enhanced primary dental care will reduce the need for onward referral to specialist paediatric dental services, whilst also stabilising the oral health of children who require more complex management in specialist services.

We currently have 6 Child Friendly Dental Practices across Greater Manchester. There is not a CFDP within the Trafford Locality, however, any child who is referred for treatment will be triaged and sent to any of the CFDP or Community Dental Service closest to their postcode. Our intention is to review the need for continuation of CFDP with a view to commission one Practice per locality.

Treatment at these sites includes:

- Prevention – Oral Hygiene Instruction, diet advice, fluoride varnish application, fissure sealants
- Stabilisation – Silver Diamine Fluoride, Temporary Fillings
- Restoration – Hall Crowns, Definitive Fillings

- Extractions

This primary care service supports our specialist community services for children and reduces referrals and pressures in secondary care and has been rolled out to 6 centres across Greater Manchester. Funding has been received from National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) for a two-year evaluation led by the University of Manchester.

Further examples of specialised services in Greater Manchester that support vulnerable groups include:

- Dental pathway for Looked After Children across Greater Manchester, due to be extended to include access for care leavers
- Healthy Living Dentistry – embedding dental practices as part of GM integrated neighbourhood working by reducing inequalities through provision of inclusive, high quality holistic care training and development in areas such as dementia friendly dentistry, Mouth Cancer Awareness, Dental Trauma, sugar free diet and medicines and Flu awareness, dementia friendly dentistry, healthy gums, and oral cancer care.

7. Access to Urgent Dental Care

Urgent Dental Care is available across Greater Manchester from 8am to 10pm 365 days per week including Bank Holidays. The service is provided according to strict clinical criteria, patients are assessed by a clinical member of the team via telephone and will be offered a face to face appointment once triage has been completed.

Urgent dental problems include the following conditions:

- Dental and soft-tissue infections
- Severe dental and facial pain: that is, pain that cannot be controlled by the patient following self-help advice
- Fractured teeth or tooth

The service operates from 13 different locations across Greater Manchester and patients can choose to be seen at the location most convenient for them.