

# Enter & View Purity Dental Practice November 2024



# Background

Healthwatch Dudley is undertaking a series of Enter & View visits to dental surgeries in the Dudley borough as part of our Exploring Access to NHS Dental Care project. Purity Dental were randomly selected to be part of an Enter & View visit.

Purity Dental is situated in central Dudley and provides NHS and private dental care to patients.

The surgery is open Monday to Friday and opens occasionally on a Saturday.

NHS appointments are offered to patients every day. There are no separate clinics for private patients.

Patients are able to book an appointment with Purity by calling the practice. Patients can also book online where they can see both NHS and private appointment availability.

## Enter & View

Healthwatch Dudley has the legal power to visit health and social care settings.

Enter & View visits provide an opportunity to make observations and speak to service users, carers and relatives to understand their experiences.

Enter & View visits and reports capture feedback and opinions from service users, friends and relatives, as well as independent observations made by Healthwatch Dudley staff on the day of the visit.

Healthwatch Dudley are able to seek opinions from service users and their families who may not be confident to share with the provider directly.

We publish our findings at [www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk) and share the report with relevant organisations.



Healthwatch Dudley has the legal power to visit health and social care settings.

# What we did

Healthwatch Dudley wrote to Purity Dental to arrange a visit and provided promotional materials which were delivered to the practice several weeks beforehand.

We carried out the announced Enter & View visit on 20th November 2024. Two members of staff visited Purity Dental from 10 am - 12 noon to speak to patients about their experiences.

On the day of the visit, we did not see the poster displayed in the entrance or the waiting area.

When we arrived at the clinic, the receptionist was unaware of our planned visit and explained that there had been a recent change in management. This was not an issue and we were able to continue with our visit.

Purity Dental's most recent Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection took place in September 2022. CQC do not have the legal power to rate dentists, but note that all regulations have been met by the practice.



# Who we spoke to

We spoke to 24 people who were attending the surgery about their experience. Two people declined to speak to us. Some people were attending the practice with a family member or carer. Some patients were called into their appointments so the conversations were brief.



Seeing orthodontist



Routine check-up



Follow-up for filling or extraction



Hygienist appointment



Emergency appointment



We spoke to 8 people who were accompanying another patient.





# Our observations

## Information

Displays presented relevant information about costs for private dental treatment, receiving free treatment and health and safety information.

## Welcome

All staff were friendly and welcoming and answered our questions about the practice. The receptionist was observed booking in patients, scheduling appointments, answering telephone calls and taking payments during the visit.

## Feedback

NHS Friends & Family Test leaflets were available and a drop box for completed surveys is located on reception.

The NHS Friends and Family Test was created to help service providers and commissioners understand whether patients are happy with the service provided, or where improvements are needed.



# Registering

We received positive feedback about registering with the practice.

We were told it was simple to register by filling out a form.

**“I started attending the practice 12 to 18 months ago. I hadn’t been to a dentist for years, so I thought I should come and get my teeth checked. I made an enquiry at the surgery, completed the forms and I didn’t have to wait too long for an appointment.”**

However, it is not a requirement to register with a dental practice to receive NHS treatment. We spoke to patients who were receiving urgent treatment that had not previously registered with the practice.



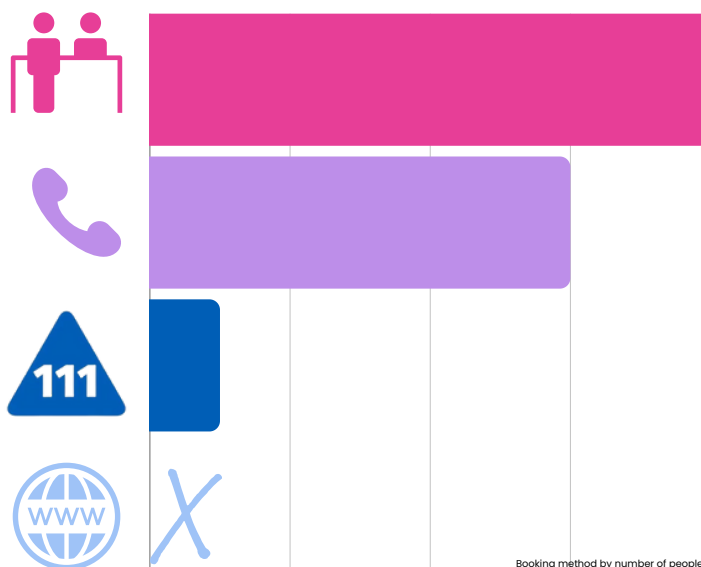
# Booking appointments

'My last (orthodontist) appointment was in September and it was cancelled a couple of times'



'I called at 9:30am and booked an appointment for 11am'

Most people booked an appointment at reception at their previous visit.



Staff shared that patients are able to book their appointments online however, we did not speak to anyone that had used this method.

The majority of people attending for routine or follow up appointments for fillings or extractions had booked at their last appointment.

## Urgent appointments

One person had called the week before and booked an appointment. They described it as an emergency, however they said that they were happy to wait for the appointment.

One person had contacted NHS 111 that morning and they had booked them an emergency dental appointment.

## Improvements

**'They were bad for cancelling appointments before. I booked this appointment yesterday, but it can take two to four weeks'**

Two people spoke to us about how there were previously issues with appointments, however they told us that the practice has improved.

**'You can normally get an appointment within two weeks, but last year was very difficult, I had to book a private appointment.'**

# Types of appointments

## Clinics

On the day of the Enter & View visit the surgery were running five separate clinics to treat routine dentistry, orthodontics and hygienist treatment.

## Types of appointments

We spoke to people who shared experience of different types of treatment:

- Routine
- Orthodontic
- Hygienist
- Emergency
- Maternity

### Routine



We spoke to four patients who were attending the practice for a routine check up with the dentist.

They reported visiting Purity as their 'regular' dentist and most of them attending every 6 months.

**"Sometimes it can take a while to get a routine appointment. but if you're in dire straits they will see you."**

Three patients who attend Purity regularly were visiting for emergency treatment. We heard from other patients about their experience of booking emergency appointments at the practice.

**"For emergencies you can get an appointment straight away."**

### Emergency



## Orthodontics

**“I was referred here for braces, I waited two years for them to be fitted.”**

Two patients were waiting to see the orthodontist. We received feedback from a parent whose child had visited the practice for orthodontic treatment. We heard patients being informed that there was a four year waiting list to see the orthodontist.’

**“My child had a bad experience. They were bullied and their braces were snapped. So my child took the broken braces off themselves. The dentist has told me I need to pay £200-300 for replacements.”**

Two patients were attending to see the hygienist.

**“Last Wednesday was my first visit as my gums were bleeding, so they cleaned one side of my gums that day, they’re doing the other side today. I’ve only been coming here for two weeks.”**

## Hygienist



## Maternity



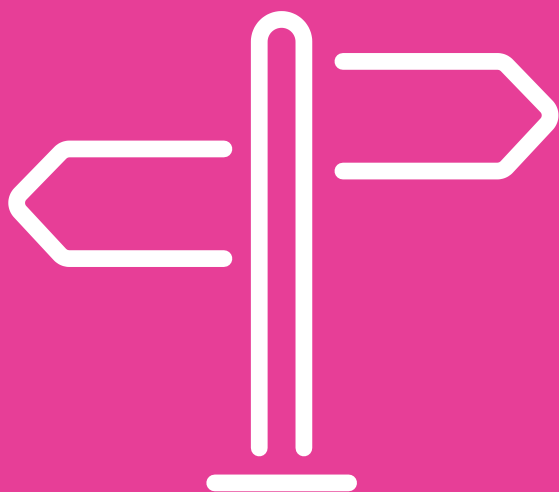
One person shared their feedback about accessing dental care whilst pregnant and during maternity leave.

**“I normally attend every six months because of free treatment during maternity leave. I would only attend once a year if I was paying for my treatment.”**



# Accessibility / getting there

**“We travel from Stourbridge. We used to live locally, but still come here now we have moved.”**



Purity Dental is based approximately one mile from Dudley Town Centre. There is very limited car parking available, so patients are required to park on the road if travelling by car.

Purity Dental have five consulting rooms over two floors. Patients can be seen in a downstairs room if required.

There is a large waiting area with plenty of seating. We found the waiting area to be clean and tidy. The reception desk is based in the waiting area.

## Travelling to appointments

Three people commented on travelling to the surgery.

**“I’m early for my appointment, I caught the bus and I never know what time the buses are going to come.”**

**“I’ve been with this dentist for the last 40 years, I started using them because they were close to where I lived, but I moved away and stuck with them.”**



# Staff

**“Everyone’s amazing.”**

**“I’ve been coming here for over a decade, they are friendly when you visit. They’re very kind and explain the treatment.”**



We received positive feedback about the staff working at Purity Dental. People told us about the care they receive and the “friendly” attitude of staff.

**“They make you feel like they listen.”**

**“The surgery is great, we’ve not had any problems.”**

**“They’ve changed a few [members of staff] but they’re okay.”**

## Managing fears

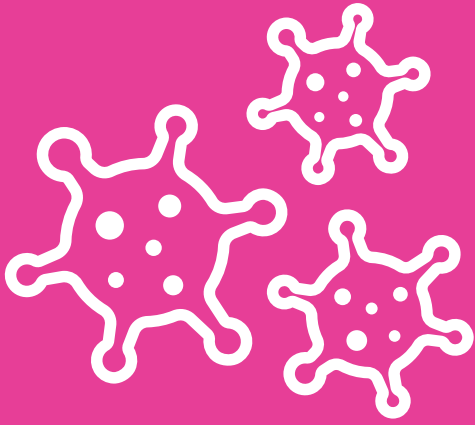
**“They ask if you feel sick or uncomfortable and ask you to put your hand up if you feel uncomfortable.”**

Patients told us that they appreciated the dentists communicating with them throughout treatment.

**“I feel sometimes that dentists do the basics and that they put the business first. I had problem that wasn’t treated at first and then I had to have a repair a year later.”**

**“I’ve been coming here for a decade they are friendly when you visit, and they’re very kind and explained treatment and processes very clearly.”**

## COVID-19



One person wished to share with us their experience of accessing dental care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**“During COVID I had a pain in my wisdom tooth, I couldn’t get an appointment and I need to have tooth removed now.”**

Three patients mentioned receiving text message reminders and telephone calls.

**“I find the text message reminders helpful.”**

**“I get a call to remind me about my appointment.”**

## Text & phone reminders



“The phone and text reminders are really good.”

# Recommendations



Continue to use text message reminders and calls to assist patients in attending pre-booked appointments.



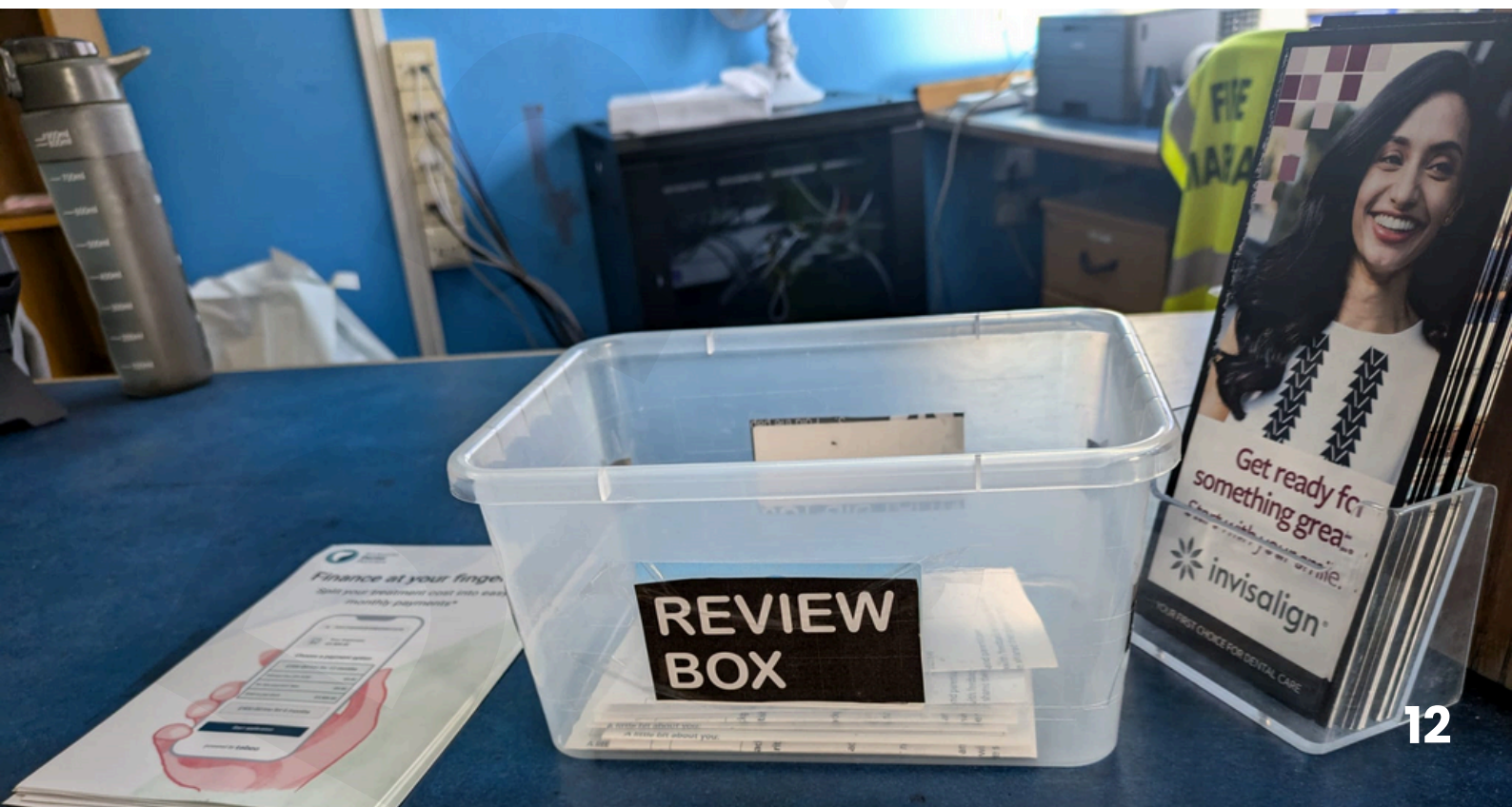
Promote online booking system for those who wish to use it. This could benefit digitally excluded patients by 'freeing up' the phone line.



Share results from NHS Friends & Family surveys with both patients and staff.



Share the feedback about orthodontics waiting times detailed in this report with the Black Country Integrated Care Board and other relevant organisations.





# Thank you

Thank you to the patients at Purity Dental for sharing their experiences with Healthwatch Dudley.

Thank you to the staff at Purity Dental for making us welcome on the day.

We encourage people who have received dental treatment at Purity Dental to share feedback about the surgery with Healthwatch Dudley.

We reached out to Purity Dental practice for a response to feedback provided by patients and our recommendations in this report. At the time of publishing, we had not received a response





# healthwatch

Dudley



**Committed  
to quality**

Healthwatch Dudley is committed to providing a quality service, from how we collect data, to the information we provide. Every three years we perform an in-depth audit, in conjunction with Healthwatch England, to ensure we meet this high standard.

**If you would like this report in another language or format please contact us.**

**Healthwatch Dudley**

7 Albion Street

Brierley Hill

DY5 3EE

03000 111 001 (local rate)

hello@healthwatchdudley.co.uk

www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk

@HWDudley