

DENTAL TASK FORCE UPDATE

Office of the Director of Public Health



The first meeting of Plymouth City Council's Dental Task Force took place on Friday 7 July 2023.

It has been established to address the following issues:

- There are currently 21,729 Plymouth residents (17,551 adults and 4,178 children) on the waiting list for an NHS dentist (correct as of May 2023). This has risen by 131 per cent since May 2018.
- More than one in five children in Plymouth has visible tooth decay by the age of five years old.
- Each year, more than 600 children in Plymouth have more than 4,000 teeth removed between them under general anaesthetic. This is entirely preventable and costs the health system approximately £1 million per year.
- Data from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities Health Intelligence Pack showed that, as of August 2022, 67.8 per cent of adults and 61 per cent of children in Plymouth had **not** accessed dental services in the preceding 24 months.

The Dental Task Force brings together key stakeholders, local MPs and NHS leaders from across the city to discuss what can be done to improve dental provision in Plymouth. Plymouth City Council's new Corporate Plan contains six specific priorities. Priority five is.....

Working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry

To address this priority, the Dental Task Force will seek to.....

- Identify sources of funding that can be used address this priority
- Ensure existing planned developments are taken forward
- Identify service providers who have capacity to deliver additional dental services
- Ensure additional NHS dental capacity is made available to improve access to NHS Dental Services for Plymouth residents
- Enhance the oral health improvement (prevention) offer available in the city.

The Task Force is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care (Councillor Mary Aspinnall). The following individuals were invited to the first meeting:

- Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Plymouth City Council (Chair)
- Cabinet member for Finance, Plymouth City Council
- Shadow Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Plymouth City Council
- Local Members of Parliament
- Director of Public Health, Plymouth City Council
- Consultant in Public Health, Plymouth City Council
- Director of Commissioning Primary, Community and Mental Health Care, NHS Devon
- Dental Services Manager, Plymouth Community Dental Services Ltd.
- Chief Executive, Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise
- Chief Operating Officer, Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise

The invite was subsequently extended to include additional representation from these organisations.

The first meeting agenda covered the following:

- Key facts and figures and progress to-date
- Units of dental activity (UDA) spend and claw-back
- The five dental chairs planned for Cavell Centre
- Offers from local providers (Livewell SW and Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise (PDSE))
- National Political picture and opportunities to influence
- Next steps

As a result of the meeting the following I I actions were agreed:

1. PDSE to liaise with NHS Devon ICB to discuss funding of the new City Centre Dental Education Practice.
2. NHS Devon ICB to provide information on the amount of funding made available to 'high street' NHS dental practices in Plymouth and the amount unspent/clawed-back annually.
3. NHS Devon ICB to provide information on reasons for 'high street' NHS dental practices underperforming on, or handing back, their contracts.
4. PCC to invite LDC representative to the next meeting.
5. PCC to arrange follow-up meeting in September.
6. PDSE to liaise with Livewell to discuss moving patients from Livewell to PDSE (to utilise spare capacity at PDSE and free-up capacity at Livewell). Contingent on PDSE proposals being taken forward by NHS Devon ICB providing additional chairs and funding for the new practice to deliver more urgent activity.
7. NHS Devon ICB to investigate how existing underperforming 'high street' NHS dental practices could sub-contract with PSDE, Livewell or NHS practices with capacity to enable additional NHS capacity to be delivered.
8. PDSE to provide more detail on their proposal for a City Centre Dental Education Practice.
9. PCC and NHS Devon ICB to liaise with Sarah Hurley (former CDO) to discuss her offer to support the development of a dental plan for Plymouth. Meeting to include the CDO (if appropriate/available).
10. Luke Pollard and Johnny Mercer to draft a joint letter to the Secretary of State asking for an update on the Government's Dental Plan and for clarification if the funding for (only) 50% of the population will remain in place. Letter to be passed to PCC for circulating to the wider DTF group to enable additional issues to be raised (if appropriate).

11. NHS Devon ICB to continue with the plan to establish the five new NHS dental chairs in the city – originally planned for the Cavell Centre.

Delivery on the on the above mentioned Plymouth City Council priority will be ongoing over the next 18 months, with updates being submitted to Plymouth City Council's Cabinet and H&WB as and when required.
