
Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee

10 January 2024

Access to Dentistry

Report by Director of Law and Assurance

Summary

In September 2021, the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee identified access to dentistry services in West Sussex as a key issue for scrutiny, in light of the pressures resulting from the pandemic. The Committee reviewed dentistry at its meeting on 21 January 2022 and then held an informal evidence gathering session on 19 January 2023, which identified several issues of concern. NHS Sussex is responsible for commissioning NHS dental services in West Sussex and has provided an update on the current situation, including the areas of concern previously highlighted by the Committee. Representatives of NHS Sussex will attend the meeting on 10 January 2024 to assist the Committee's scrutiny of this matter.

Focus for scrutiny

The Committee is asked to scrutinise access to dentistry and provide any feedback to NHS Sussex. Key lines of enquiry include:

- (1) Measures to address the current NHS dental care backlog in West Sussex
- (2) The impact of lack of access to NHS dentistry on other NHS services in West Sussex (e.g. General Practice, Accident and Emergency)
- (3) Whether issues of concern identified through evidence gathering have been addressed, including contract reform, workforce recruitment and retention, prevention and more local engagement with dental professionals
- (4) The impact of lack of dental care on care leavers and children in care
- (5) Whether there are any issues requiring further scrutiny or monitoring

The Chairman will summarise the output of the debate for consideration by the Committee.

Details

The background and context to this item for scrutiny are set out in the attached report. There are no resource or risk implications directly affecting West Sussex County Council, as this is a report by the NHS, relating to NHS services.

Tony Kershaw

Director of Law and Assurance

Contact Officer: Rachel Allan, Senior Advisor, Democratic Services, 0330 222 8966

Appendices

Appendix A: Report by NHS: Access to Dentistry

Background papers

None