

NHS dental services: recent requests for information, advice and/or guidance from Healthwatch Kingston

Healthwatch Kingston has been contacted by local residents and health and care professionals asking for information, advice and/or guidance about NHS dental services. This is what they shared with us:

1. *"I requested the clinic that my treatment was therefore 100% NHS carried out, unfortunately the clinic refuses to treat me on the grounds that my root canal is not covered by the NHS. This is the main issue, there is a clinic that, by the rules, should attend patients registered by the NHS and treat them according to the treatments that the NHS covers. however, this clinic practically forces NHS patients to pay for the treatments in private and if the patient cannot afford the private treatment, they send them away. The clinic is trampling on patients' rights to access healthcare in order to profit from people who cannot afford their treatments. They use the NHS system to attract clients and in the end charge them for non-private treatments, this is wrong and against the rules! It's humiliating! Can I file a formal complaint with the police against practices at this clinic?"*
2. *"I have a problem with my tooth, I was told it needs to be fixed in 3 months maximum."*
3. *"For the past 3 months, I have tried to find an NHS dentistry that would take me as their patient. However, after contacting over 40 clinics and being put on their waiting lists - I have had no success."*
4. *"I cannot afford to go to a private dentist to fix my tooth and the time to fix it is running out."*
5. *"I am finding it impossible to register with a dentist in my area for NHS services. I have an 8-week-old baby so am entitled to free NHS dental care at the moment and have been struggling with toothache for some time, getting progressively worse through pregnancy. I would like to request your help on finding dental clinics that provide services to NHS. I am currently expecting, and I am looking to find an NHS dentist in Kingston. Could you please provide me the dental clinics that have a contract with NHS?"*
6. *"I am looking to register as an NHS patient with a dentist, having moved into Surbiton a year ago. However, I have been unable to do so as all the dentists I have contacted have said they are not taking new NHS patients. Most recently, I was told today that a dentist's surgery, who do offer NHS services according to their website, was unwilling to register me as they didn't receive sufficient funds from the NHS for NHS patients, currently. If true, this means I'm not sure I'll be able to register anywhere. Please can you let me know whether you know of any dentists in the Kingston or Surbiton area that are taking on new NHS patients?"*

7. *"Hi, I went to the dentist on 8/3/22 (Family Dental Care, Chessington) for a check-up and was told I needed a filling which I had done. Ever since I have been in excruciating pain. Pain to the point where I'm having to take strong painkillers just to not cry. I had no pain before. I rang up twice to get some help. They said they will not be able to do anything as I cannot afford to pay. I paid over £150 for my treatment which has completely cleared me out. I do work full time, but I cannot afford to pay the ridiculous dental NHS fees. They said possible root canal/extraction starting at nearly £300! I do not have any money, but I am not eligible for help! I don't know what to do as I am in so much pain!"*
8. *"Using the NHS website I have been trying to find a local dentist that is taking on new NHS patients but unfortunately from the list provided, none are. Or that don't have a waiting list of at least 12 months."*
9. *"I want to register myself and my young daughter (2 years old) to start her on dental hygiene. I myself am pregnant and would like a check-up."*
10. *"I'm currently at a private practice in New Malden and have had a temporary band fitted rather than a crown in December as I didn't have the funds and today, I have a front back tooth that's broken down to the gum. I'm not working at present or unable to claim any benefits so I can't afford to pay £800 minimum to get the tooth fixed urgently if that's even possible."*
11. *Student social worker from AfC – "I am a student social worker struggling to help my young person find an NHS dentist. He has not had a recent routine check-up. We have called several surgeries with no success. Can someone please advise if there are any surgeries in Kingston that are taking new patients?"*
12. *RBK Adult Social Worker – "The above patient is eighty-two and back in August last year lost her dentures in India (she was flown back to the UK with a fracture to her hip). Due to access to her property she physically is unable to mobilise out of the property threshold/steps. At present Disabled Facilities Grant is being looked into and this will take some time. Would it be possible for an NHS domiciliary dentist. The alternative is an ambulance crew with 2 to physically lift xxxx out of her property into her wheelchair and then back again. xxxx is struggling with her eating her meals. Any help and advice would be greatly appreciated to improve her quality of life."*
13. *Social prescriber from a local Doctors surgery – "Person with only two teeth and serious health issues could not get an NHS dentist or even a referral. No one would take as issues too complex."*
14. *RBK (Support Team Officer (Kingston United for Ukraine) – "We have a client (family of 2) who has not been able to register with a NHS dentist for over a month, they are on the waiting list."*

For further information, please email: info@healthwatchkingston.org.uk