

HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE	18 th March 2026
REPORT OF	Helen Kenyon, ICB Place Director
SUBJECT	Dental Commissioning update – Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
STATUS	Open

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (HNY ICB) is responsible for the commissioning and contracting of NHS dental services. This paper aims to offer a local update on dental commissioning activities and to provide a progress report on local and national priorities.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

Members are asked to note the details in the report.

BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

1. Introduction

In April 2023, Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (HNY ICB) took on delegated responsibility from NHS England for the commissioning and contracting of all NHS dental services across North East Lincolnshire.

While HNY ICB has the remit for commissioning dental services, Local Authorities have statutory responsibilities for oral health improvement, including commissioning evidence based oral health improvement programmes to meet the needs of the local population.

The purpose of this report is to update members on the current local and national position for NHS dental services as commissioned by HNY ICB.

1.1 NHS Dental Services – improving local access through NHS commissioning

Both nationally and locally, access to NHS dentistry is a challenge with issues identified relating to the national contract itself, workforce gaps, and procurement restrictions, making it difficult to secure new dental provision. It is important to note that dental contracting takes place within this national context and challenges are well-embedded, meaning that HNY ICB has many issues to overcome in its aim to improve dental services.

Due to national funding, where only 50% of the population is funded for NHS dental treatment, it is rare that new NHS dental practices are commissioned. As such, the dental landscape is relatively stable unless there is a change to NHS provision through either the full or partial return of contracted activity. Across NEL, most dental services are stable with few changes to report. However, members may be interested in these specific updates:

- **Waltham Dental Practice** – working with NHS England, in November 2024, the ICB took the decision to terminate the NHS dental contracts held by the practice. This decision was made in light of confidential, contractual matters which were not linked to concerns with regards to patient safety or quality of service (the practice continues to remain open as a private service).

The contractor took up their right to appeal the ICB decision to terminate the contracts and this appeal was considered by NHS Resolution. Whilst the appeal was being considered, Waltham Dental Practice continued to hold its NHS contracts and could deliver NHS services. In August 2025, NHS Resolution concluded its review and upheld the ICB's decision to terminate the contracts. As such, the ICB took steps to end the contract and to reallocate the dental activity to other dental providers in the area.

By November 2025, all NHS dental activity released from the Waltham contracts was successfully redistributed to other practices with no reduction of service. Patients were informed of the changes in December 2025 and will have received a letter outlining their options for a new NHS dental provider. ICB commissioners expect that the termination of the contracts and movement of dental activity to new providers will result in improved dental access for those living in the area.

- **Intermediate Minor Oral Surgery (IMOS)** – this specialist dental service, available by referral only, was being provided by a practice in Grimsby but under existing contract arrangements, this contract ended on 31 March 2025. In order to continue the service for South Humber, the ICB had to consider its procurement options and due to changes to the contract requirements, a competitive procurement process was undertaken to secure a new provider for 1 April 2025. Several bids were received and evaluated in order to identify a successful bidder for South Humber. The service commenced, as planned on 1 April 2025 and those living in NEL may now be referred to a specialist IMOS provider in Scunthorpe.
- **Community Dental Services (CDS)** – another specialist dental service, designed to enable access to dental services for those unable to attend 'high street' dental practices due to disability, anxiety or other reasons, was also coming to the end of its contract on 31 March 2025. Again, the ICB had to consider its procurement options and were able to award the contract to the 'most suitable provider' meaning that North Lincolnshire and Goole (NLaG) retained their CDS contract for another 10 years. This brings continuity for patients and security of a long-term contract for the service. CDS is working to retain its delivery locations across South Humber, bringing services into local clinics and hospitals so that patients are able to access NHS dental care within their communities.

The current performance figures which set out access rates for children and adults into NHS dental care are set out in Appendix 1. NEL sees an improving picture for children's access rates whereas adult rates are falling, in-line with national trends.

1.2. Non recurrent funding

In addition to the main commissioning budget, the dental team also has access to a non-recurrent dental budget. This budget is a result of underperforming NHS dental contracts where commissioners are able to 'clawback' funding from undelivered dental activity to re-invest into other dental services.

Using non-recurrent funding in 2025/26, the ICB has retained its programmes to:

- Improve access and reduce waiting lists for urgent and orthodontic appointments
 - Urgent appointments – 4 practices in NEL are offering approximately 4,800 patient appointments throughout the year. Grimsby also has out of hours provision and a practice in Cleethorpes is piloting Sunday appointments throughout March 2026.
 - Orthodontic practices – 1 contract in NEL has increased their capacity to see patients from the waiting list.
- Offer child only contracts – 4 practices in NEL are taking part.
- Continue bespoke dental access programmes for those experiencing homeless and for refugees and asylum seekers.
- To fund translation and interpretation services for all dental providers and Community Dental Services (CDS).
- Promote good oral health and to prevent dental decay – a social media campaign was launched in February 2025, with face-to-face activities now taking place in 2026 over half term and Easter holidays, linking with Local Authority colleagues.
- Prioritise access for the most vulnerable, through 'flexible commissioning' practices who accept referrals from health and social care providers, and who offer preventative treatments. There are currently 4 practices taking part in NEL.
- Encourage over-delivery of contracted UDAs, up to 110%, increasing access to dental services.

1.3 Collaboration with Local Authorities – Prevention, Access and Treatment (PAT)

The Prevention, Access, and Treatment (PAT) programme, based on the national 'Childsmile programme' continues to be delivered in schools across North East Lincolnshire. The PAT programme is delivered in partnership with dental providers, local authorities and schools, targeting children and young people to promote good oral hygiene and prevent dental decay.

Throughout the summer of 2025, the ICB conducted an interim evaluation of the PAT programme, 18 months into the programme. The evaluation has been instrumental in helping to build an understanding of the programme and its successes or areas for improvement. Following the evaluation, the PAT programme has become 'business as usual' and falls under the remit of Dental Commissioners who are considering the findings and recommendations, informing medium-term commissioning intentions.

Currently, across North East Lincolnshire, there are eight schools participating in the PAT programme. Each of these schools is located within the most deprived areas, in

line with PAT's aim in targeting key inclusion areas. The full list of schools participating in PAT and other local authority commissioned schemes is available in Appendix 2.

1.4. National incentives and programmes

In addition to local Place-based and ICB activity, there are also a range of national initiatives focused on improving access to NHS dentistry. Under the Labour Government, the ICB is taking action to deliver on its key national priorities, including:

- the focus on creating circa 27,000 urgent dental appointments across Humber and North Yorkshire as part of the 700,000 appointments expected nationally;
- the dental recruitment incentive scheme (DRIS) aimed at offering a 'golden hello' payment to encourage dentists to work in the area; and
- Full dental contract reform.

With regards to the ICB's target to deliver 27,119 additional urgent dental appointments, the ICB is currently below target, alongside most ICBs in England. This is despite the ICB's best efforts to increase provision, offering up to £8 million of investment into urgent dental services, twice the investment made in 24/25. Due to the ICB's earlier investment into urgent dental, seen in previous years, it is more challenging to meet the national target as dental providers are already doing what they can to deliver urgent care. This limited capacity meant that only £5.8 million of the allocated £8 million has been committed to urgent provision. In a final attempt to increase provision, the ICB is piloting a 9-week programme for dental practices to deliver urgent appointments on Sundays up to the end of March 2026.

The ICB has performed well in its dental recruitment incentive scheme (DRIS) where the national government expected the ICB to offer 8 'golden hello' payments to support recruitment into the area. Humber and North Yorkshire ICB has successfully placed 7 dentists in the area with 2 being based in NEL. Humber and North Yorkshire ICB is the only ICB in the North East and Yorkshire Region to achieve its target for DRIS.

Finally, as part of national dental contract reform, the government has recently confirmed its plans for changes to the dental contract. ICBs are awaiting further details but new contractual requirements will be in place from 1 April 2026. Early indications of changes include mandatory requirements for dental providers to offer urgent dental appointments and include payment changes to support dentists who may treat patients with complex dental issues and high levels of dental disease, thus incentivising dentists to engage in complex treatment plans.

1.5. Conclusion

Overall, NHS dental services remain a complex and challenging area however, Humber and North Yorkshire ICB, in partnership with local authority colleagues and dental providers, is working to bring about improvements. The continued procurement of specialist dental services and the increase in urgent dental appointments, is a step toward achieving this aim in North East Lincolnshire.

Together, working in partnership with local authorities and our dental providers, Humber and North Yorkshire ICB is positive that they can continue to invest in dental services and to improve access to dental treatment for its residents.

2. RISKS, OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUALITY ISSUES

Where opportunities arise for joint-working and collaboration between the local authority and ICB regarding dental services and oral health outcomes, officers will work

together to realise these benefits.

3. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable

4. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The ICB continues to fund NHS dental services through its dental commissioning budget and non-recurrent dental funding.

5. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

As per the main body of the report, there has been ICB dental investment into child only contracts and access rates (as per Appendix 1) are improving in NEL.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE, NATURE RECOVERY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

7. PUBLIC HEALTH, HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND MARMOT IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

8. MONITORING COMMENTS

In the opinion of the author, this report does not contain recommended changes to policy or resources (people, finance or physical assets). As a result no monitoring comments have been sought from the Council's Monitoring Officer (Chief Legal Officer), Section 151 Officer (Director of Finance) or Strategic Workforce Lead.

9. WARD IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Not applicable

11. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

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Appendix 1: Data

a) Access data – children

Details from <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/dentists-dental-practices/>

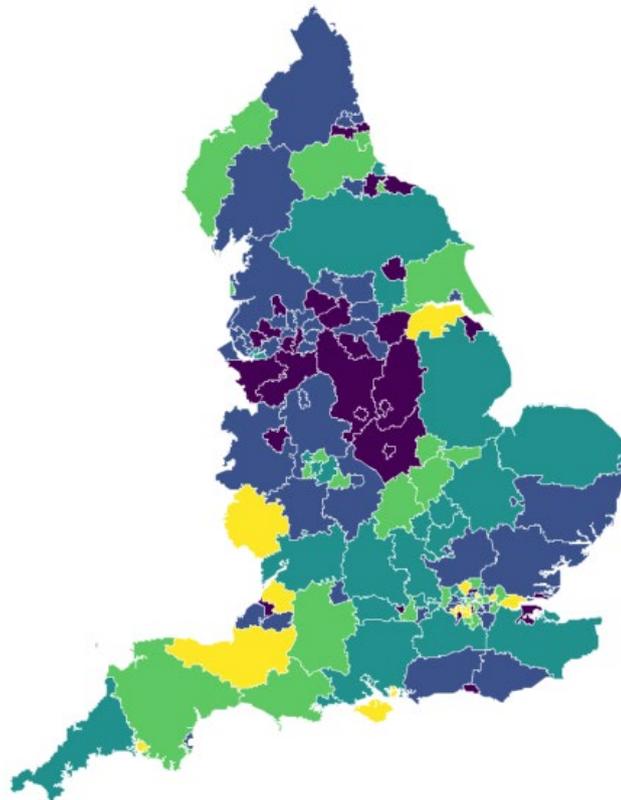
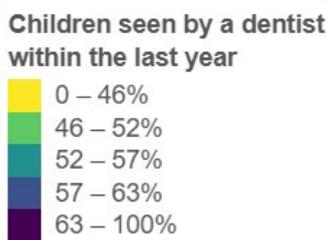
Local Authority	2024	2025	Direction
North Lincolnshire	50%	46%	↓
East Riding	52%	51%	↓
North Yorkshire	56%	56%	-
Hull	62%	63%	↑
North East Lincolnshire	65%	67%	↑
York	69%	69%	↑
Yorkshire and Humber	61%	62.4%	↑
England	55%	57%	↑

The above table shows the changing rates of children accessing dental services, comparing 2024 and 2025 rates. Of particular note:

- Yorkshire and Humber rates are above the England averages
- NEL rates are above the regional and England averages
- Lowest levels of access are experienced by children living in North Lincolnshire and East Riding, with both being below the England and regional averages

The map below shows how each local authority area compares across England.

National map for June 2025



b) Access data – adults

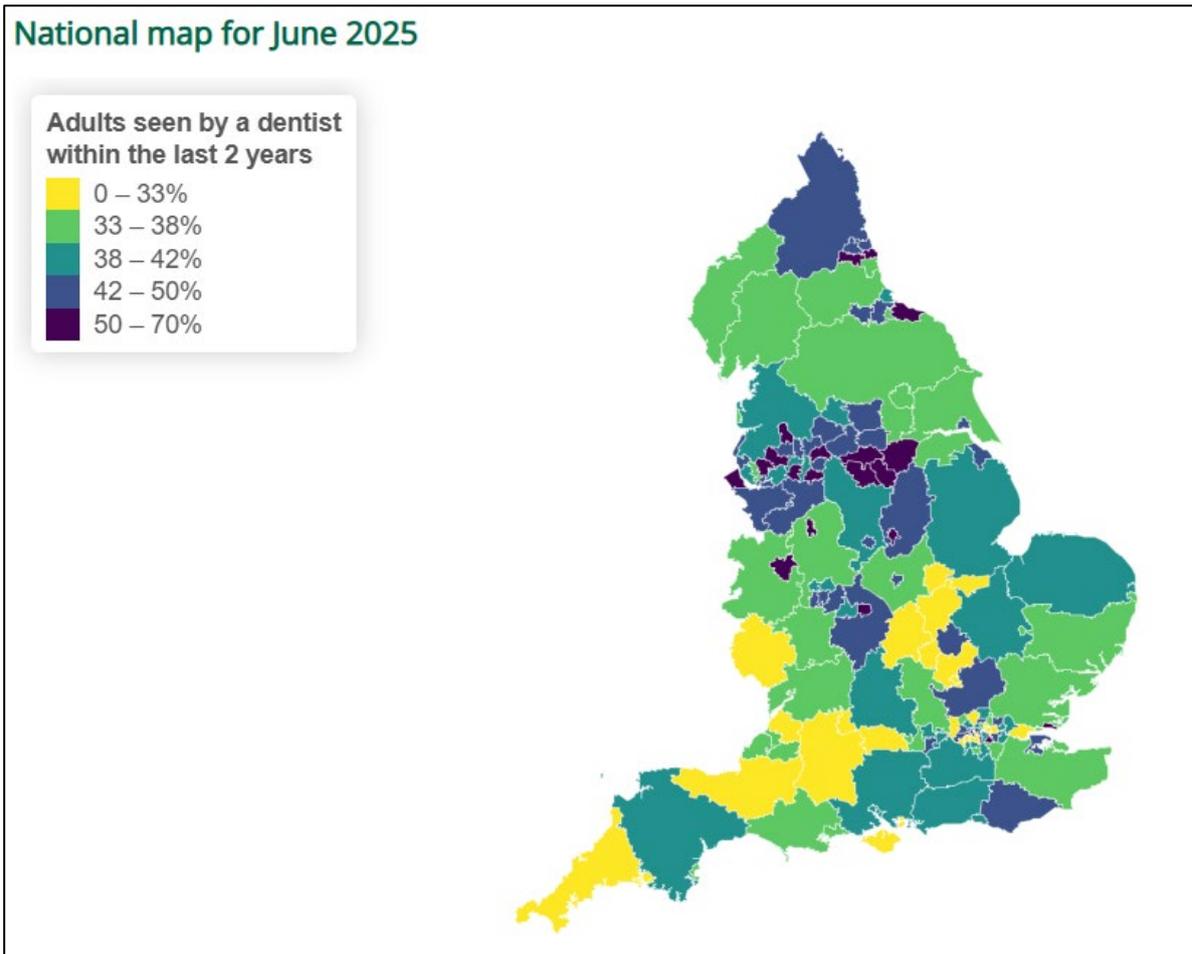
Details from <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/dentists-dental-practices/>

Local Authority	2024	2025	Direction
North Lincolnshire	38%	36%	↓
East Riding	37%	35%	↓
North Yorkshire	39%	38%	↓
Hull	51%	49%	↓
North East Lincolnshire	49%	48%	↓
York	37%	35%	↓
Yorkshire and Humber	46%	44.2%	↓
England	40%	39%	↓

The above table shows the changing rates of adults accessing dental services, comparing 2024 and 2025 rates. Of particular note:

- Rates are falling across all areas, including England and Yorkshire and Humber.
- NEL rates are above regional and England averages, but falling
- Lowest levels of access are experienced by adults living in York and East Riding, with North Lincolnshire and North Yorkshire also falling below England averages.

The map below shows how each local authority area compares across England.



Appendix 2 – Prevention, Access and Treatment (PAT) schools

Official School Name	IMD 2019 national decile	IDACI 2019 national decile	Teeth Team	ICB PAT Scheme	PH Supervised Tooth brushing / Brush Bus
	(Note: low number indicates high levels of deprivation)				
Welholme Academy	1	1		Taking Part	
Oasis Academy Nunsthorpe	1	1		Taking Part	
Ormiston South Parade Academy	1	1			Taking Part
Weelsby Primary Academy	1	1		Taking Part	
Macaulay Primary Academy	1	1			Taking Part
Woodlands Academy	1	1		Taking Part	
Grange Primary School	1	1		Taking Part	
Pilgrim Academy	1	1		Taking Part	
Elliston Primary Academy	2	2		Taking Part	
St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy	2	2		Taking Part	
Willows Academy	2	2			Taking Part
Bursar Primary Academy	2	2			Taking Part
Old Clee Primary Academy	4	4			Taking Part
Eastfield Primary Academy	5	5	Taking Part		