

Dentistry Services in Tower Hamlets

Trends Analysis Report 2017-2018



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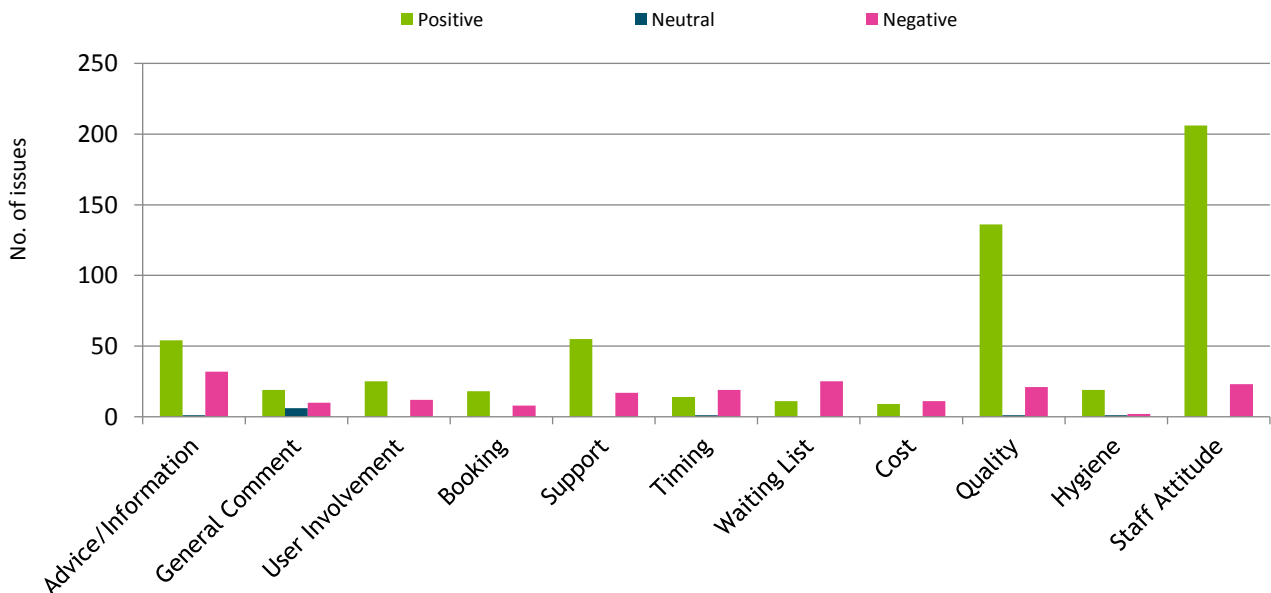
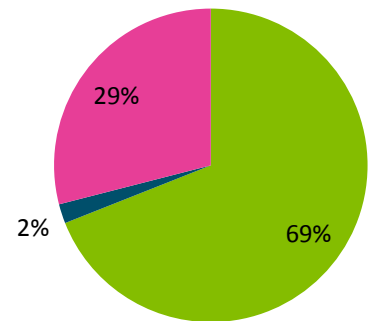
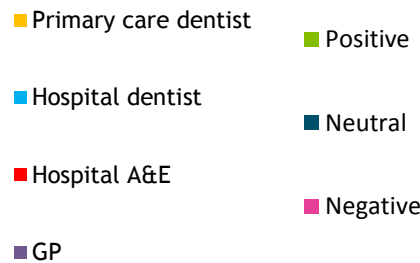
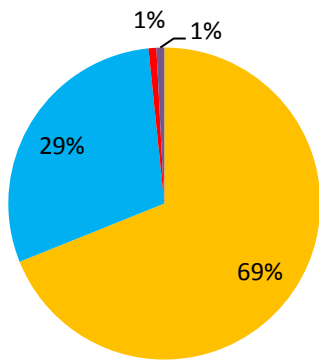
Between October 2017 and October 2018, we have analysed **234 comments** from service users, identifying **861 issues**.

Local residents give very positive feedback on **primary care dentists** in the borough. Feedback about **hospital-based dentistry** is mixed.

Both in primary care dental practices and in the dentistry department of the Royal London Hospital, dentists, assistants and nurses are commended for the quality of the service they provide and their kind, helpful attitude.

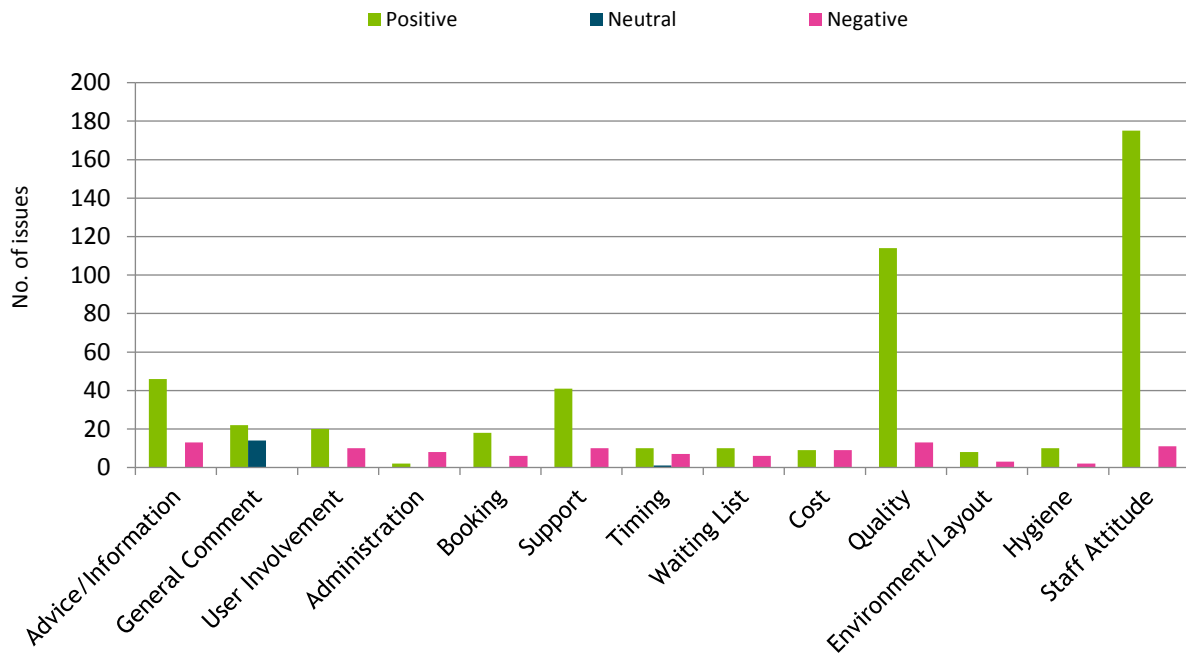
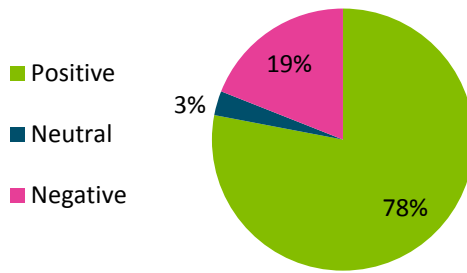
In primary dental surgeries, booking is generally easy/ straightforward and reception staff are praised for their pleasant manner. Booking an appointment with a hospital-based specialist is more difficult, and some patients report very long waits before they can be seen. Cancellations and admin errors contribute to the situation. Furthermore, there are reports of patients not being informed of delays and cancellations in their care, possibly because of admin errors.

Overview



Primary care dentists

160 comments,
identifying 622 issues
about 28 dental practices.

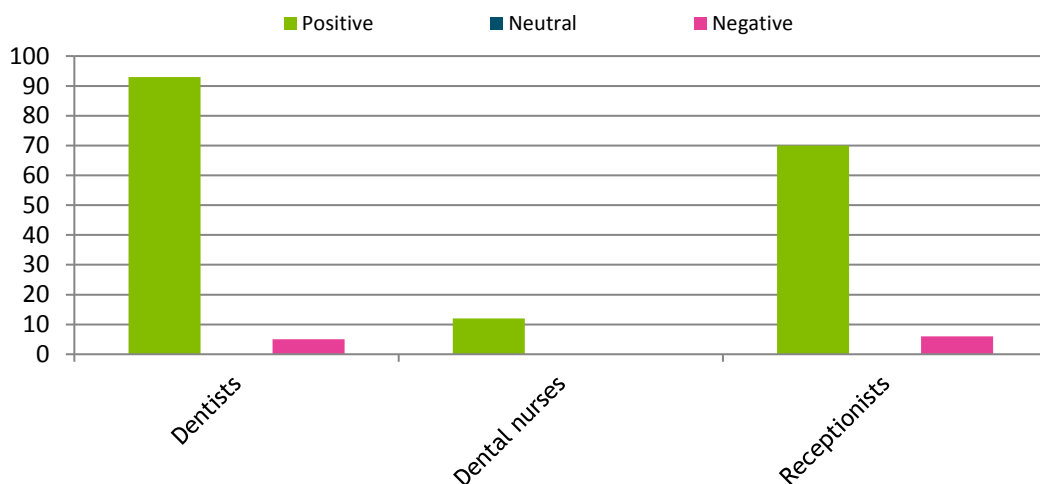


Aspects praised by patients

The quality of medical services provided by dentists in Tower Hamlets is thought to be very high by most service users, who appear impressed with the professionalism of doctors and nurses.

- *For years I've been attending this clinic for regular maintenance but recently needed some serious work done AND consistent with every experience to date THEY WERE AMAZING: firstly, they were kind (to a man pain!); and communicative about likely causes, treatment options and expected outcomes; and efficient and cost effective.*
- *The dentist was incredibly compassionate about my chronic health conditions and took care to make sure my medications are compatible with dental treatment, and the dental nurse also listened very closely to my concerns.*
- *Amazing, personable Dr P. repaired a filling, and did it without injecting novocaine. I was surprised it went well and there was no pain!*

The attitude of all staff members (doctors, nurses and receptionists) is praised by patients.



- *Very lovely practice! From the receptionist R. to my dentist Dr B. and his lovely dental assistant. Friendly service, very clean practice and amazing staff! I highly recommend their services.*
- *My experience today was great, I was very nervous, but the dentist and dental nurse were extremely good and made me feel at ease. I had two teeth taken out and I feel great, the centre is immaculate, and the staff are friendly, thank you for your patience this morning.*
- *Just like to say what a pleasant experience this was visiting Abbey dental practice. From entering, to leaving, I was made to feel really welcome, Receptionist, was very helpful with the new patient questionnaire, practice manager, very pleasant to chat with, while waiting. Then came my turn for the Dentist chair, I don't think I've ever felt so relaxed, at the dentist, he was amazing, answered all my questions, and hopefully has solved my tooth problem. I'm back in another month, for a clean-up, and this time not dreading it*

Dentists give good explanations about diagnosis and treatment, as well as advice on prevention and oral hygiene.

- *One particular dentist is very professional and very thorough. I have been her patient for more than 7 years. I'm so satisfied that I have no desire to go anywhere else. She explains things well. Is gentle and always asks how you are and even during treatment ensures you are comfortable and allows you time to rest your mouth too. She gives you dental hygiene advice and you feel reassured and confident to go back.*
- *I am provided with excellent advice. There are also lots of information available to you if you want it.*
- *The dentist is excellent, professional, always cheerful and informative when asked questions about my dental work.*
- *I was looking for a friendly dentist I felt I could trust, and I have found her here. This practice is completely different to the increasingly prevalent 'give us your money' approach. I am leaving feeling fully consulted, well informed and confident that the advice is in my interest not theirs. And for the first time in a long time wanting to write a five star review.*

Booking appointments is easy and straightforward for most patients.

- *When I was experiencing pain, I got an appointment immediately without any difficulty.*
- *Smooth experience booking appointments. Great dentist. Would recommend.*
- *I've been a patient at Damira Island Health (E14) for the last 8 years and have never had any problems. The appointments are prompt and easy to schedule.*

Dental practices are usually clean, with well-presented waiting rooms.

- *The surgery was tidy, and the waiting area is quite comfortable. Every member of staff I met there was friendly and polite.*
- *Lovely clean and fresh-looking practice.*
- *The best dental practice I have ever seen. Very clean and first class quality.*
- *Very clean! Was told the surgery has been revamped A-Z. You can definitely see this. All equipment looks brand new.*

Aspects criticised by patients

A small number of patients report that lack of clarity on NHS versus private treatment has resulted in unexpected charges for them.

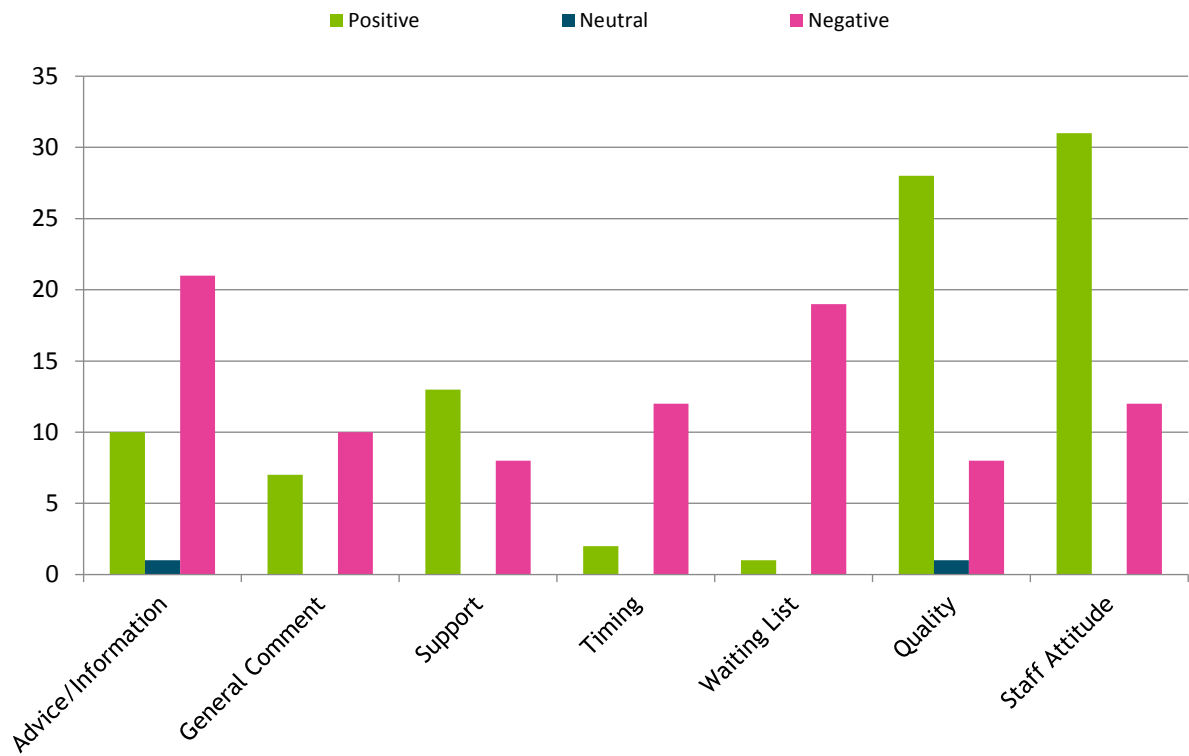
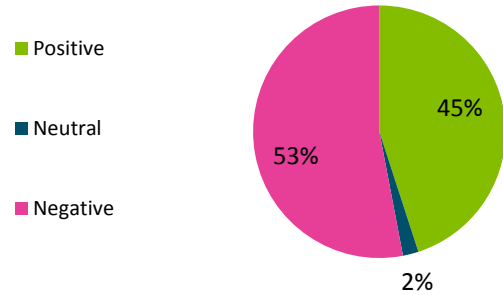
- *I thought I was paying the NHS band prices. No, they have been secretly charging me private charge. Not once did they inform me that I was being treated as a private patient and that I was paying the private cost. I am not someone who can afford private dental care. Nor have any of the other people I've spoken to who have also been conned into paying private dental care. They trick you into signing a sheet of paper that agrees paying private, and when I say trick - they will talk to you when they give you the form to sign. They even have the cheek to add on further treatment onto the bill before you've even received the treatment. They do not explain to you what you are signing. All they do is ask you if you're paying when you enter the dentist, of course anyone working and not on benefits will answer yes.*
- *I had treatment under the belief that this is an NHS practice. It was a particularly busy day and the receptionist told me to sign a document. As it was really busy at the desk, I signed it without reading. It turns out the document was an agreement for them to charge private prices. Please be wary of this. Terrible staff.*

NHS patients have to wait a long time for procedures that are available straight away in the same clinic for private patients.

- *Dr X tried to make me pay for private health care I hadn't asked for (nor signed for to receive). He then refused to treat me with the NHS option I had booked in for and had prepaid.*
- *After being referred for a wisdom tooth extraction and being told I would only have to wait a couple of weeks for an appointment. I am now in my fourth month still waiting on the "waiting list" for an appointment to come through. They did however inform me that I could be seen straight away privately for £250 other than that I had to wait for the next appointment. I asked will I be seeing someone different and they said it is the same surgeon only that we will fit you in. How can you justify letting patients suffer on the basis whether or not they can pay privately? This is so unfair on so many levels. I have since had my tooth out at the hospital*

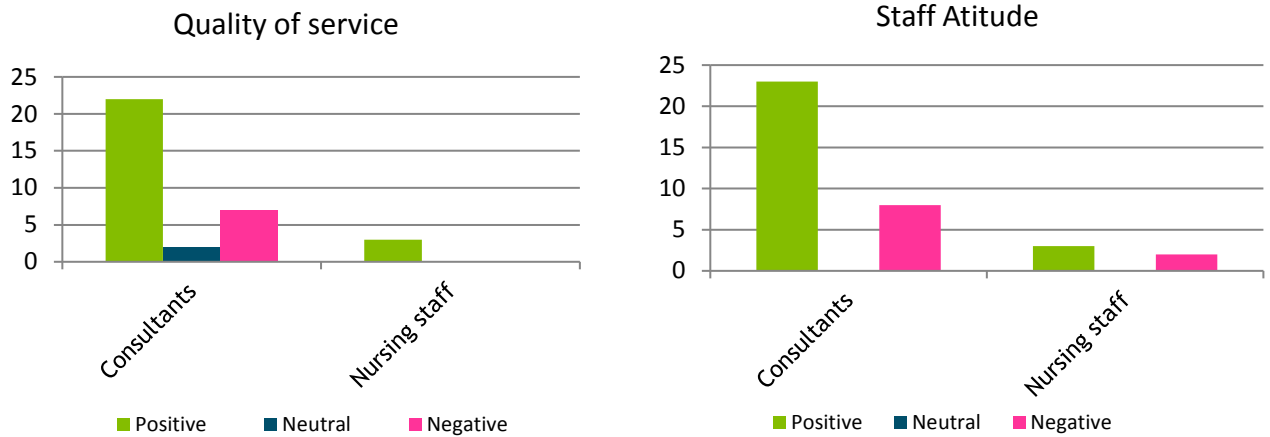
Hospital-based dental services

900 comments,
identifying 261 issues;
the vast majority of
comments refer to the
Royal London Hospital.



Aspects praised by patients

Patients are happy with the quality of care they receive from dental consultants, as well as from dental assistants and nurses. The attitude of medical staff members is also commended by service users.



- *I would really like to express my gratitude and admiration to all of the team involved in my care for the injuries to my face following an accident in February which required two surgeries and follow up care from the Maxillo Facial Trauma Team. I am so grateful for you being there to facilitate what I consider a brilliant repair. You changed a horrible situation into an interesting experience. I would like to include, ambulance, nursing, imaging, portering and reception staff involved in my thanks for genuinely humane care.*
- *The nursing team have delivered kind and compassionate care. The night team have been fantastic and kept me happy and comfy.*
- *Thank you... X and Y from Dental. Patient thanked you both and from the bottom of her heart for your helpful and speedy manner in which this case has been dealt with.*

Waiting rooms are clean and tidy; eight dental patients interviewed during our outreach gave the hospital five stars for cleanliness.

Aspects criticised by patients

It takes a long time to get an appointment to see a consultant. Cancellations make waiting times even longer.

- *Patient sent a complaint letter to CCT with concerns relating to the delay in care and treatment.*
- *I had a decayed lower wisdom tooth on both side and giving me sharp unbearable pain. My dentist suggested that both decayed wisdom tooth need to be taken out because it's causing infection. They can't do in surgery because it's very close to my nerve, so she refereed me to Royal London hospital because only hospital can do some of the tough extractions. I've been to the hospital and they give me appointments in January and February one for each tooth. When I was going for my first extraction on January they phoned me on same day, cancelled my appointment and rescheduled for the 24th of April. Then after few days I received a letter that my February appointment has been cancelled and rescheduled in May.*
- *Patient's mother not happy with the delays the patient has regarding treatment under the oral surgery team the patient has been waiting over a year for treatment.*

Patients are not informed about delays and cancellations in appointments.

- *Patient not happy with the delays in treatment and no communication regarding cancelled appointment.*
- *Patient not happy that they have attended two appointments that have been cancelled and patient not notified.*
- *Patient is unhappy with the lack of communication regarding her scheduled surgery. She states that her problem is getting worse and is now affecting her quality of life. She would like and explanation regarding the delay and an offer of an urgent surgery date.*
- *Patients sister wants to make a formal complaint regarding her brother's lack of treatment and the patient's appointment that was cancelled but they had not been contacted this has happened twice.*

Admin errors contribute to unreasonable waits.

- *Dental patient called the department after waiting 6months after a referral to find when her appointment was for. Was told that the doctor had forgotten to add her to the waiting list.*
- *Received a complaint e-mail from a patient who is unhappy with her care management. Patient informed that she attended her appointment and was informed that she did not require a scan as this was already completed the year before. She then received another letter informing that she had DNA another appointment which was not so as the hospital had informed that her appointment has been cancelled. On the back of this, a letter with her details was sent to a wrong dental practice.*
- *Patient not happy that they were sent an appointment for dental imaging on a bank holiday and the whole service was closed.*