



Integrated Care System

Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin

July 2024

**Dental Service Equity Audit for Primary
Care Dental Services across Shropshire,
Telford & Wrekin ICB**

Introduction

- A Dental Service Equity Audit identifies how fairly dental services are distributed relative to the oral health needs of the population.
- The NHS England 2023/24 priorities and operational planning guidance reconfirms the ongoing need to recover services to deliver the NHS Long Term Plan (NHSE, 2023). It includes an ambition to recover dental activity, towards pre-pandemic levels and to ensure fair allocation and distribution of resources towards those most in need. A Dental Service Equity Audit supports this ambition.
- The aim of this audit is to assess levels of access to NHS primary care dental services across
- Shropshire Telford and Wrekin ICB at ward level and review available oral health and deprivation data for those wards.



Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin – what was audited

- Information from the local Dental Advice Line and Healthwatch will provide insights from the public, and current and planned housing developments will help to identify areas with anticipated population growth. This information will support the identification of initial priority areas for those with the poorest oral health, who also have the lowest levels of access to services. This will inform the dental commissioners when prioritising targeted action to improve access to dental services and help reduce inequities in access to dental services across the ICB.

- The decision-making process in regard to NHS dental service commissioning is undertaken against a backdrop of differential population growth and a growing private dental sector. In addition, the public can access NHS dental care wherever they choose as there is no ‘catchment’ area for dental practices, unlike for general medical practices. These factors create a very dynamic environment for dental commissioning, and this dental service equity audit should therefore be reviewed and updated regularly to evaluate the impact of commissioning dental services and to identify new priority areas for future commissioning.



Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin – what did it tell us?

Oral Health Profile of Shropshire Telford and Wrekin ICB

- The most recent oral health data is that collected during the 2021/2022 National Dental Epidemiology Programme survey of 5-year-old children. Data on adult oral health is limited and have not been included in this report.
- The percentage of children found to have experienced decay into dentine by the age of 5 years was 17% for the ICB (OHID, 2023). This is lower than the average across the West Midlands (23.8%) and England (23.7%) (OHID, 2023).
- However, the average of 17% masks variations in dental decay across the area. Children living in the most deprived 20% of areas of the country are 2.5 times more likely to have experienced tooth decay (35.1%) than those living in the least deprived 20% of areas (13.5%).



Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin – cont.

- Each 5-year-old child examined who had experienced tooth decay had an average of just over 3 teeth affected by tooth decay. It is likely that this will have caused pain and for some will have resulted in tooth extractions under general anaesthetic. Indeed, during 2022/23, 565 children living in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin received a general anaesthetic for tooth extractions. [Hospital tooth extractions in 0 to 19 year olds: 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hospital-tooth-extractions-in-0-to-19-year-olds-2023)
- Disparities are also evident in the experience of dentinal decay by ethnic group, which was significantly higher in the other ethnic group (44.8%) and the Asian or Asian British ethnic group (37.7%).



STW Plan for addressing Dental Inequality

- The Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Dental Services Equity Audit recommends future dental service commissioning in seven priority areas and calculates the number of additional UDAs required to increase local access in the most challenged areas to the pre-pandemic level across the ICB.
- Individual priority wards have been grouped together to create larger priority areas so that commissioners can commission additional NHS dental activity on a more viable footprint and to increase NHS dental access for the wider local priority population.



Priority Areas

In priority order, the areas identified are –

1. The wards of Madeley & Sutton Hill, The Nedge, Woodside, Dawley & Aqueduct, Malinslee & Dawley Bank and Brookside.
2. The wards of Market Drayton West and Market Drayton East.
3. The wards of Oswestry East, Oswestry West, St. Oswald, Gobowen, Selattyn & Weston Rhyn, Ellesmere Urban, Llanymynech, St. Martins, Whittington and Oswestry South.
4. The wards of Ludlow North, Ludlow East, Ludlow South, Clee, Corvedale and Church Stretton & Craven Arms.
5. The wards of College, Haygate and Hadley & Leegomery.
6. The wards of Oakengates & Ketley Bank, Wrockwardine Wood & Trench, St. Georges and Donnington.
7. The wards of Underdale, Castlefields & Ditherington, Harlescott, Monkmoor and Sundorne.

