



Patient and Public Involvement in Health

Stockport and the new NHS Dental Contract 2006

A report compiled by the Stockport Primary Care Trust Patient & Public
Involvement in Health (PPIH) Forum

Support for PPIH provided by Gaddum Centre, Gaddum House, 6 Great Jackson Street, Manchester M15 4AX

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Chief Executive: Shirley Adams

Who are the PPIH?

Patient & Public Involvement in Health (PPIH) Forums are made up of groups of volunteers in local communities who are enthusiastic about helping patients and members of the public influence the way that local healthcare is organised and delivered.

Forum members come from different backgrounds and have a range of experiences and skills.

Each PPIH Forum is fully independent and works with a local NHS Trust. There is a PPIH Forum for every NHS Trust in England. PPIH Forums have the power to make a difference in the community as they have been officially set up by the Government and are supported by a national public organisation, the Commission for Patient & Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH).

PPIH Forums play a vital role in making sure patients' and public's views are heard and acted on by all those involved in making decisions about health. The functions and powers of PPIH Forums have been laid down by law.

PPIH Forums independently watch over the quality of local healthcare; shape decisions which impact on our health and influence local and national decisions as part of a growing network of patient and public involvement.

NHS Dentistry within Stockport

It is just over a year since the Government introduced the new contract for Dentists doing NHS work and passed responsibility for commissioning dental services to the Stockport Primary Care Trust.

The Stockport Primary Care Trust Patient & Public Involvement in Health (PPIH) Forum judged it time to survey how the change might have affected access to a NHS Dentist and the nature of care.

Accordingly we asked both Dentists and the Primary Care Trust to answer our questions (Appendix 1). Over half the Dental Practices (31) in Stockport responded.

The statements given below indicate the essence of what we have been told.

- 1) A majority of Dentists have a waiting list for NHS Patients.
- 2) A significant minority - 45%, say that the waiting list is longer now than it was a year ago.
- 3) All but two of the Dentists feel that the new contract fails to encourage people to take more care of their teeth.
- 4) All but one of the Dentists feels that the new contract does not encourage dentists to improve the quality of care to NHS Patients – that is for access and for actual treatment.
- 5) A small majority – 53% of Dentists who responded, felt that the Stockport PCT was not encouraging dentistry in the Borough, but a small number – 35% felt it was.
- 6) A majority – 55%, felt that the Stockport PCT was limiting access to NHS treatment for lack of money but a significant minority of dentists – 32%, felt it was not doing so.
- 7) A significant number of dentists who responded – 39% felt that Stockport PCT was not attempting to influence the extent of treatments given.
- 8) The dentists generally felt that the increase in fees paid by NHS Patients for treatment was up to 50% more with the new contract.
- 9) A very significant majority – 74% of dentists who have responded are less confident of their ability to give good NHS dental care than they were a year ago at the start of the new contract.

From the Stockport Primary Care Trust's point of view:

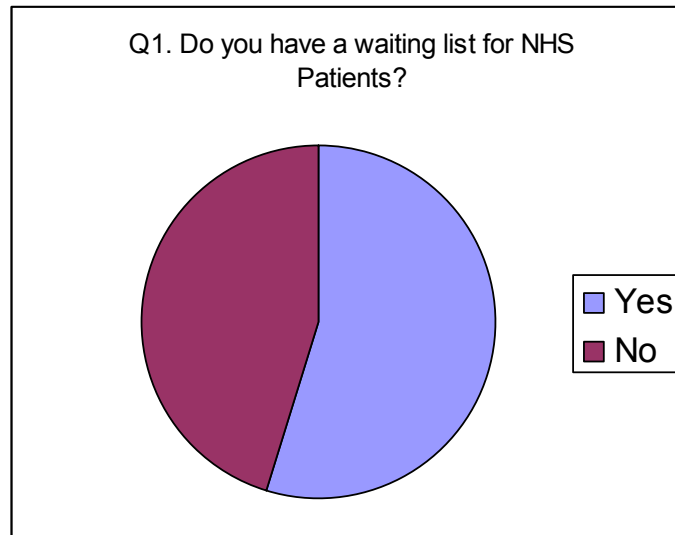
- 10) The Government got its estimates wrong on how much money would be needed by the Stockport PCT for taking responsibility for NHS Dentistry within the Borough. It underestimated how much money would be paid through patients' contribution. This forced the PCT to divert almost £1 million that would have been used elsewhere to make up the shortfall.
- 11) In the last year over 6000 residents have been helped to get on an NHS list for dental care in addition to those who achieved this by their own efforts.

There is no hard data but the Stockport PCT believes that those attempting to get on dental lists have increased in numbers.

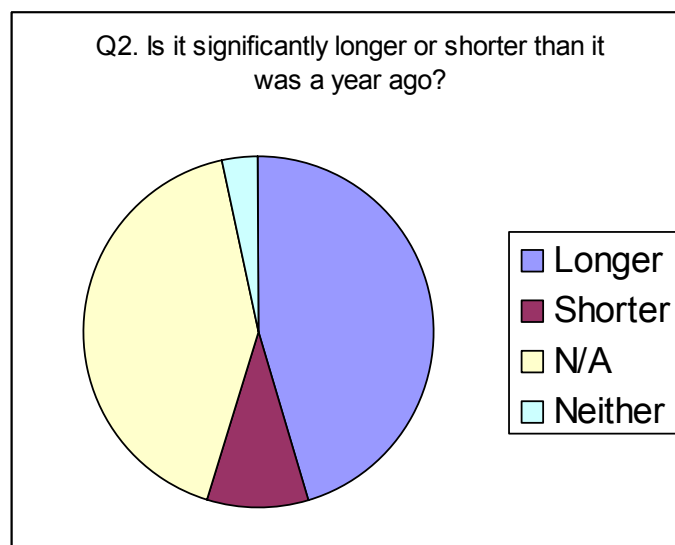
- 12) Stockport PCT has evidence that the output (units of treatment) increased by some 8% in this year of the new contract.
- 13) Stockport PCT increased the number of dentists by the equivalent of 5 full time people but has no plans for further increased spending.
- 14) Stockport PCT is responsible for the emergency Out-Of-Hours Service but in a three-month reference period only 17% of those who made contact actually received treatment.
- 15) Stockport PCT will continue to offer a Helpline Service to Residents who seek NHS Dentistry and will monitor the number that receive NHS care.
- 16) Dentists will continue to hold lists and records for the NHS patients they treat but these will have no significance in the contract and payment scheme.

From the viewpoint of Patients the Forum concludes:

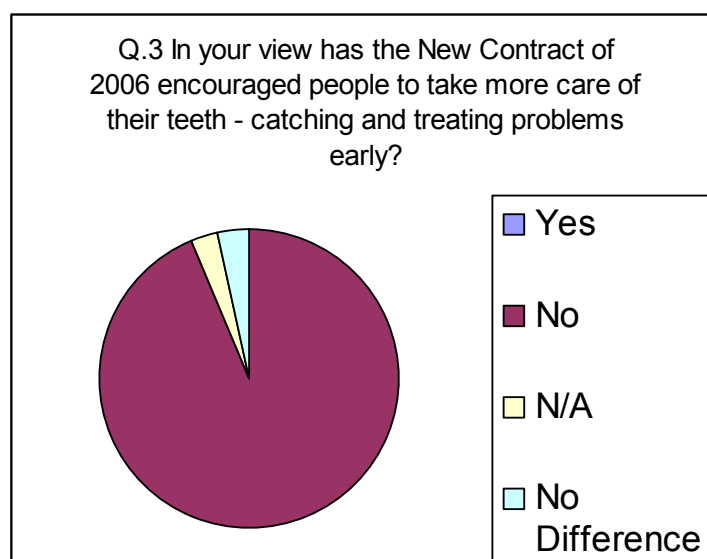
- The new Government contract is working against the interests of patients in access to NHS dentists and care for their teeth.
- The new Government contract is working against the interests of the general residents of Stockport by having required Stockport PCT to divert up to £1 million from NHS care elsewhere in the Borough.
- The Stockport PCT seems generally to have acted responsibly and well within the constraints of finance.
- That only 17% of those who sought Out-Of-Hours advice or treatment were actually seen by dentists (as opposed to phone discussion etc.) seems to us a very low figure. We believe this needs further checks and watching.



55% answered 'yes'.



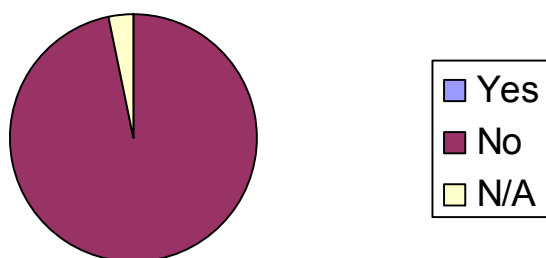
45% answered 'longer'.



94% answered 'no'.

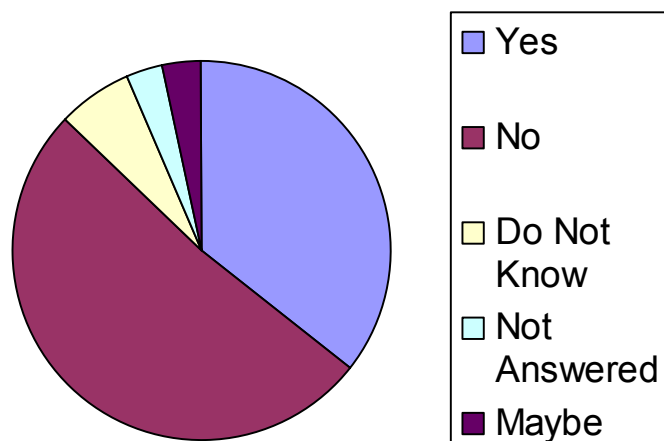
Patient and Public Involvement in Health

Q4. In your view has the New Contract (with its rules for claiming payment) encouraged dentists to improve the quality of care - that is, catching and improving quality of care within the best Dental Guidelines for good practice?



97% answered 'no'.

Q5. Is the PCT showing signs of encouraging NHS Dentistry within the Borough?



53% answered 'no'. 35% answered 'yes'.

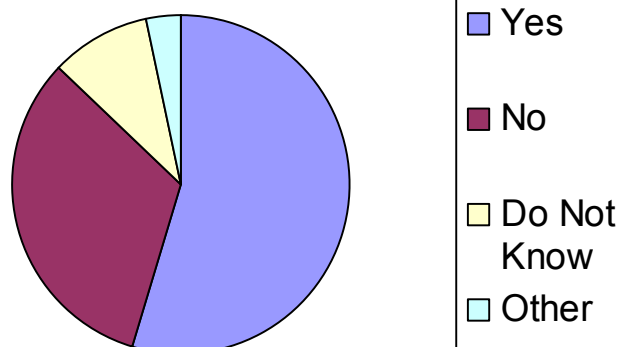
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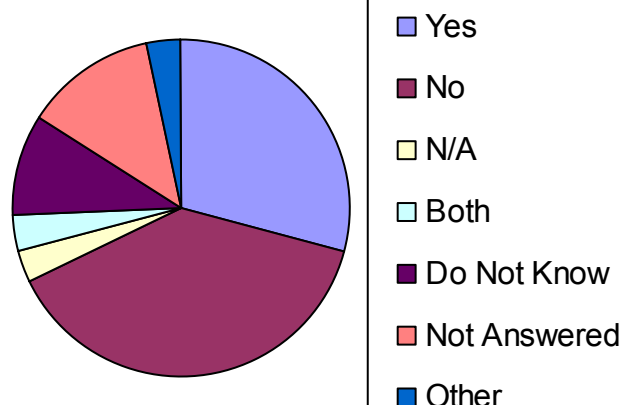
507162, Chief Executive: Shirley Adams

Q6a. Has the PCT limited, or shown signs of limiting, for financial constraints: Access to treatments?



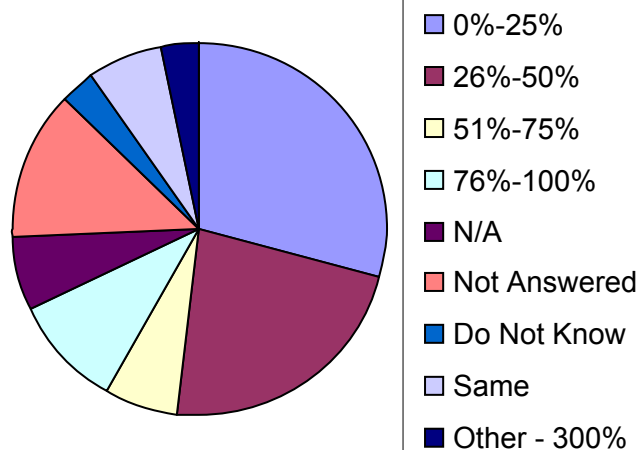
55% answered 'yes'. 32% answered 'no'.

Q6b. Has Stockport PCT limited, or shown signs of limiting, for financial constraints: Extent of treatments?



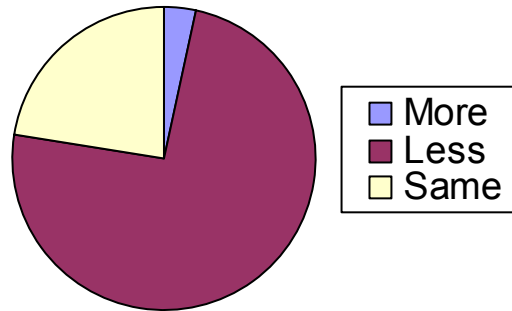
39% answered 'no'. 29% answered 'yes'.

Q7. It has been generally accepted that the 'average person's' NHS Dental Charges would increase significantly under the new contract. What is your estimate of this increase in % terms?



9 responses were for 0%-25%
7 responses were for 26%-50%

Q8. Are you more or less confident about your ability to give good NHS Dental Care to patients that you were a year ago?



74% answered 'less'.

APPENDIX 1



Patient and Public Involvement in Health

1 June 2007

Questionnaire to Dentists in the Borough of Stockport

The Stockport Primary Care Trust Patient & Public Involvement in Health Forum is charged with representing the Patients and Residents in Stockport.

We are an entirely independent body set up by the Government purely to act in the interests of these people and so are in a position to make representation wherever and to whomever may be appropriate.

We have been following the effects of what is happening to dentistry within the NHS in the national press but feel the time has come to find out more of what is actually happening within Stockport.

In consequence we ask you to spend a couple of minutes answering the following questions and returning the sheet to our support organisation in the prepaid envelope no later than **30th June 2007**.

- Do you have a waiting list for NHS Patients?
- Is it significantly longer or shorter than it was a year ago?
- In your view has the New Contract of 2006 encouraged people to take more care of their teeth – catching and treating problems early?
- In your view has the New Contract (with its rules for claiming payment) encouraged dentists to improve the quality of care – that is catching and improving quality of care within the best Dental Guidelines for good practice?
- Is the PCT showing signs of encouraging NHS Dentistry within the Borough?
- Has the PCT limited, or shown signs of limiting, for financial constraints:

Access to treatments?
Extent of treatments?

- It has been generally accepted that the 'average person's' NHS Dental Charges would increase significantly under the new contract. What is your estimate of this increase in % terms?
- Are you more or less confident about your ability to give good NHS Dental Care to patients than you were a year ago?

Thank you for your time in answering these questions. If you feel there are other matters we should know or matters where we might be able to help please contact us through our Forum Support Organisation at the Gaddum Centre.

Mike Lappin
Chairman Stockport PCT PPIH Forum

Individual replies will be kept confidential. This questionnaire has been seen and is being sent out with the knowledge and agreement of your LDC Officials.