

Survey of consumers' experience of dental services

Prepared by Ipsos-UK for the Office of Fair Trading, this survey report is supplementary information to OFT630 – The private dentistry market in the UK.

March 2003

OFT630b

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Consumer Experience of Dentists

Job No. J4839uz19 June 2002

Prepared for

OFFICE OF FAIR TRADING

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1. BACKGROUND

As part of a wider examination of the extent of consumer problems encountered when seeking dental treatment the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) wishes to establish factual information about experience of consumers when finding a dentist or when obtaining dental treatment.

In this research the OFT is not attempting to address issues of quality of treatment and value for money. Such issues inevitably involve aspects of clinical and professional judgement that fall outside OFT expertise.

This particular piece of work will concern itself only with objective information about any consumer experience on availability and use of dentists, and where appropriate availability and use of complaint procedures, though stopping short of any evaluation of the substance of complaints.

The three main issues the research is intended to deal with are covered in more detail in the Research Objectives (Section 2). In each case the research should establish factual results about what information is available and, in practice, provide, how easy it is for the consumer to obtain and understand the information and how easy it is to act on the information.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives for this study, as defined by the OFT were as follows:

Choice of dentist

- Information available to patients wanting NHS and private treatment.
 - What factors patients look for in a dentist
- Are patients aware of existing information on dental services
 - What information do they think should be available
- Extent of patient choice between NHS and private treatment
- Extent of patient switching from NHS to private.
- Proportion of patients attempting to move to an NHS dentist as a result of dentist becoming private.
- Gauge the effect of cost of treatment in population without regular dentist.
 - Extent of lack of access to NHS treatment in those without regular dentist
- Patients approach to choosing and changing dentists

Information relating to treatment and payment

- Determine whether dentists routinely advise on nature of treatment.
 - Frequency of written or verbal details
- Consumer experience of emergency treatment
 - Source of emergency treatment
- Whether NHS and private treatments are differentiated to patients
 - Whether itemised invoices showing treatments are received
- Information provided about private treatment under dental plans
 - Experience of improving access initiatives

Complaints

- Measure confidence levels in dentists.
 - Quality of treatment; information and advice
- Frequency of having cause to complain
- Patient experience of NHS complaint procedures
 - Whether judged adequate
- Level of private patient awareness of the lack of standard complaints procedures.
 - Whether those who switch are aware of the differences in procedures between NHS and private
- Patient experience of attempting to complain about private treatment
 - Whether judged as fairly handled

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 The method

The research was carried out using Ipsos-UK's omnibus service, Capibus. Capibus delivers a high quality, nationally and regionally representative sample of c.2000 adults aged 15+ each week across around 180 sample points, in both urban and rural areas, throughout Great Britain.

A two-stage random sampling method is utilised for generation of the Capibus sample. Quotas are set in each sampling point based on ACORN information.

3.2 The achieved sample

The final sample achieved for this survey was 3,807 interviews with adults aged 18+.

3.3 The interview

The interviews were all conducted in home by experienced Ipsos trained interviewers.

These interviews were based on a structured questionnaire approved by the OFT, a copy of which has been appended to this report (6.2). Which have been aggregated and tabulated to facilitate the preparation of this summary document.

3.4 Timings

Ipsos UK received the brief for this project on Wednesday 13th March 2002 following which proposals were submitted to the OFT on the 8th April.

The survey was commissioned on the 12th April and telephone/e-mail discussions were held between the OFT and Ipsos UK during which time the questionnaire was discussed and approved.

Interviews were completed during the 3rd - 16th May.

Having completed the interviews this report was prepared and delivered to the OFT on the 14th June.

4. MAIN FINDINGS

4.1 Choice of dentist

At the time of interview respondents were asked whether they were currently registered with a dentist and how many of those registered were with an NHS dentist. Overall 73% were registered, significantly more women than men (76% cf 69%) (Profiles vs national population are in Appendix 6.1). There are very few regional differences in the number of people registered with a dentist, but in Scotland there are significantly less people registered than elsewhere in the country (38% not registered with a dentist) and in Yorkshire/ Humberside there are significantly more people registered with a dentist than elsewhere in the country (81% registered with a dentist).

43% of those who are not registered with a dentist say they are not registered, because they don't think they need to be, while 17% say it is because they chose to only be treated when they need it. Other reasons given for not being registered with a dentist are included in the table below:

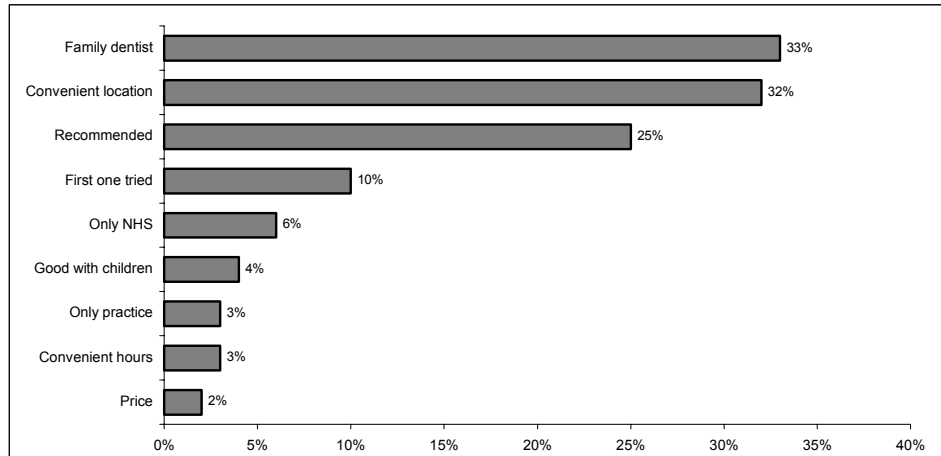
TABLE 4.11 Reasons given for not being registered with a dentist

Don't think I need it	43%
Choose to only get treatment when I need it	17%
Too expensive	7%
Taken off lists due to failure to attend, not tried to register elsewhere	7%
No NHS dentists available	5%
Have false teeth	4%
Could not find NHS alternative	3%
Moved house/ area	2%
Could not get back on lists	2%
Too frightened	1%
Could only get back on lists as private patient	1%
Not got around to it	1%
Don't like dentists	1%
Other	4%
<i>Don't know</i>	8%

Significantly more of those who feel that they do not need to be registered with a dentist or those who have false teeth are aged 55+ (15% aged 55-64 and 38% aged 65+ don't need to be registered; 19% aged 55-64 and 69% aged 65+ have false teeth) Those who failed to attend regularly and were consequently removed from the lists and those who feel that it is too expensive were significantly more likely to be aged under 55 (21% aged 15-24, 35% aged 25-34 and 14% aged 35-44 were removed from lists; 30% aged 25-34, 17% aged 35-44 and 24% aged 45-54 felt it was too expensive).

A third of respondents (33%) say that the reason they are registered with their current dentist is because their family have always used this dentist, with significantly more 15-24's saying this than any other age group (57%) and significantly more people in Scotland giving this as a reason than any other region (52%). Another third (32%) say that it is because the practice is in convenient location, with significantly more people aged 45+ saying this than those aged under 45 (39% 45-54, 37% 55-64 and 37% 65+). Other reasons given for choice of dentist are shown in the chart below:

CHART 4.12 Reasons given for choosing current dentist



The top three features that respondents look for in a dentist were competence (65%), quality of work (60%) and cleanliness (55%). Other features that respondents look for in a dentist include friendliness, availability of NHS treatment and understanding as can be seen in the table below:

TABLE 4.13 Features looked for in a dentist

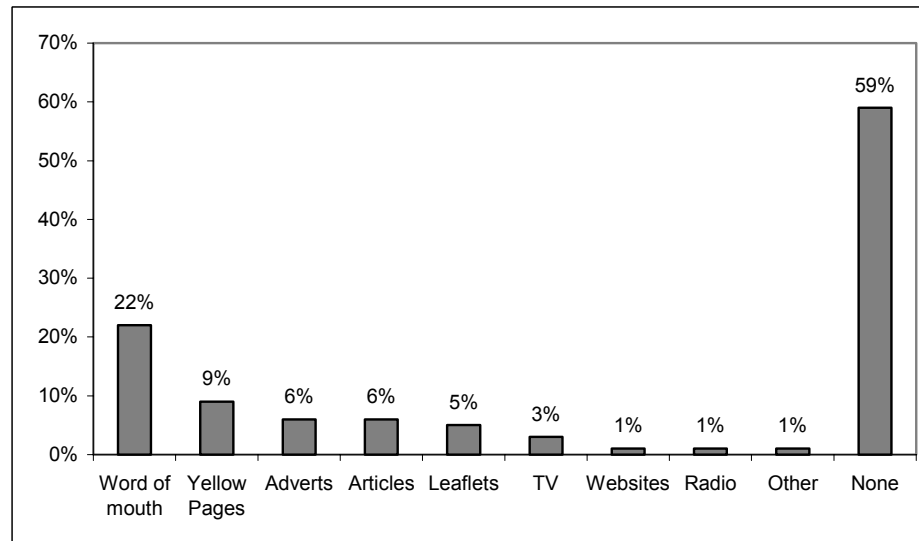
Competence	65%
Quality of work	60%
Cleanliness	55%
Friendliness	51%
NHS treatment available	47%
Understanding	40%
Don't have to wait too long for an appointment	36%
Value for money	31%
Up to date methods	30%
Latest equipment etc	22%
Cosmetic and other advanced treatments	11%

Significantly more females look for cleanliness than do males (58% versus 53%). This is also the case for understanding (44% versus 36%) and friendliness (55% versus 47%), while the opposite is true of value for money (33% males versus 29% females)

Most of the respondents were not aware of any information regarding dental practices (59%), with significantly more people in Scotland and West Midlands

having no awareness of any sources of information than in any other regions (73% Scotland, 74% West Midlands). However of the sources which respondents were aware, word of mouth was the most (22%) followed by yellow pages (9%).

CHART 4.14 Sources of information regarding dental services



Although most (39%) felt that they had no recent experience of choosing a dentist and so felt unable to judge the information available when trying to make a choice, 38% felt that there was sufficient information available. However there were some differences dependent on region. In Scotland there were significantly more people who felt unable to judge as they have no recent experience (65%), and in Greater London significantly more people than in any other region felt there was no sufficient information available (40%)

When it came to the choice of dentists in the area, on average most people think the choice is quite good (mean score 2.9 out of 4), with the highest scores in East Anglia (3.2) and Scotland (3.1). The lowest score was in the South West (2.4), but this was also one of the areas, along with the West Midlands that had significantly more people who felt unable to answer this question (overall 16% d/k; South West 28% d/k; West Midlands 27% d/k). Interestingly there was no difference between NHS and private patients scores for the choice of dentists.

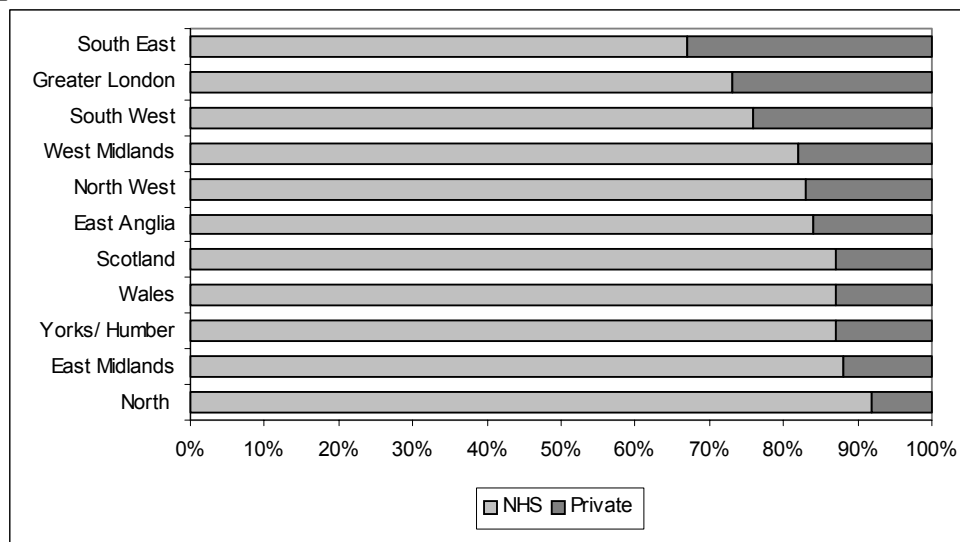
TABLE 4.15 Choice of dentists in local area

	Mean Score	% Very Good	% Very Poor	% Don't know
North	3.0	22%	5%	10%
North West	2.8	23%	14%	12%
Yorks/ Humberside	2.7	11%	9%	19%
West Midlands	2.7	14%	12%	27%
East Midlands	3.0	19%	5%	15%

East Anglia	3.2	40%	8%	8%
South West	2.4	7%	16%	28%
South East	2.7	14%	12%	19%
Greater London	3.0	20%	5%	17%
Wales	2.9	29%	11%	15%
Scotland	3.1	21%	1%	4%
TOTAL	2.9	20%	9%	16%

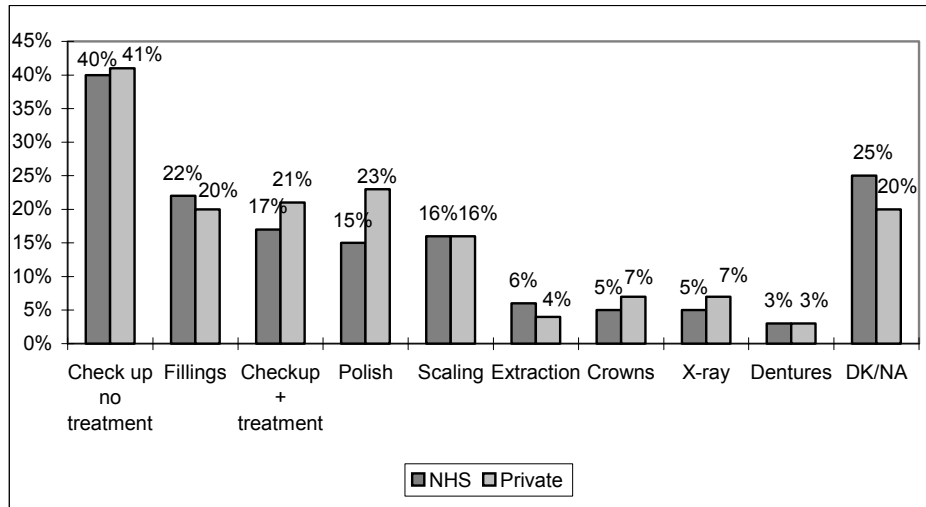
Of those who are registered with a dentist, 81% are registered with an NHS dentist and 19% are registered with a private dentist. Of these significantly more of those aged 15-24 are registered with an NHS dentist (88%) while there are more of those aged 25 and over who are registered with a private practice (19% aged 25-34, 20% aged 35-44, 21% aged 45-54, 23% aged 55-64 and 18% aged 65+). Also significantly more of those living in Greater London and the South East are registered at a private practice than in any other region (33% of those living in Greater London and 27% of those living in the South East versus 19% overall). There were also a larger number of people using private dental practices in the South West and although not significantly higher than all other regions it was significantly higher than some (24% versus 19% overall).

CHART 4.16 Regional differences in use of Private and NHS dental practices



When asked about treatment in the last 12 months, 41% had not treatment in the last 12 months. However those who did have treatment the majority (30%) had a check up but no treatment. This was followed by 16% who had a filling and 13% each who had a check up with some treatment or a polish:

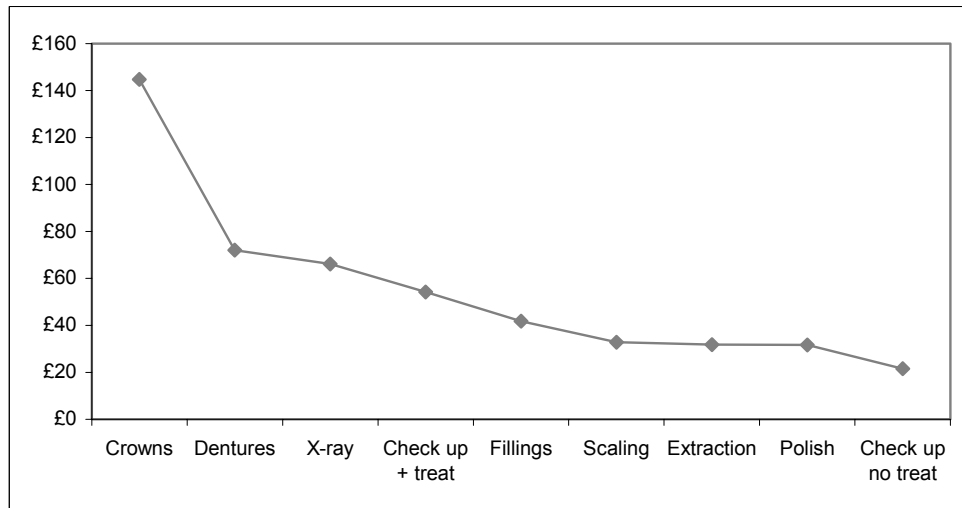
CHART 4.17 Treatment in the last 12 months



From this it is clear that private patients are more likely to receive a check-up with some treatment, or a polish, than NHS patients are. Crowns and X-rays are also more common among private patients, while fillings are more common among NHS patients.

On average treatment cost £33.50, with prices ranging from under £10 (32% of those receiving treatment) to more than £300 (1% of those receiving treatment). The most expensive treatment was Crowns, at an average of £144.80, and the cheapest was a check up with no treatment (£21.50):

CHART 4.18 Cost of treatment



There were also some regional differences with cost of treatment in London and the South East costing significantly more than other regions (£51.50 in South East and £61.70 in London), while significantly lower in the North (£13.30), regardless of no significant differences in type of treatment.

However these costs are reflected in the choice of NHS or private treatment, with mean cost to NHS patients being £24.60 and the mean cost to private patients being £70.40. The cost of treatment is also reflected in the pattern of NHS/private/combination treatment. Overall, 73% of patients had their last treatment on the NHS, 22% had it privately and 4% had a combination. However when comparing treatments, significantly more people had Polishing (29%), crowns, X-rays and scaling (27% each) carried out privately, and 13% of patients had the most expensive treatments – crowns carried out as a combination of NHS and private.

When asked why they had treatment carried out as a combination of NHS and private, more than half (59%) said it was because some of their treatment was not available on the NHS. A further 13% each said that dentist either was not prepared to do the work on the NHS or because the dentist suggested that the treatment would be inferior on the NHS. There were some differences between treatments:

TABLE 4.19 Reasons for having a combination of NHS and private treatment

	Some not	Dentist not	Dentist	DK/NA
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	available on NHS	prepared to do work on NHS	suggested NHS inferior	
Check up no treatment	46%	26%	11%	7%
Check up + treatment	71%	1%	12%	16%
Fillings	66%	10%	9%	9%
Crowns	82%	0%	4%	14%
X-ray	80%	4%	7%	9%
Extraction	59%	0%	9%	32%
Dentures	69%	0%	31%	0%
Polish	78%	5%	10%	7%
Scaling	91%	3%	0%	7%
TOTAL	59%	13%	13%	15%

Although the majority of patients have not changed their dentist (79%), there are 16% who have changed and a further 5% who have not changed but did think about it.

On average, patients changed dentists approximately 3.6 years ago, although those who live in the South West changed more recently (mean = 2.8 years ago) and those in Scotland or the North have not changed so recently (mean = 4.3 years ago for both). Also there is a trend that those who are younger have changed more recently (15-24's changed 3.1 years ago) increasing in length of time since change with age (65+ changed 4.3 years ago).

Of those who receive private treatment, the average length of time they have been receiving private treatment is 5.6 years, with no significant differences between any of the demographic groups.

The main reason given for changing dentist was due to moving home (30%) followed by a lack of confidence in the dentist's ability (18%), for greater convenience specifically that it is closer to work/home (17%) and to avoid going private (15%). This is the same for both NHS and private patients, except for the avoiding going private (only 4% private, 19% NHS) which is replaced by looking for lower prices (6% private, 2% NHS).

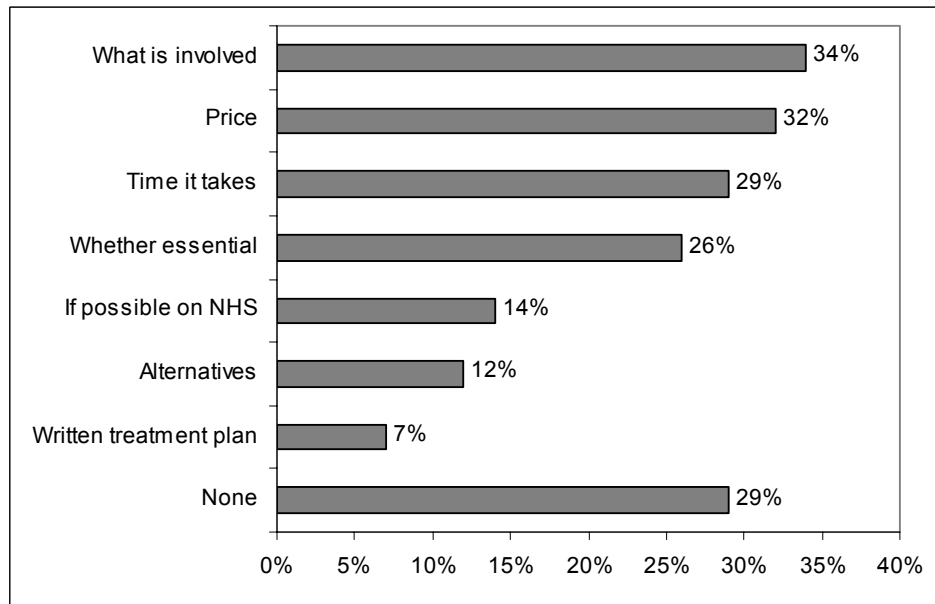
The main reasons given for choosing to have private dental treatment are a personal preference (38%) and that the patient could no longer receive NHS treatment at the dentist but wanted to stay with the practice they were registered with (29%). Other reasons included that there was no NHS alternative (15%) and that there are treatments and services available that are not available under the NHS (9%). There were significantly more females saying this last option than males (13% of females, 4% of males)

In general patients found the process of changing dentists to be a reasonably easy process, with a mean score of 3.2 out of 4. Those in the North scored this higher (mean 3.8) while those in the South West scored it slightly lower (mean 2.8)

4.2 Information relating to treatment and payment

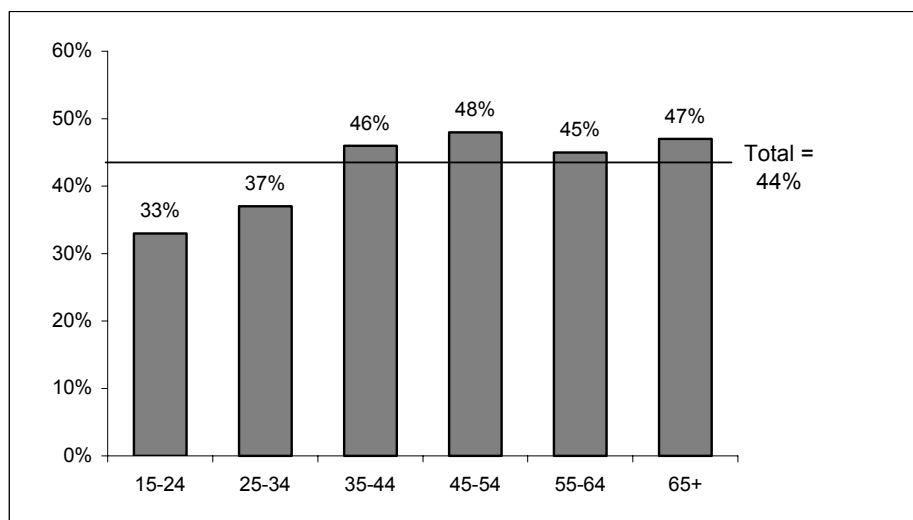
Most of the respondents felt that they were given some advice prior to treatment on the last occasion; with only 29% saying they were given no advice. This differed slightly by region with more people saying they were given no advice in Scotland (46%) and Yorkshire/Humberside (40%). A third of people were given information regarding what is involved, another third were given information regarding the price and a little under a third were given information regarding the time the treatment takes.

CHART 4.21 Information provided by dentist prior to last treatment



When it came to paying for treatment, a little over half of the respondents (56%) were not provided with an invoice with significantly more males (47% versus 41%) and significantly more people aged over 35 being provided with invoices (as shown overleaf).

CHART 4.22 Age differences in those who were provided with an invoice for their dental treatment



Of those who were provided with an invoice, in most cases it only showed the total charge (53%), while for some others it showed some itemised information (29%) or detailed information about treatments and materials (19%). In only 1% of cases did the invoice show which information was private and which was NHS. Significantly more of those who are NHS patients were given only the total charge on their invoice (57% NHS versus 42% private), while significantly more private patients were given detailed information about the treatment and materials (31% private versus 16% NHS).

In general most of the respondents were aware of some dental plans for private dental care, with only 39% saying they were aware of none. Of those who were aware of some dental plans the most commonly mentioned were Bupa Dental Cover (48%), Denplan (23%) Boots health cover (16%) and Hospital Savings Association (12%).

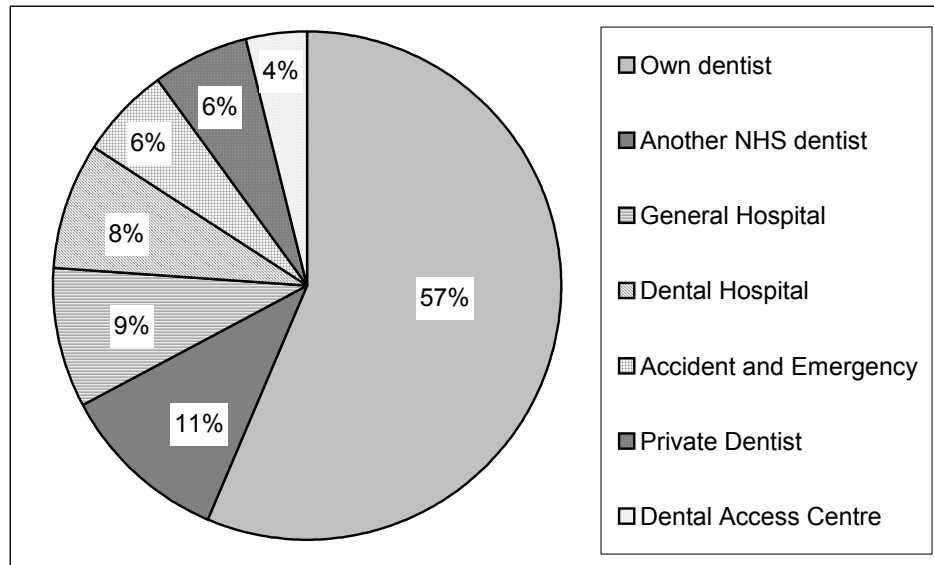
TABLE 4.23 Awareness of dental plans

Private Dental Plan	Total Awareness	Awareness NHS	Awareness Private
Bupa Dental Cover	48%	52%	57%
Denplan	23%	24%	44%
Boots Health Cover	16%	17%	21%
Hospital Savings Association	12%	13%	15%
Providential	3%	4%	3%
National Dental Plan	3%	4%	5%
None	39%	36%	18%

Overall, respondents mentioned an average of 2 dental plans. However those who are NHS patients mentioned only an average of 1.9 dental plans, while those who are private patients mentioned 2.1 dental plans.

Only 17% of patients have had emergency treatment, and of those over half have had treatment at their own dentist, while others have been to another NHS dentist, a general hospital, a dental hospital or accident and emergency:

CHART 4.24 Locations of emergency dental treatment

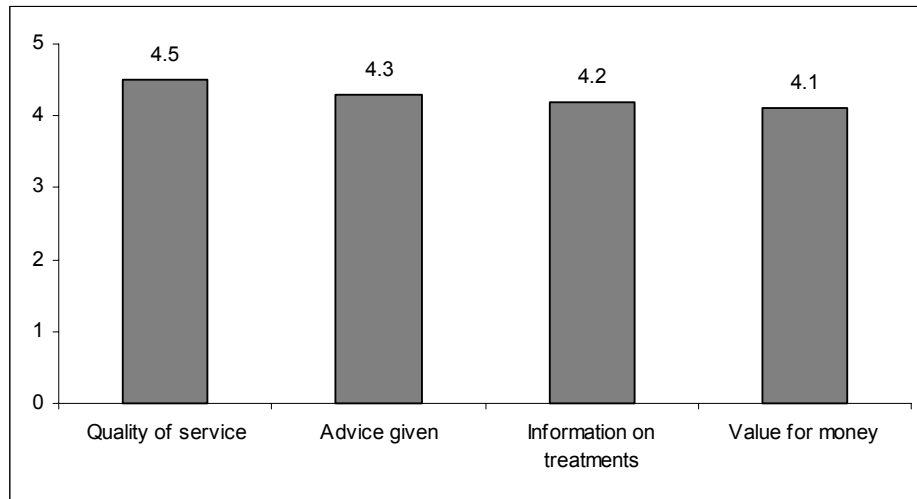


However more people have attended their own dentist for emergency treatment in Scotland than any other region (85%) while none in this region have attended a private dentist for emergency treatment, and more people in the South East have attended a general hospital (not A & E) than any other region (21%).

4.3 Complaints

Overall patients are positive about their dentists rating them quite highly on all four factors of Quality of service, information on treatments available, advice given and value for money.

CHART 4.31 Rating of dentist



Overall patients view their dentists as providing a good quality of service, although this is significantly higher in Wales and the South West (4.7 each) and lower in East Midlands (4.3) and Greater London (4.2). The advice given is rated second highest, with no significant differences between the demographic groups. This is followed by information on treatments and value for money. There are significant differences between those who are NHS and those who are private for each of these factors, with private scoring higher on all factors except value for money in which it is scored lower than NHS patients.

These high scores are also reflected in an overall score of confidence in dentists, which has a mean of 4.4. This confidence in dentists seems to increase with age, with those aged 15-24 being significantly less confident than any other age group (mean = 4.2), and the score gradually increasing with age, such that those aged 65+ have the highest mean score for confidence in their dentist (4.6).

TABLE 4.32 Ratings of dentists and overall confidence

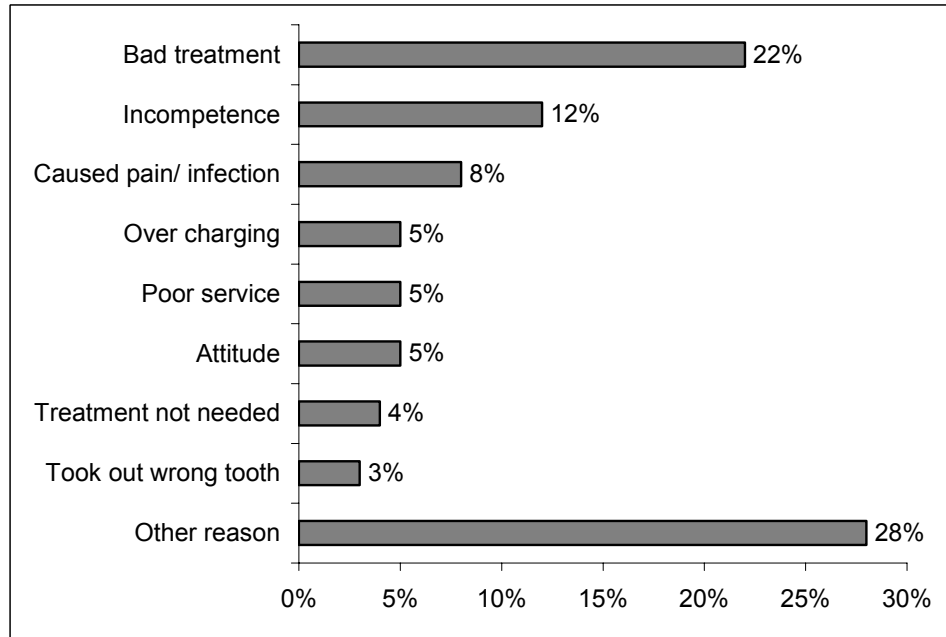
	Mean Score	Very Good	Very Poor
Quality of service	4.5	53%	1%
Advice Given	4.3	47%	1%
Information on treatments	4.2	40%	1%
Value for money	4.1	37%	2%

	Mean Score	Very Confident	Not at all Confident
Overall confidence	4.4	55%	1%

This is also reflected in the need to complain about dentists with only 6% of patients saying they have ever had cause to complain. Of the patients who have ever had cause to complain, this has not happened frequently with an average of only 1.3 reasons to complain in the last five years.

Amongst those who have had cause to complain, the most common cause was bad treatment (22%), with others also listing incompetence (12%) and that the treatment caused severe pain or an infected tooth (8%)

CHART 4.33 Causes of complaint



However although 6% of patients felt they had cause to complain, just over half actually did, resulting in only 3% of all patients actually complaining. There were no causes of complaint that were more likely to result in an actual complaint than any others, and no demographic differences in those who are more likely to complain.

When patients have actually complained about their dentist, the majority have complained directly to their dentist (69%), while others have complained to the practice. A few have complained to the local health authority, the General Dental Council or the British Dental Association. After this initial complaint the majority (80%) were not directed elsewhere, although a tenth of patients were directed to their dentist.

TABLE 4.34 To whom patients complain

	Initial Complaint	Subsequent complaints
Own dentist	69%	10%
Dental Practice	16%	3%
Local Authority	10%	1%
General Dental Council	3%	2%
British Dental Association	3%	1%
None	~	80%

When the patient complained, the majority found that there was no result and nothing was done about their complaint. This was most likely to be the case if the complaint was to the dentist or the dental practice, with 34% of those having no response. However 11% of those complaining to the dentist or the practice did receive an apology and half of these felt that the issue was sorted out. A similar number simply changed their Dentist. Of those who complained to their local health authority 12% received an apology and all felt that the issue was sorted out. For the remainder of those who took their complaint further, the issue was dealt with in some other way.

Consequently among those who complained, there was quite low level of satisfaction with how the complaint was handled, with an overall score of only 2.4 (out of 5). This was lowest amongst those aged 35-44 (1.8) and highest amongst those aged 55-64 (3.0). It was also much lower score in Greater London (1.6), but much higher in both East Anglia (4.2) and the South West (4.0).

The overall satisfaction with the outcome of the complaint was also quite low, with a mean score of 2.4 and similar demographic differences to those shown above.

TABLE 4.35 Satisfaction with the way complaints were dealt with and the overall outcome of the complaint

	Mean Score	% Very Satisfied	% Not at all Satisfied
Way complaint was dealt with	2.4	12%	46%
Overall outcome of complaint	2.4	15%	46%

However there were some deviations from this depending on whether the patient was NHS or private. For those who are NHS, satisfaction with the way the complaint was dealt with is the same as above (2.4), with lowest satisfaction in the South East (1.9) and Scotland (1.8). There is again the lowest satisfaction among those aged 35-44 (1.6), closely followed by those aged 45-54 (1.8) and highest among those aged 55-64 (3.4).

Satisfaction with the overall outcome of the complaint is also the same as above (2.4), although there are no regional differences, the same trend in age is apparent.

TABLE 4.36 NHS patients satisfaction with the way complaints were dealt with and the overall outcome of the complaint

	Mean Score	% Very Satisfied	% Not at all Satisfied
Way complaint was dealt with	2.4	9%	47%
Overall outcome of complaint	2.4	14%	46%

Most NHS patients who have not complained were not aware of how they should complain (70%), and of the remaining thirty percent, 18% were aware of how they should complain direct to their own dentist, but only 7% were aware of the NHS complaints procedure.

For private patients, there no formal complaints procedures available, only 16% claimed to be aware of procedures the remainder (84%) not being aware of any procedures. However, the satisfaction that private patients felt with regards to complaining is higher. The average score for satisfaction with how the complaint was dealt with is 2.8, with those in the East and West Midlands being least satisfied and most satisfied, being those in the South West however, due to the low sample for this, there are low bases, meaning a score for this would be misleading. There are also no differences between ages, but males are more satisfied than females (3.0 versus 2.5).

For satisfaction with the overall outcome of the complaint, again the mean score is higher (2.8), with similar demographic differences to those shown above.

TABLE 4.37 Private patients satisfaction with the way complaints were dealt with and the overall outcome of the complaint

	Mean Score	% Very Satisfied	% Not at all Satisfied
Way complaint was dealt with	2.8	15%	24%
Overall outcome of complaint	2.8	15%	24%

5. CONCLUSIONS

Approximately three quarters of those asked are registered with a dentist, and four fifths of these with an NHS dentist. This equates to two thirds of the population being registered with an NHS dentist and a sixth with a private dentist. When it comes to choosing the dentist with whom patients are registered, most choose the dentist with whom their family has always been registered, although there are also a large number of people who choose a dentist who is located conveniently, or has been recommended.

Recommendation or word of mouth is also the main source of information regarding dental services, as most people are aware of no sources of information other than just word of mouth. This suggests that there is little promotion by practices or local health authorities of services available.

Most people do not change their dentists, and when they do, it is most often because they have moved home or area, although some did not have confidence in the dentist's ability. In general this is also felt to be a relatively easy process. For those who change to a private practice, there are a number of reasons, but a third of patients decide to change to private dental care out of loyalty to their dentist when the practice becomes private. Although there could be a number of reasons for choosing to stay with the practice when it becomes private (no availability of other services, convenience), this does reflect on the dentist's ability, as patients would prefer to pay for their services rather than attempt to move to another NHS practice.

When patients receive dental treatment, most feel that they are given adequate advice, with specific advice relating to what is involved in the treatment, price and the time treatment will take. However there are fewer people receiving advice on alternatives to the treatment and very few people receive a written treatment plan. There are also some issues surrounding invoicing of treatment with over half of patients receiving no invoice, and of those who did receive an invoice, half showed only the price, while almost none showed information about what had been carried out on the NHS and what was private. There are also clear differences here between NHS patients and private patients with more private patients being given details about the treatment on their invoice.

In general patients feel that they get a good service, which provides good advice and information about treatment whilst being good value for money. As a consequence of these factors there is a high general satisfaction with dentists in the UK and very few people feel they have cause to complain. Of those who do feel there is cause to complain, the most common cause is bad treatment, however most do not actually complain, with only 3% of respondents complaining. Most of these complain to their dentist or the dental practice. There are also few people who have not complained who are aware of the NHS or private complaints procedures, and most people are not referred to the correct body to deal with these complaints.

Consequently the results of complaints are not regarded as adequate with much lower satisfaction with both the way the complaint was dealt with and the overall

outcome of the complaint. Although there were some differences between private and NHS patients, the scores remained low for both.

Thus it would seem that although most patients are very satisfied with their dentist, and often the only reason for changing dentists is for convenience (either because they have moved home or they require a dentist nearer to home/work), there are problems when the patient does have a cause for complaint. Most patients do not know the correct body to complain to and often complain directly to the dentist or practice and feel unsatisfied with the results. As there is little awareness of information regarding dental services and when choosing a new dental practice most people take recommendations or simply choose the most convenient practice, there is clearly a lack of awareness regarding services provided by the local health authority both in terms of finding a practice and complaints procedures.

6. APPENDICES

6.1 Profile of those registered

Figures in brackets show index against national population

		Registered with a dentist	NHS Registered	Private Registered
	ALL ADULTS AGED 18+	73%	59%	14%
Age				
	18-34	29% (99)	30% (100)	25% (95)
	35-54	40% (104)	39% (103)	42% (106)
	54+	32% (98)	31% (97)	33% (99)
Social Grade				
	AB	26% (103)	21% (99)	44% (121)
	C1/C2	50% (101)	51% (102)	47% (98)
	DE	24% (96)	28% (99)	10% (81)
Working Status				
	Working	59% (104)	57% (102)	68% (112)
	Not working	41% (96)	43% (98)	32% (88)
Children in Household				
	Yes	34% (103)	35% (104)	32% (101)
	No	66% (97)	65% (96)	68% (99)
Income				
	Upto £9499	13% (97)	15% (99)	4% (88)
	£9499- 17499	17% (102)	16% (100)	12% (96)
	£17500+	19% (102)	19% (99)	35% (115)

6.2 Approved Questionnaire

I'd now like to talk to you about dentistry....

ASK ALL

DJ01

Are you registered with a dentist?

Yes

No

ASK DJ02 TO ALL WHO ARE NOT REGISTERED (No at DJ01)

SHOWCARD DJ02

DJ02 Why is it that you are not registered at a dentist? [MP]

Don't think I need it

It's too expensive / lack of money to pay for it

No dentists nearby

No NHS dentist available

I choose to only get treatment when I need it

I failed to attend for regular inspections and was taken off my dentist's list, after which

I have not tried to register there or elsewhere

I could not get back on the dentist's list

I could only get back on as a private patient

I could not find a NHS alternative

Other reason (specify)

ALLOW DK

ASK DJ02 TO ALL WHO ARE NOT REGISTERED (No at DJ01)

DJ02A On the whole would you prefer to be registered?

Yes

No

Indifferent

NOW GO TO DJ04

IF REGISTERED(YES AT DJ01) ASK DJ03

DJ03

Are you registered to receive NHS or exclusively private treatment? [SP]

READ OUTNHS - that is one under the NHS scheme generally, (although patients can and sometimes do have work carried out privately).

Private - that is, you are provided exclusively with private dental treatment

SHOWCARD DJ03B

DJ03B Patients registered with a NHS dentist can combine NHS and private treatment, although not on the same tooth. If you have had regular treatment in the last few years, has there been any change in the amount of private to NHS treatment?

- Only had private
- More private treatment compared to NHS
- About the same
- Less private treatment compared to NHS
- Not had regular treatment

ASK ALL THOSE REGISTERED TO HAVE EXCLUSIVELY PRIVATE TREATMENT (CODE 1 AT DJ03B)

DJ03C How long have you been receiving private dental treatment?[SP]

- Up to a year
- Between one and three years
- Between three and five years
- More than five years
- DK

ASK ALL THOSE REGISTERED TO HAVE EXCLUSIEVLY PRIVATE TREATMENT (CODE 1 AT DJ03B)

SHOWCARD DJ03D

DJ03D What is the main reason for choosing to have private dental treatment?[SP]

- Personal preference
- I can get treatments and services that are not available under the NHS
- I could no longer obtain NHS treatment from my dentist, but I stayed registered with that dentist
- Not my preference but cannot find and NHS alternative
- Other
- DK

ASK ALL THOSE WHERE DENTIST CHANGED FROM PROVIDING NHS TO PRIVATE TREATMENT, BUT PATIENT STAYED REGISTERED WITH THAT DENTIST (CODE 3 AT DJ03D)

SHOWCARD DJ03E

DJ03E Why did you remain with your dentist after he changed to only providing private treatment?[MP]

- Personal confidence in the dentist
- Lack of NHS alternative
- Other features about the dentist, such as convenient location, opening times
- Other (specify)

ASK ALL THOSE WHERE DENTIST CHANGED FROM PROVIDING NHS TO PRIVATE TREATMENT, BUT PATIENT STAYED REGISTERED WITH THAT DENTIST (CODE 3 AT DJ03D)

DJ03F Did you make any attempt to find an alternative dentist, before deciding to stay?

Yes

No

ASK ALL

SHOWCARD DJ04

DJ04 Have you visited a dentist in the last 12 months? If yes, please tell me what sort of dental treatment you had done on your last visit? [MP]

CODE NULL FOR NO TREATMENT IN LAST 12 MONTHS

Attended for examination/check-up but without additional treatment

Attended for examination/check-up followed by the treatment(s) mentioned below

Fillings

Crowns

X-ray

Extraction

Dentures

Polish

Scaling

Other (specify)

ALLOW NULL

ASK ALL WHO HAVE HAD ANY SORT OF TREATMENT (INCLUDING INSPECTION) AT DJ04 (ANY OF CODES 1 TO 10)

DJ05A And could you tell me approximately how much you paid for your last piece of dental treatment?

PLEASE GIVE YOUR ANSWER TO THE NEAREST WHOLE POUND

NUMERIC 0-9999

ALLOW DK & REF

DJ05B And was that particular treatment done on the NHS, private, or was it a combination of both? [SP]

NHS

Private

Combination

ALLOW DK

ASK DJ05BB IF CODE 3 AT DJ05B

DJ05bb What was the reason for not all of the treatment being done on NHS?

Some not available on NHS

Dentist not prepared to do work on NHS

Dentist suggested quality would be inferior on NHS

Other (specify)

ASK ALL

SHOWCARD DJ05C

DJ05C Could you tell me whether you have ever had any emergency dental treatment and if so where you went for this treatment? [MP]

CODE NULL FOR NEVER HAD EMERGENCY TREATMENT

Accident & Emergency

General Hospital (but not A & E)

Dental Hospital

Your dentist

NHS dental access centre

Another NHS dentist

Another private dentist

Other (specify)

ALLOW NULL

ASK ALL WHO ARE REGISTERED (CODE 1 AT DJ01)

SHOWCARD DJ06

DJ06 Which of the reasons on the card describe why you chose your current dentist? [mp]

Family dentist

First one I tried registering with

Recommend by friends/family

Good with children

Price

Convenient location

Convenient opening hours

No choice – only dental practice available

No choice – only NHS dental practice available

Other (specify)

ALLOW DK

ASK ALL INCLUDING THOSE NOT CURRENTLY REGISTERED

DJ07 Have you ever changed or thought about changing your dentist? [sp]

Yes – changed

No – but I did think about it

No – never seriously thought about it

IF CHANGED (CODE 1 AT DJ07)

DJ07A When was that approximately?[sp]

Within the last year

Between one and three years ago

More than three years ago

IF NOT CHANGED BUT HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT IT (CODE 2 AT DJ07)

DJ08 Why didn't you change in the end?

OPEN ENDED

ALLOW DK

IF CHANGED (CODE 1 AT DJ07)

DJ09 Why did you decide to change dentist (on the last occasion you changed)?[mp]

To stay within NHS/avoid going private

Lack of confidence in dentist's ability

To obtain cosmetic or other treatment not available from current dentist
For greater convenience – closer to work or home
For greater convenience – more suitable opening hours
Looking for lower prices
Moved house or home and needed one in new location
Following a complaint
OTHER (SPECIFY)
ALLOW DK

IF CHANGED DENTIST(CODE 1 AT DJ07)
D09A How easy was the process of finding a new dentist?[sp]
Very easy
Quite easy
Quite difficult
Very difficult
ALLOW DK

ASK ALL
SHOWCARD DJ10
DJ10 Through which, if any, of these information sources have you seen or heard
information about dental services?[MP]
CODE NULL FOR NONE OF THESE
Advertising
Leaflets
Websites
Article in newspapers/magazines
Yellow Pages or similar directory
Word of Mouth
Television
Radio
Other (specify)
ALLOW NULL

ASK DJ11 TO DJ15B TO ALL REGISTERED ONLY (YES AT DJ01)
DJ11 When you came to choose your current dentist, do you feel that there was
enough specific information available in order to help you make the right choice?
Yes
No
No view – no recent experience

SHOWCARD DJ12

DJ12 Which, if any of the following features do you look for in a dentist? [MP]
PLEASE MENTION THE MOST IMPORTANT FEATURE FIRST
FOLLOWED BY ANY OTHERS / COMPTUING RECORD FIRST MENTION;
THEN ANY OTHERS

Competence

Understanding

Cleanliness

Value for Money

NHS treatment available

Quality of work

Friendliness

Latest equipment etc.

Cosmetic and other advanced treatments

Up-to-date methods

Don't have too wait too long for an appointment

Other (specify)

ALLOW DK

DJ13 How good would you say the choice of dentists is in your area?[SP]

READ OUT

Very good

Quite good

Quite poor

Very poor

ALLOW DK

SHOWCARD DJ14

DJ14 Now thinking about the last occasion where you had any dental treatment, could you tell me which, if any, of the following things did the dental practitioner tell you about or provide, prior to the actual treatment being done? [MP]

CODE NULL FOR NONE OF THESE

The price of the treatment

The time it might take

Whether the treatment was essential or not

Whether there were any alternatives

A written treatment plan

Exactly what the treatment would involve (e.g. X-RAYS, fillings, polishing etc.)

Whether the treatment was possible under the NHS at that practice

ALLOW NULL

DJ14A After the treatment, when it came to paying, where you provided with an invoice?

Yes

No

ASK DJ14B IF YES AT DJ14A

DJ14B If at any stage you were provided with an invoice, what sort of things did it show?[mp]

CODE NULL IF DON'T REMEMBER

Just the total charge
Some itemised information
NHS and private treatments separately
Detailed itemised information on treatment and materials
ALLOW NULL

SHOWCARD DJ15

DJ15 I would also like you to rate your current dentist on the following points?[sp]

1. Quality of service
2. Information available on treatments
3. Advice given
4. Value for money

Possible Answers:

Very good
Quite good
Neither good nor poor
Quite poor
Very poor
ALLOW DK

SHOWCARD DJ16

DJ16 And could I ask you how confident you are overall, in your current dentist?[sp]

Very confident
Quite confident
Not sure either way
Not very confident
Not at all confident
ALLOW DK

ASK ALL

SHOWCARD DJ17

DJ17 Which, if any, of the dental plans or dental initiatives on the card were you aware of before today?[mp]

CODE NULL FOR NONE OF THESE

BUPA Dental Cover

Boots Health Cover

Clinident

Complete direct care

Denplan

Clinicare

CIGNA dental care

Dental Payments Admin Services

DEnsure

Highland dental plan

Hospital savings association

Practice Plan

Providental

IndepenDent

National Dental Plan

Smilecare

ALLOW NULL

ASK ALL

DJ18A Have you ever had **CAUSE** to complain about the service you have received at any dentist you have been registered with?

Yes

No

ASK DJ18B to DJ18C IF YES AT DJ18A

DJ18B How often would you say you have had **CAUSE** to complain in the last 5 years?[sp]

Once

Twice

Three times

Four times

Five times or more

ALLOW DK

DJ18C What was the nature of your complaint?

OPEN-ENDED

ALLOW DK

DJ18D And did you actually complain on any of these occasions when you felt you had reasonable cause to?

Yes

No

ASK DJ18E TO DJ 20 IF YES AT DJ18D

DJ18E Thinking about the last time you complained about the dental service you had received, who did you complain to initially?[mp]

CODE NULL IF CAN'T REMEMBER

My dentist

The general dental council

The dental practice

The local health authority

The British dental association

A trading standards department

Other (specify)

ALLOW NULL

DJ18F Did any of them re-direct you to another body, if so, to whom were you re-directed? [mp]

My dentist

The general dental council

The dental practice

The local health authority

The British dental association

A trading standards department

Other (specify)

ALLOW NULL

DJ18G How did they respond and what happened subsequently?

OPEN-ENDED

ALLOW DK

DJ19A How satisfied were you with the way your complaint was dealt with?

Very satisfied

Quite satisfied

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

Not very satisfied

Not at all satisfied

DJ20 And having made your complaint, how satisfied were you with the overall outcome?

Very satisfied

Quite satisfied

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

Not very satisfied

Not at all satisfied

FOR THOSE NOT COMPLAINING AT DJ18A (No) or DJ18d (No)

DJ21 Assuming you did want to complain about any aspect of your dental service, would you know how to go about complaining? If so, how?

Yes – through NHS complaints procedure

Yes – direct to the dentist in questions

Yes – some other means

No

FOR PRIVATE REGISTERED ONLY (code 2 at DJ03)

DJ22 Are you aware of there being any formal procedure for complaining about your dentist, within the private sector?

Yes

No

END