Dental Statistics – NHS Registration and Participation

Statistics as at 30 September 2017
Publication Date – 23 January 2018

About this release

This Information Services Division publication reports on NHS dental registrations in Scotland between September 2000 and September 2017. In addition, it provides data on contact with an NHS dentist between September 2006 and September 2017.

Main Points

Registration

- 92.5% of the Scottish population of 5.4 million is registered with an NHS dentist as at 30 September 2017
- Children are more likely to be registered with an NHS dentist than adults (93.8% and 92.2% respectively).
- 96.0% of adults living in the most deprived areas are registered with an NHS dentist compared to 86.5% in the least deprived areas.
- Registration rates between children living in the most and least deprived areas are similar.

Contact with a Dentist (Participation)

- As at 30 September 2017, 7 out of 10 registered patients (3.5 million) had seen an NHS dentist within the last two years.
- Children are more likely than adults to have seen an NHS dentist within the last two years (84.5% compared to 67.4%).
- Children and adults from the most deprived areas were less likely to have seen their dentist within the last two years than those from the least deprived areas (80.5% compared to 89.5% of children and 62.9% compared to 73.5% of adults).
Background

This report only includes data on patients registered with an NHS dentist; data for patients registered with or treated by private dentists is not available.

Registration policy has changed over the years; originally, registration with an NHS dentist lapsed after 15 months, increasing to 36 months in April 2006 then to 48 months in April 2009. In April 2010, ‘lifetime registration’ was introduced. These changes have driven up registration rates and affected rates of participation.

Additionally, registrations held in abeyance have been excluded from the total number of registrations produced in this report. Abeyance is defined as patients registered with a dentist list number that ceased before the date of snapshot. If a patient’s registration goes into abeyance, it is uncertain whether they have access to routine NHS dental care, therefore, we have concluded that their registration should not be included in national registration data. In the past, official dental registration statistics have included all patients, including those whose registrations are in abeyance, and so may have overstated the actual number of people registered with a dentist in Scotland. These statistics have now been updated to exclude registrations held in abeyance and have also reported the numbers of registrations in abeyance separately.

Participation is a measure of patient attendance at an NHS dentist in the two years prior to the time point of interest. This relates only to those patients who are registered with an NHS dentist, not those who only see a dentist for occasional or emergency treatment. Participation as a measure was introduced in September 2010 but has been calculated for data since September 2006 to show the effect of changes to registration rules.

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Further Information

Further information can be found in the Dental Registration and Participation Report.

The Information Services Division published a wide range of dental statistics. You can find all our dental information at the ISD Dental website.

The next release of this report is expected in January 2019 and will present data as at 30 September 2018.