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Healthwatch was established in 2013 in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Within this legislation Healthwatch has a right to a reply within 20 working days to Reports and Recommendations submitted by Local Healthwatch to a service provider/commissioner.

Report & Recommendation Response Form

Report sent to: NHS SOUTH EAST LONDON CCG
LMC (Blackheath standard PMS and Valentine Health Partnership)
Federation: Greenwich Health
Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust
LDC
Royal Borough of Greenwich
Circle MSK

Date sent: **28/3/22**

Title of Report: **Feedback Report 2021-22 Summary**

Response If there is no response, please provide an explanation for this within the statutory 20 days (by 26th April 2022)
Please note: This form and its contents will be published by Healthwatch Greenwich.

Date of response	19/04/22
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For Office Use Only	
Date response received	
Within 20 days	

provided	
General response ¹	<p>The LDC is grateful to Healthwatch Greenwich for raising important issues around the provision of dental services in the borough, its regular feedback from patients and the public, and its engagement with the LDC.</p> <p>The key points raised about dental services are underpinned by historic issues with dental commissioning and the dental contract which has been in operation since 2006. In order to address the issues raised by Healthwatch Greenwich in a long term and sustainable way, complete reform of the contractual arrangements for NHS dental services is required.</p> <p>Response to the key issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inability to access routine dental care for more than a year/two years: The LDC sympathises with patients who have had this experience and would like to extend our support to these patients for their attitude to maintaining their oral health through regular appointments. Regular appointments are an important part of oral health and prevention and are absolutely to be encouraged. <p>The last two years have, however, caused enormous disruption across the entire health service. With dental practices closed at the start of the pandemic and, once reopened, operating at a significantly reduced capacity because of new infection and prevention control guidelines, as well as staff sickness the number of appointments was significantly reduced. As will be appreciated, practices had to prioritise finishing courses of treatments that had been started before the pandemic started and then, because of the reduced number of appointments, prioritising those patients who required pain relief or significant treatment over routine appointments.</p> <p>We recognise that this has caused considerable frustration and some distress to patients, but lack of access is an issue predating the pandemic. For instance, access for adults in June 2016 stood at 53 per cent of the adult population in Greenwich. While above the England average this clearly leaves a significant proportion of the population of Greenwich without access to an NHS dentist even during non-pandemic times. By December 2021 access had dropped to 36.9 per cent of adults in Greenwich. The drop in numbers of patients seen is correlated to an increase in the number of urgent treatments and more complex treatments provided.</p> <p>As we move out of the pandemic it will take time for the backlog of unmet dental need to be addressed so we anticipate an ongoing issue with access to routine NHS dental care. We hope to work with local commissioners and other local stakeholders including Healthwatch Greenwich in the new NHS structure of the Integrated Care System to improve and increase the amount of primary care NHS dental services available in the borough.</p> <p>Information about access and activity can be found here: https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoieYTRIMzJiYTEtMTgwMi00ZTdiLTgzMWUtZGM5Y2NmMTI5MGE4IiwidCI6IjUwZjYwNzFmLWJiZmUtNDAxYS04ODAzL</p>

¹ Please expand boxes as needed for your response.

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Within 20 days	

menda tion no:	
Respo nse to recom menda tion no: <i>Please add additio nal rows as require d.</i>	
Signed :	Martin Skipper
Name:	Martin Skipper
Positio n:	Head of Policy LDC Confederation on behalf of Bromley, Bexley and Greenwich Local Dental Committee

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