

## **GP Patient Survey Dental Results Summary;**

### **January to March 2013**

1. Dental questions were originally added to the GP Patient Survey in January to March 2010, as the Department of Health wanted information on NHS dental access and demand for services based on people's reported experience. In 2011/12 the questionnaire and methodology were revised meaning that comparisons cannot be made to previous years. The January to March 2013 GP Patient Survey is only the second time since these changes that an annual comparison can be made.
2. This paper summarises the key findings of the January to March 2013 dental results and makes comparisons to the survey results from the same time the previous year (January to March 2012).
3. In January to March 2013 the GP patient survey questionnaires were sent to 1.4 million adult GP patients and 500,000 replies were received. The response rate is 35.5%; a decrease of 2.0 percentage points compared to January to March 2012 results.

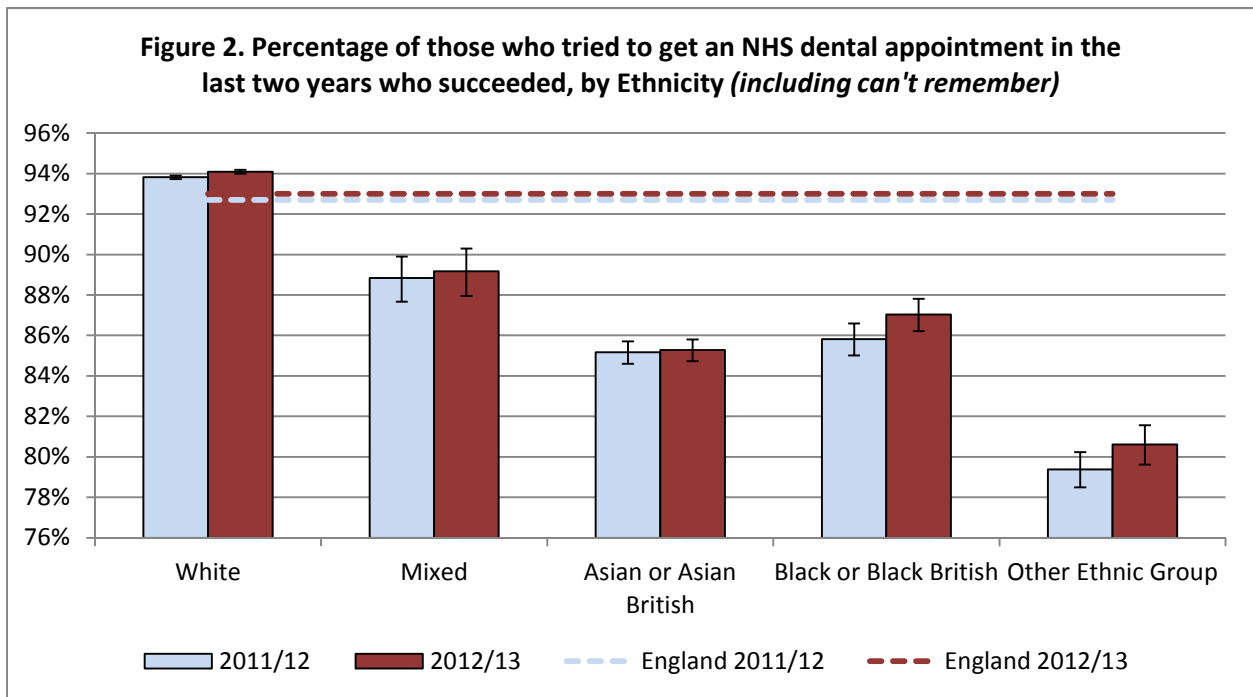
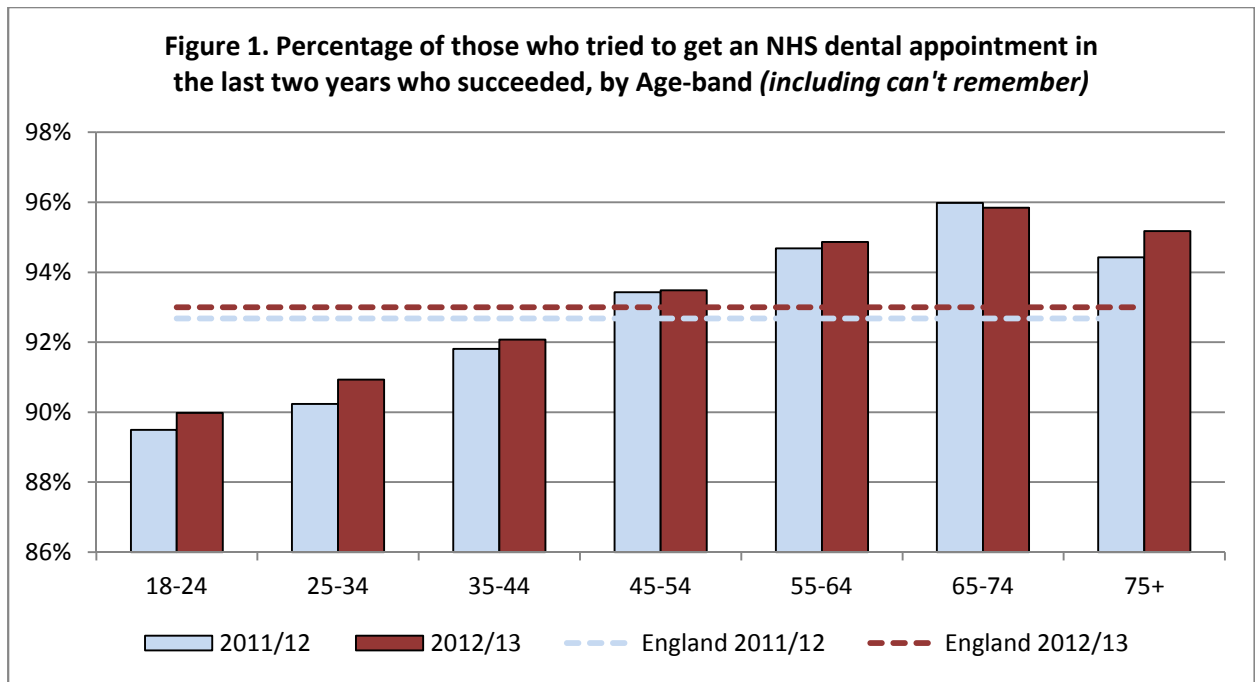
## **Key Points**

### **Tried to get an NHS dental appointment**

4. 60% of respondents tried to get an NHS appointment in the last two years, the maximum recall period recommended by NICE guidelines. This is higher than the previous year, although by less than 1 percentage point. Of those that tried in the last two years, 52% had tried in the last year; 40% within the last six months and 23% in the last three months.
5. Demand for NHS dentistry services shows regional differences. The North East has the highest level of demand, with over two-thirds (67%) of respondents trying to get an appointment in the last two years. In comparison, London and South Central have the lowest proportions, with just over half (54%) of respondents trying to get an appointment in the last two years.

### **Successful in getting an NHS dental appointment**

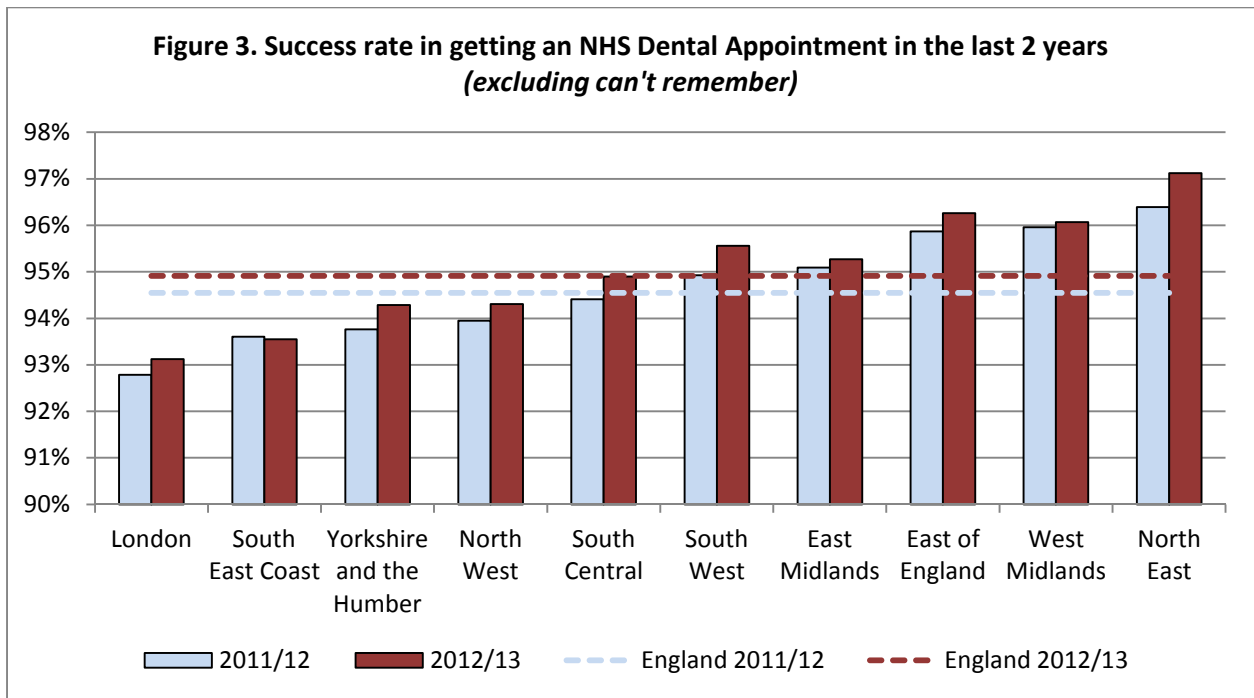
6. Of those that tried to get an appointment in the last two years, 93% were successful in getting an appointment. The success rate (when excluding the 'can't remember' category) was 95%, the same proportion as seen the previous year.
7. Those respondents who stated they had not been to the practice before were less successful, at 77%, compared with 97% who were successful when trying to make an appointment at a practice they had visited before.
8. This was also the case for younger adults as shown in figure 1 and for ethnic minorities (figure 2).



N.B. 95% confidence intervals have been added to Figure 2 as the sample size for some ethnic groups is small. The confidence interval allows us to estimate the precision of results obtained from our sample to provide a likely range of the true proportion found in the population.

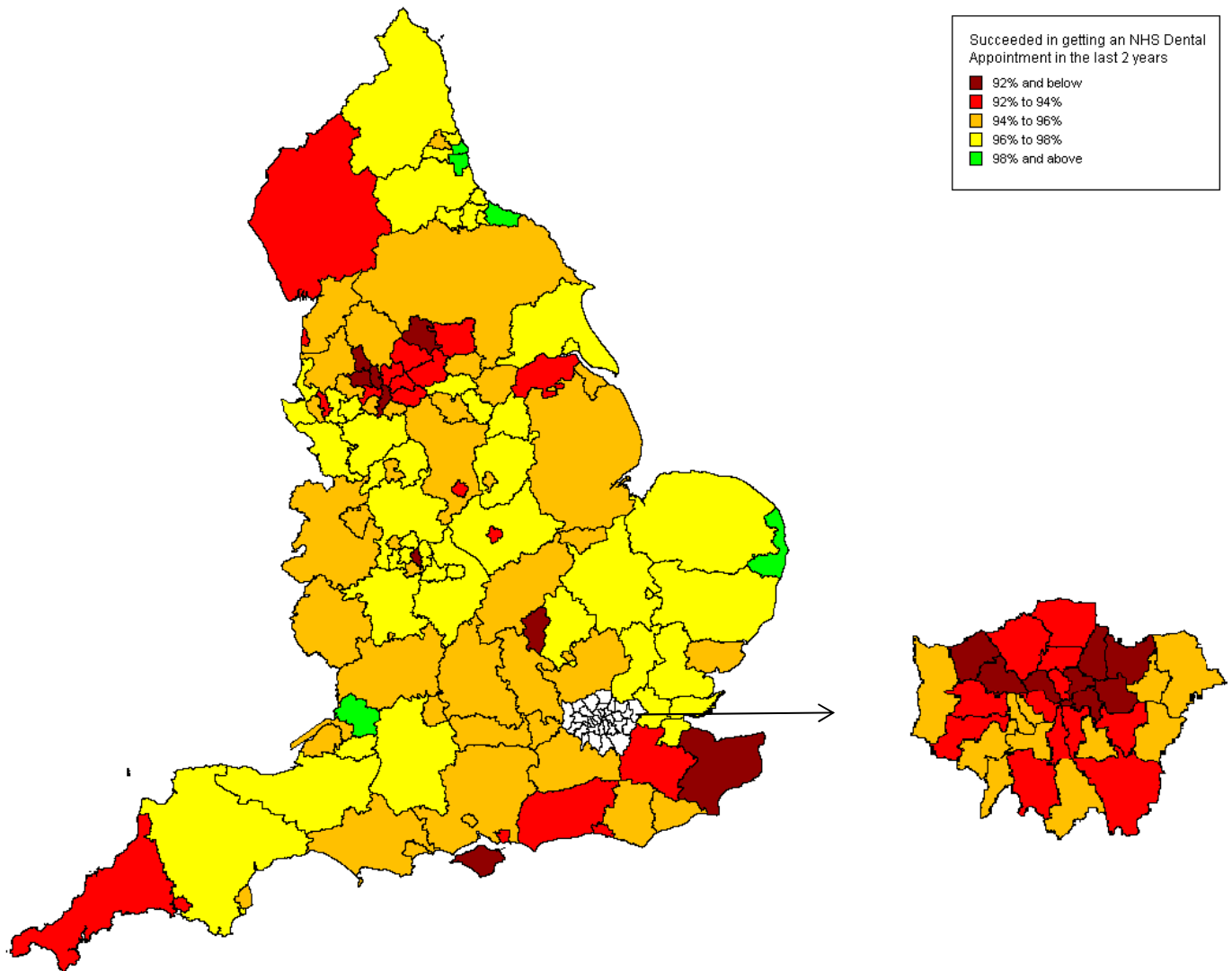
### Regional breakdown of Success Rate

9. Figure 3 shows the Strategic Health Authority (SHA) with the highest success rate for the 24-month measure was the North East (97%), followed closely by the East of England, West Midlands and the South West (all 96%). London has the lowest success rate (93%) of all the SHAs, however its demographic makeup contains a high proportion of younger adults and ethnic minorities which contribute to this figure. In comparison to the previous year, success rate at SHA level has remained stable.



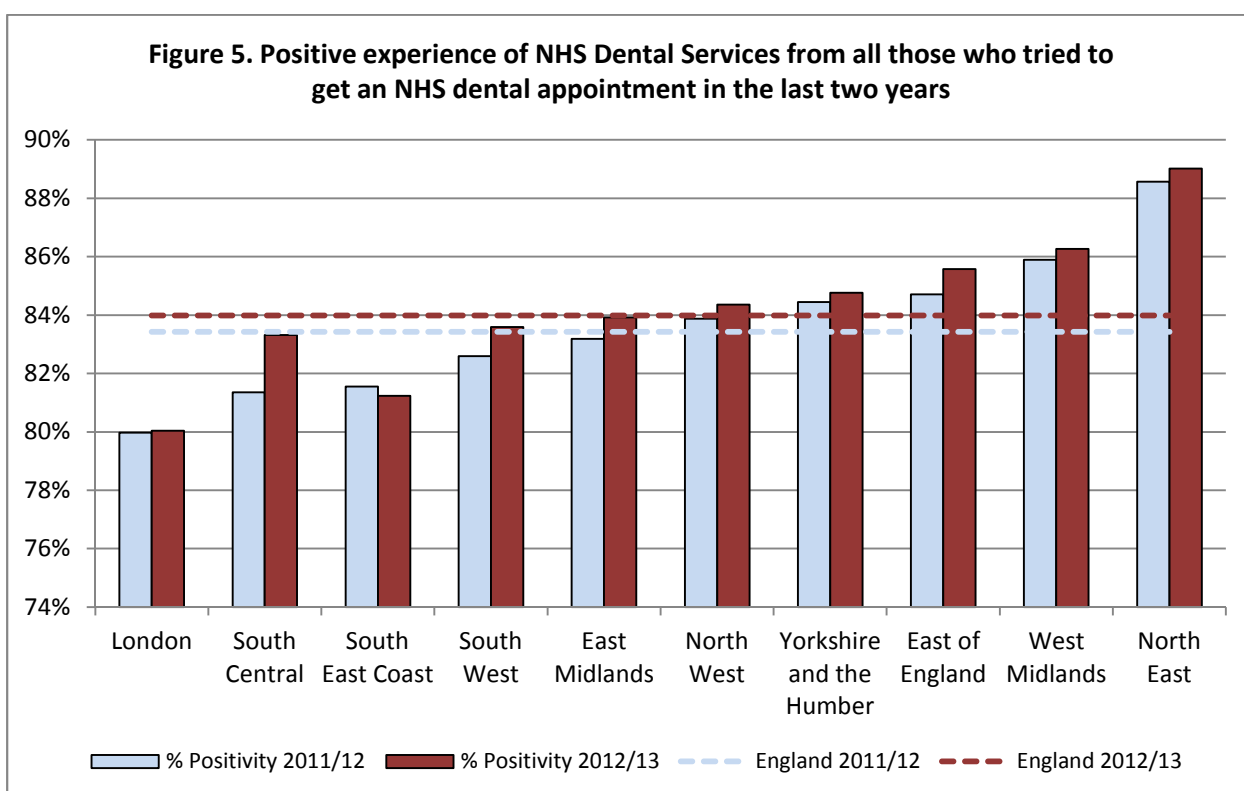
10. Figure 4 below clearly shows, at Primary Care Trust (PCT) level, the worst success rates are mainly found in London and the remaining are scattered across the country. The lowest success rate, of 89%, was found in Bradford and Airedale PCT.

Figure 4. Percentage of respondents who tried to and succeeded in getting NHS Dental appointment in the last two years at PCT level, January to March 2013 (*excluding can't remember*)



## Overall Experience of NHS dental services

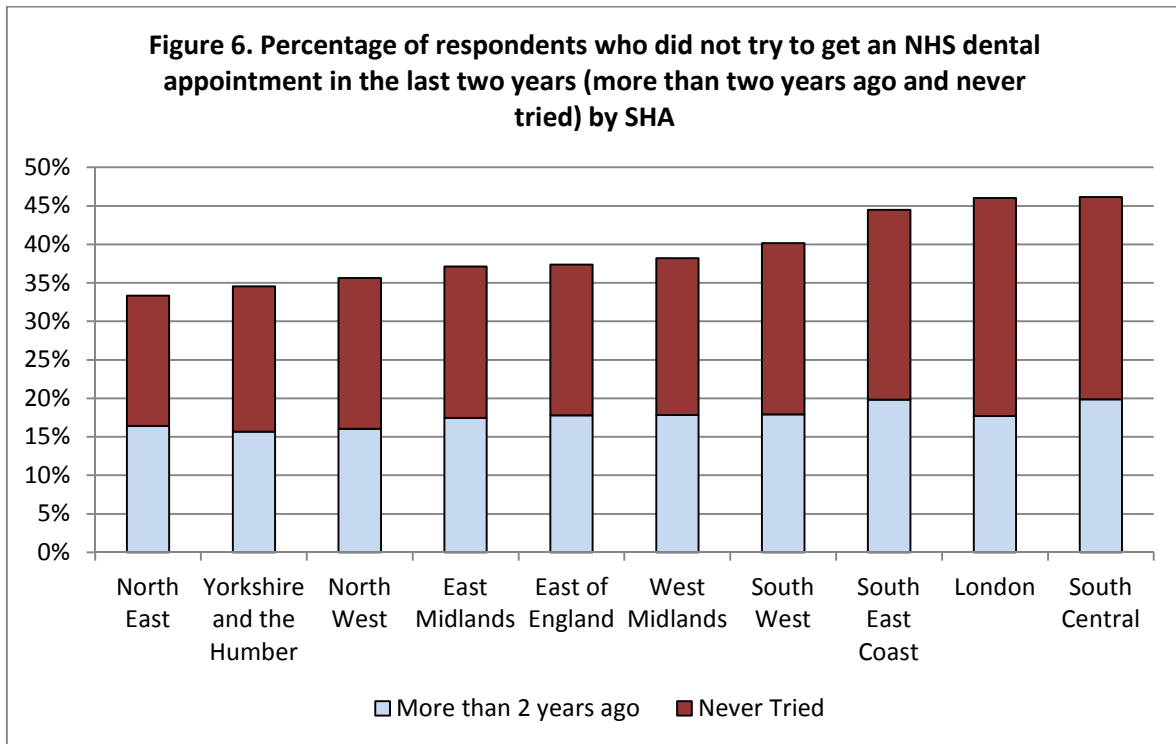
11. 84% of respondents who tried to get an appointment in the last two years rated their NHS dental experience as positive (48% very good and 36% fairly good). 9% of respondents stated it was neither good nor poor whereas fairly poor and very poor had a 4% and 3% share of the total respectively.
12. The overall percentages of respondents that had a positive experience increased by 1 per cent compared to the previous year. A percentage shift of 1 per cent was seen from good to very good during this time.
13. As figure 5 below shows, at SHA level the North East had the highest positive patient experience, at 89%, and London had the lowest (with 80%). Patient experience is influenced by whether they were successful in getting an appointment. Nationally, those who were successful in getting an appointment rated their patient experience as 88% positive, compared to only 20% who were unsuccessful. This in part explains the regional differences seen.



## Did not try to get an NHS dental appointment

14. Two fifths of adults in the survey did not try to get an appointment with an NHS dentist in the last two years, a decrease of less than 1 percentage point compared to the previous year. Over one-fifth (22%) of all respondents have never tried to get an NHS dental appointment while 18% of respondents tried to get an appointment with an NHS dentist over two years ago.
15. A larger proportion of respondents in the southern regions have not tried to make an appointment in the last two years, accounting for almost half of all respondents in South Central and London SHAs (46%). In comparison, the three SHAs in the north have the lowest proportions; with only a third (33%) of respondents in the North East did not try to get an appointment in the last two years.

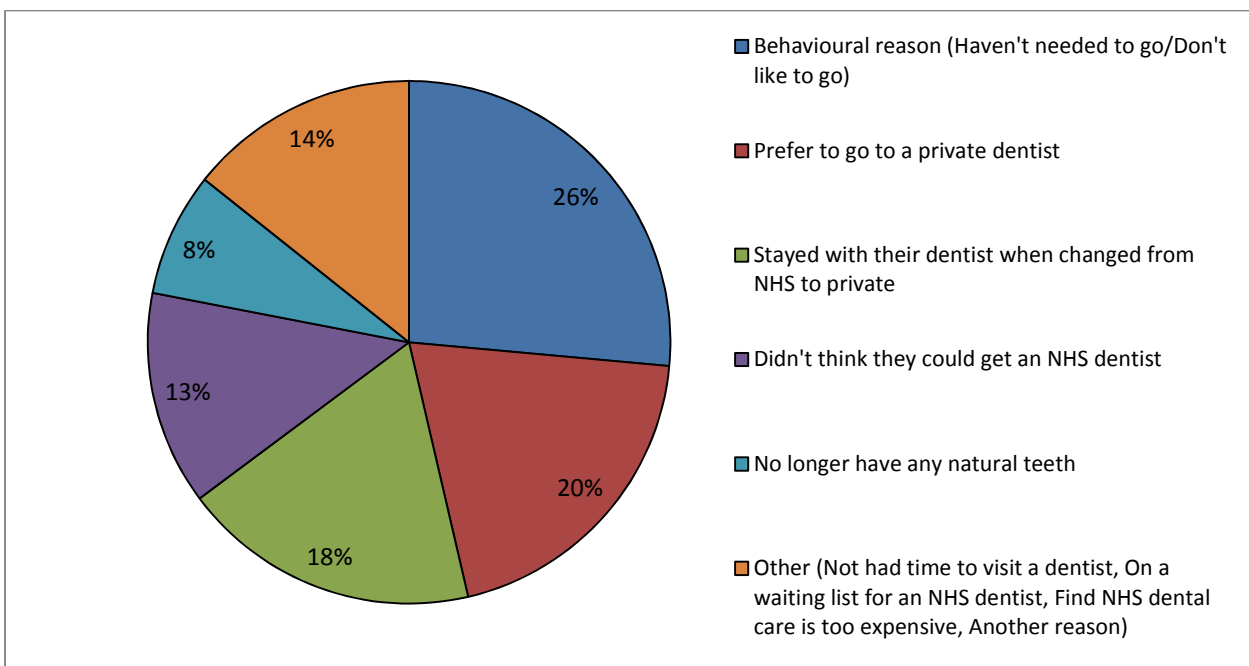
16. For the respondents who have never tried to get an NHS dental appointment, London and South Central had the highest proportions, accounting for over a quarter of respondents for each SHA (28% and 26% respectively).



### Reasons for not trying to get an appointment

17. Like results from the previous year, behavioural reasons were the most common explanation as to why respondents had not tried to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years, with over a quarter of the respondents giving the response “I don’t like to go” or “I haven’t needed to go”.

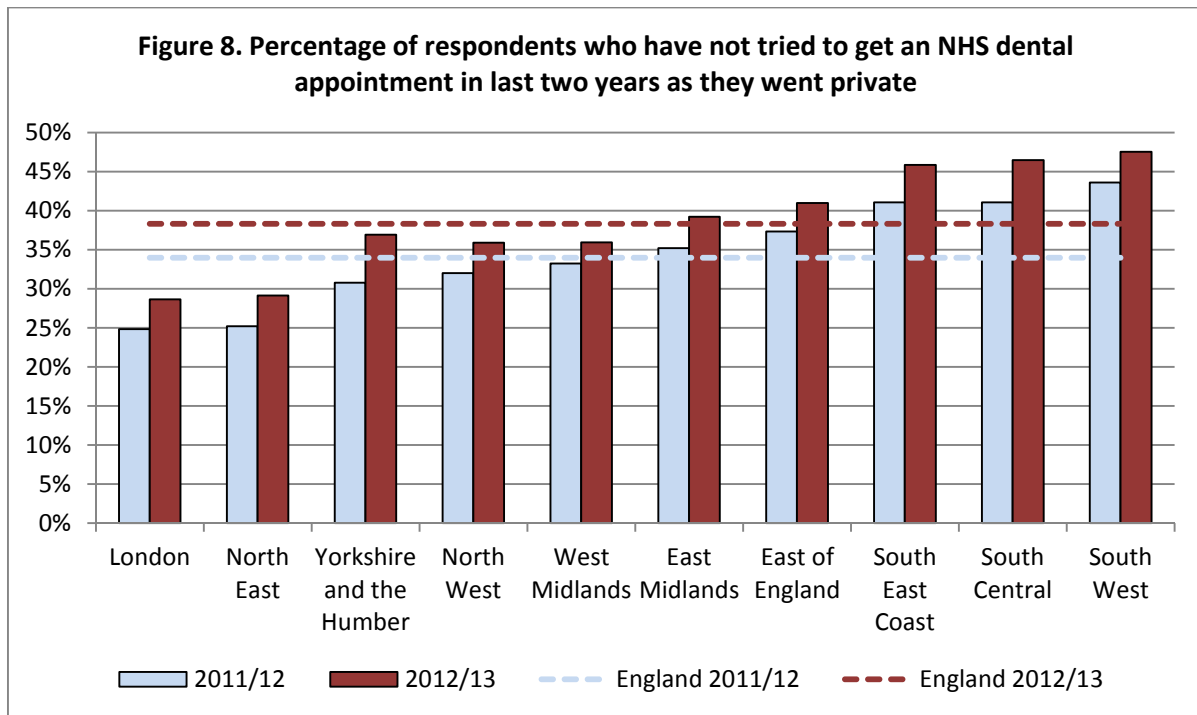
**Figure 7. Reasons did not try to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years**



18. 13% of the respondents who didn't try to get an NHS dental appointment, gave their reason as "I didn't think I could get an NHS dental appointment". It is likely these adults have a negative perception surrounding the availability of NHS dental appointments; however, the proportion of people who gave this response has decreased by 1 per cent compared to the previous year's results.

19. 20% of respondents did not try to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years as they preferred private dentistry while 18% stated they stayed with their dentist when they moved from NHS to private. These reasons accumulated to over a third of all responses (38%) for not trying to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years. Compared to the previous year, private dentistry has shown a four percentage point increase, with each reason increasing by 2 percentage points respectively.

20. An increase in usage of private dentistry can be seen across all SHAs (see Figure 8). However there are regional differences apparent, varying from 29% in the North East and London to 48% in the South West. The SHAs in the south have the highest percentage of private dentistry usage; with the exception of London SHA, which has a notably low percentage (29%) for the South.



To get current results (January to March 2013) please click on the following link:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/2013/06/11/gppsdsg42013eng6876/>

To access the full dental results for January to March 2012 please click on the following link:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/2012/12/13/3453543gppsw1201213/>

### Contact email

You can obtain further details about the statistics published in this section or comment on the section by contacting the following address:

Email: [gpsurveydental@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:gpsurveydental@dh.gsi.gov.uk)