

Summary of the Dental Results from the GP Patient Survey – January to March 2019



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About this release

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.

The GP Patient Survey was chosen to capture this information as a way of accessing the proportion of the population who do not use (or have not recently used) NHS dental services in addition to those that do, to give a fuller picture of people's dental behaviour and experience.

This paper summarises the key findings of the January to March 2019 dental results and makes comparisons – where appropriate – to previous survey results.

The GP Patient Survey was significantly re-developed in 2018 in order to keep pace with changes in frontline general practice, although the questions relating to NHS dentistry have not changed.

Changes were made to age brackets and geographical boundaries of Commissioning Regions. 16-17 year olds were included for the first time in 2018.

General Survey Information

- The GP Patient Survey is an independent survey run annually, by Ipsos MORI on behalf of NHS England. The survey is sent out to over two million people across the UK, during the final quarter of the financial year, with an aim to track change over time and monitor the quality of services.
- For the 2019 GP Patient Survey – conducted between January and March 2019 – 2.3 million GP patients age 16 and over were contacted and 771,000 replies were received. This represents a 33% response rate; a decrease of 1 percentage point compared to January - March 2018 results.
- Further information on the GP Patient Survey and technical details regarding its collection and the weighting of the data, can be found on the GP Patient Survey Website at: <http://www.gp-patient.co.uk/>.
- The remainder of this publication relates to the additional analysis carried out on the dental section of this survey. Percentages are given to one decimal place for greater accuracy.
- Survey region and CCG breakdowns are based on the address of the respondent and not the address of the dentist.
- Last year, 16- and 17-year olds were included in the survey for the first time. This meant that answers to the question "When did you last try to get an NHS dental appointment for yourself?", were no longer comparable to previous years. This year's the results can be compared between 2018 and 2019.
- Practices that closed before April 2019 were referenced to the previous year's Commissioning regions. Outdated Commissioning Regions are not included in the analysis but will still contribute to national figures.

Next publication:
July 2020

Previous publications:
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/gpps-dental-statistics/>

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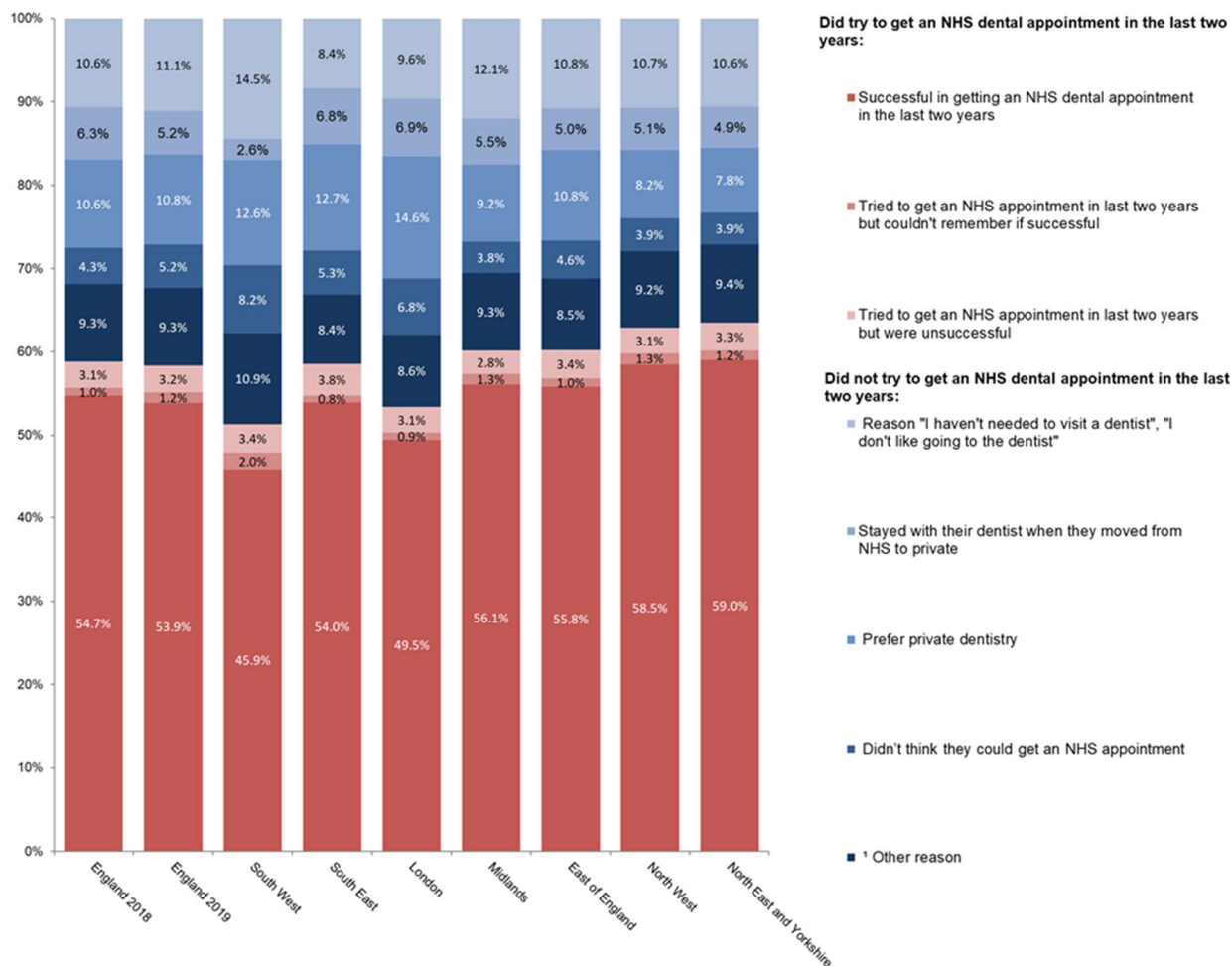


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Overall survey population breakdown of dental behaviour by region

- The following graph (Figure 1) shows the overall survey population breakdown of dental behaviour in England and the 7 regions²:

Figure 1. Dental attendance: Percentage of patients who were successful getting an NHS dental appointment in the last two years, and, if not, the reason why by Region, January to March 2019



¹ Other reason includes: "I no longer have any natural teeth", "I haven't had time to visit a dentist", "I'm on a waiting list for an NHS dentist", "NHS dental care is too expensive", "Another reason".

² The boundaries for Commissioning Regions altered this year. North divided into North West and North East & Yorkshire, Midlands & East divided into Midlands and East.

- There was a regional variation in the percentage of respondents who reported that they had successfully got an NHS dental appointment in the last two years, ranging from 59.0% in the North East and Yorkshire to 45.9% in South West (Figure 1).

- South West has the highest proportion of those who have not tried to get an NHS appointment in the last two years because they “didn’t need to go “or “don’t like going” (14.5% of respondents). Nationally the figure is 11.1%, 8.6% feeling that they didn’t need to go, and 2.5% who do not like going.
- London has the largest proportion of patients who instead relied on private dental care at 21.5%, with 6.9% of respondents having “stayed with their dentists when they moved from NHS to private” and 14.6% “preferring private dentistry”.

Tried to get an NHS dental appointment

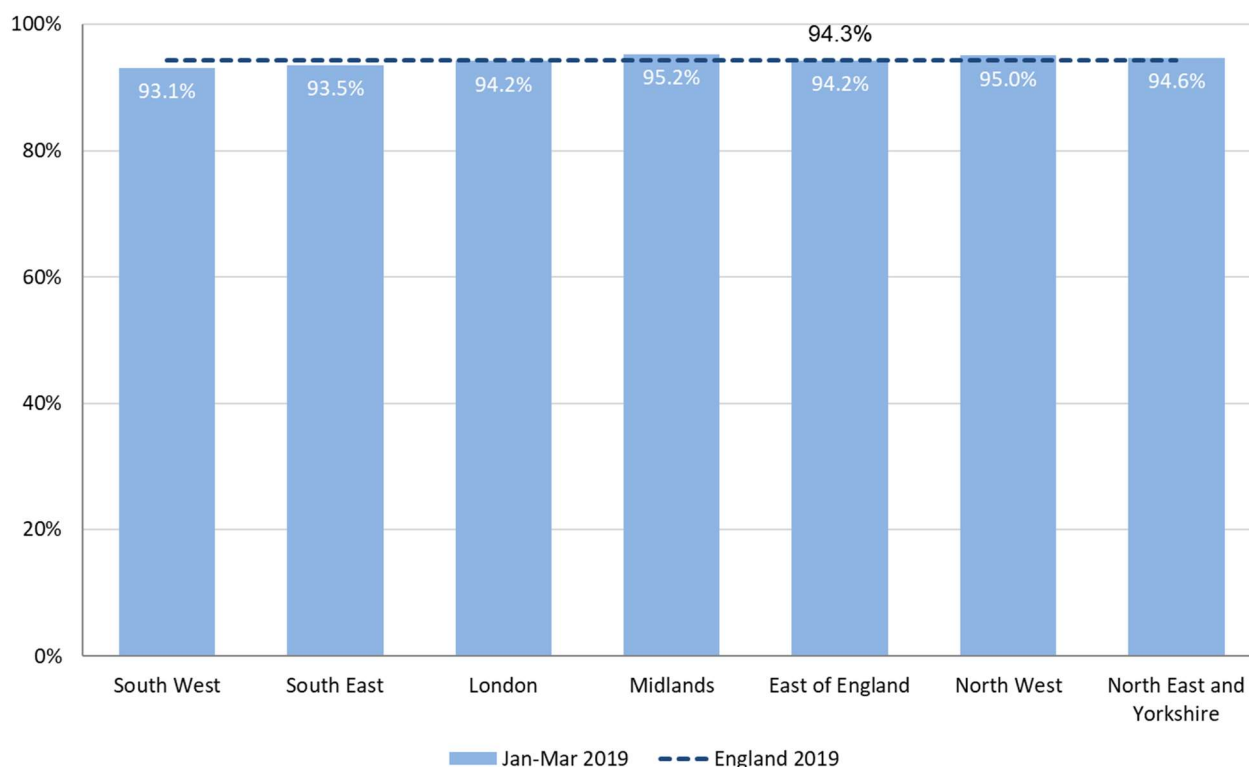
- 58.4% of all respondents tried to get an NHS appointment in the last two years, the maximum recall period recommended by NICE guidelines¹. 50.4% of respondents had tried to get an NHS dental appointment in the last year; 38.1% within the last six months and 21.9% in the last three months.
- There is regional variation in the contact rate for NHS dentistry services with the percentage trying to get an appointment in the previous 2 years being highest in the North East & Yorkshire at 63.5%. In contrast, the rates remain lowest in London at 51.3% followed by South East at 53.4%.

¹ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg19/chapter/1-guidance>

Success in getting an NHS dental appointment

- Of those that tried to get an appointment in the last two years, 92.3% were successful. The success rate (when excluding those who stated that they 'can't remember' whether they were successful, as shown in Figure 2) was 94.3%.
- The success rate for respondents who had not been to the practice before was lower, at 73.4%, compared with 96.0% who were successful when trying to make an appointment at a practice they had visited before.
- Regionally, the success rate in getting an NHS dental appointment was highest in the Midlands (95.2%). South West had the lowest success rate (93.1%) of all the regions (Figure 2)¹.

Figure 2. Success rate in getting an NHS Dental Appointment in the last 2 years (excluding 'can't remember') by Region



¹ The boundaries for Commissioning Regions altered this year. North divided into North West and North East & Yorkshire, Midlands & East divided into Midlands and East.

- Figure 3 shows geographically the range of success rates at CCG level.

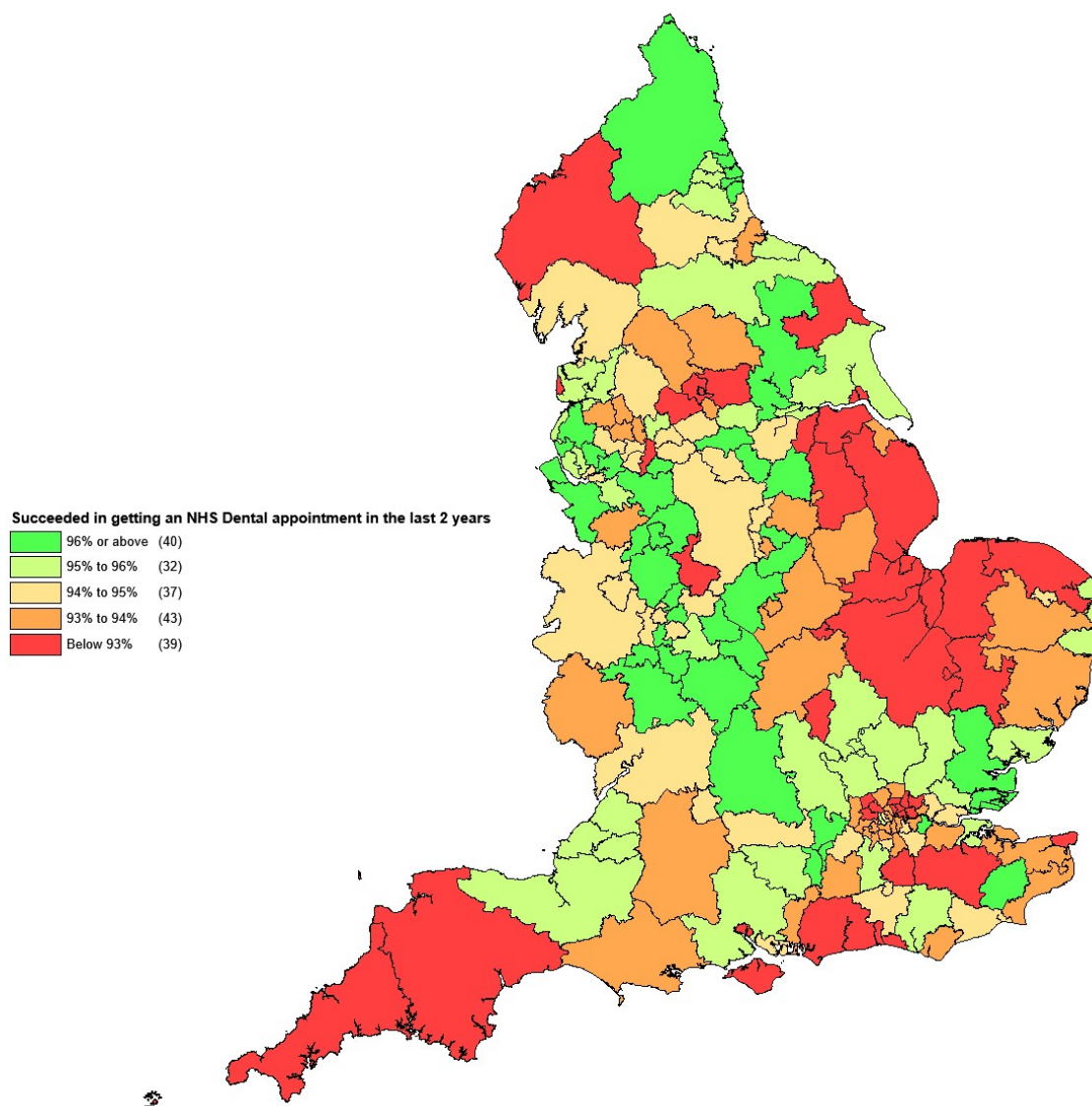
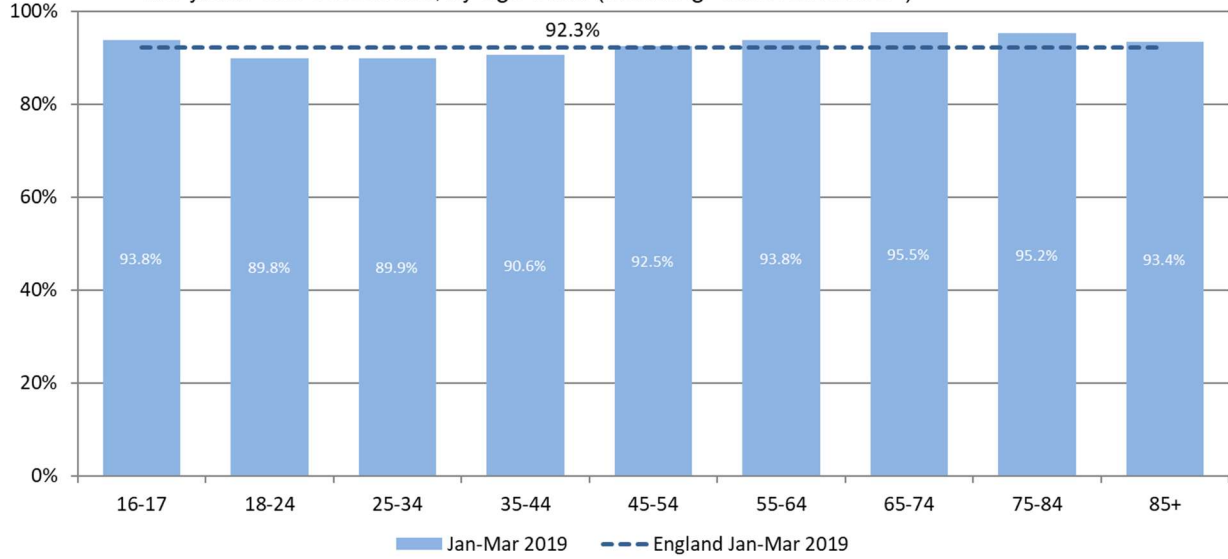


Figure 3. Percentage of respondents who tried to get, and succeeded in getting, an NHS dental appointment in the last two years, at Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) level, January to March 2019 (excluding “can’t remember”).

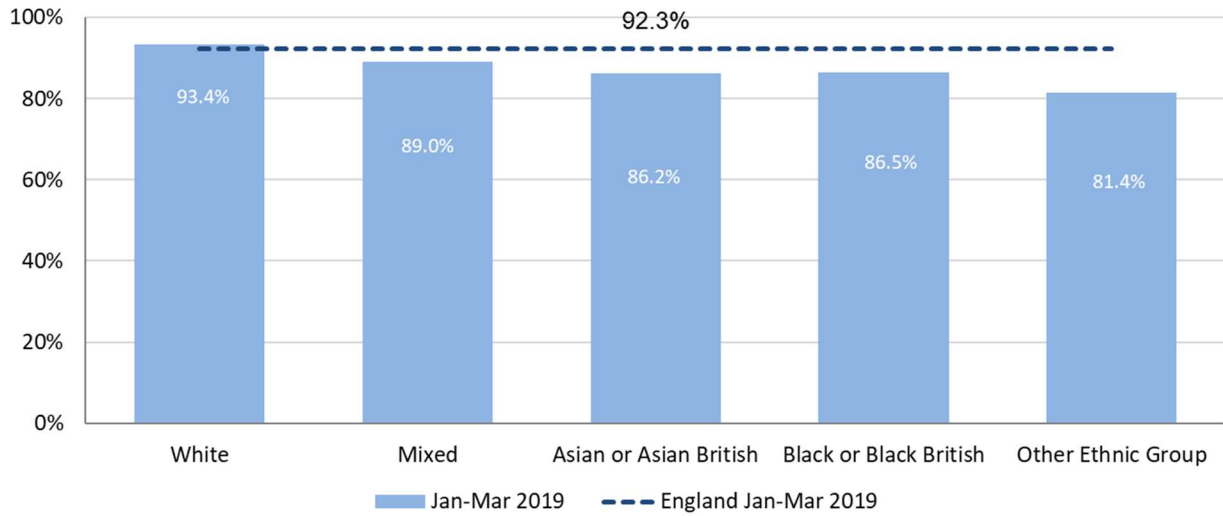
- The top three CCGs with the highest success rates for those who tried in the last two years were NHS Surrey Heath CCG (98.7%), NHS South Tyneside CCG (98.5%) and NHS South Worcestershire CCG (98.2%).
- The bottom three CCGs with the lowest success rates for those who tried in the last two years were NHS West Norfolk CCG (80.8%), NHS Corby CCG (86.6%) and NHS Bradford City CCG (86.6%).
- Lower levels of success were reported by younger age groups (Figure 4)³ and ethnic minorities (Figure 5) against the national figure of respondents reporting that they had been successful of 92.3% (including those who “can’t remember”).

Figure 4. Percentage of those who tried to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years who succeeded, by age-band (including "can't remember")



³ 16-17 and 85+ are categories which have been added this year.

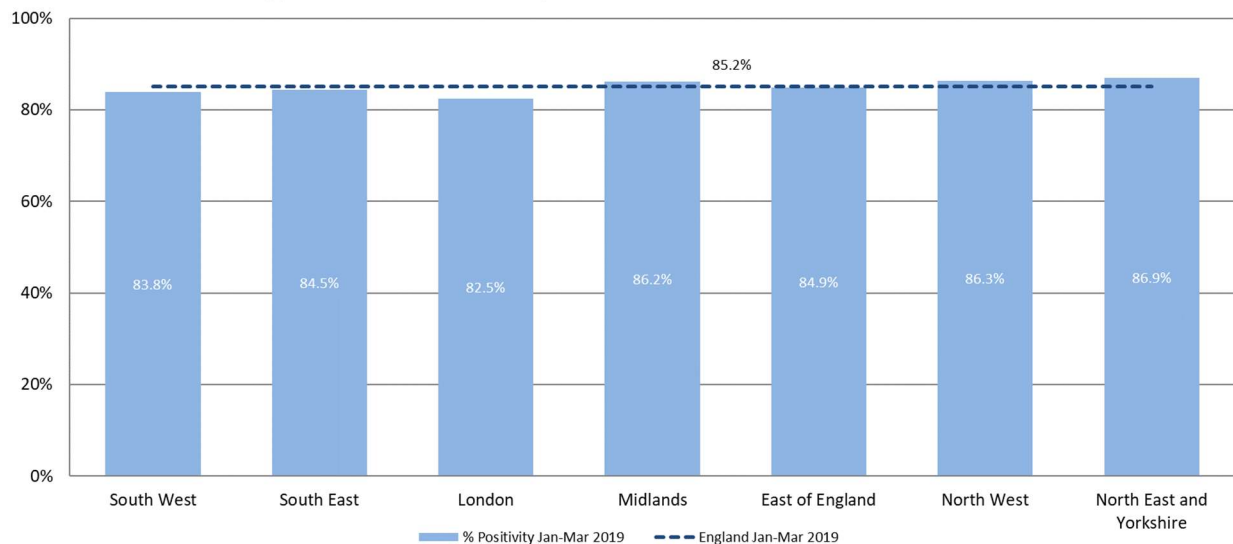
Figure 5. Percentage of those who tried to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years who succeeded, by ethnicity (including "can't remember")



Overall experience of NHS dental services

- Of the respondents that tried to get NHS dental care in the last two years, 85.2% of respondents rated their NHS dental experience as positive.
- In January to March 2019, 54.7% had a very good experience and 32.1% had a fairly good experience. Meanwhile 7.5% said it was neither good nor poor, and fairly poor and very poor had a 3.2% and 2.6% share of the total respectively.
- Satisfaction rates with the overall patient experience of NHS dental care is highest in North East & Yorkshire, with 86.9% of respondents respectively rating their patient experience as positive. Meanwhile London had the lowest, with 82.5% (Figure 6)².

Figure 6. Positive experience of NHS Dental Services from all those who tried to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years

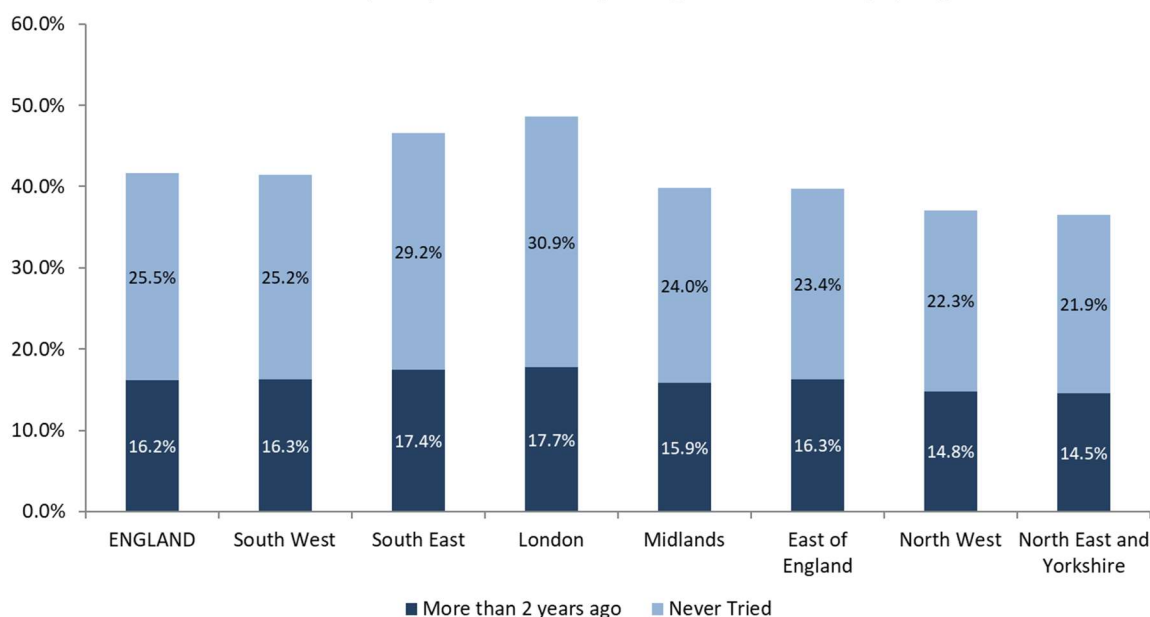


² The boundaries for Commissioning Regions altered this year. North divided into North West and North East & Yorkshire, Midlands & East divided into Midlands and East.

Did not try to get an NHS dental appointment

- Just over two fifths (41.6%) of adults who responded to the survey had not tried to get an appointment with an NHS dentist in the last two years (Figure 7)². A quarter (25.5%) of all respondents had never tried to get an NHS dental appointment, while 16.2% of respondents last tried over two years ago.
- Regionally, the largest proportions of respondents who have not tried to make an NHS dental appointment in the last two years were seen in London. NHS Richmond CCG, in London, had the highest proportion, with 58.6% of respondents who had not tried in the two year period. In comparison, NHS Great Yarmouth and Waveney CCG, in the East of England, had the lowest proportion, with only 26.7% of respondents not attempting to get an NHS appointment in the last two years.
- London has the highest proportion of respondents who have never tried to get an NHS dental appointment.

Figure 7. Percentage of respondents who did not try to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years (more than two years ago and never tried) by Region

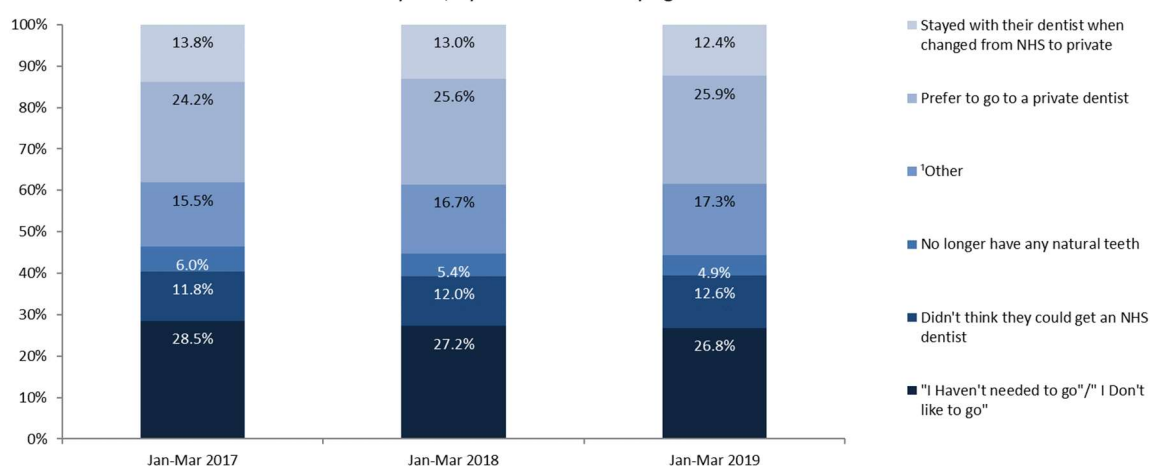


² The boundaries for Commissioning Regions altered this year. North divided into North West and North East & Yorkshire, Midlands & East divided into Midlands and East.

Reasons for not trying to get an appointment

- When considering the respondents who did not try to get an NHS dental appointment, the main reasons stated by respondents for why they have not tried to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years is “I don’t like to go” or “I haven’t needed to go” with over a quarter (26.8%) of the respondents stating one of these reasons (Figure 8).
- 12.6% 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”. The proportion of people who gave this response has increased by 0.6 percentage points compared to the previous year’s results.
- 25.9% of the respondents who did not try to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years said they preferred private dentistry, an increase of 0.3 percentage points compared to the same period last year. Those respondents who stayed with their dentist when they moved from NHS to private made up 12.4%.

Figure 8: Proportion of respondents who did not try to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years, by reason for not trying from 2017 to 2019

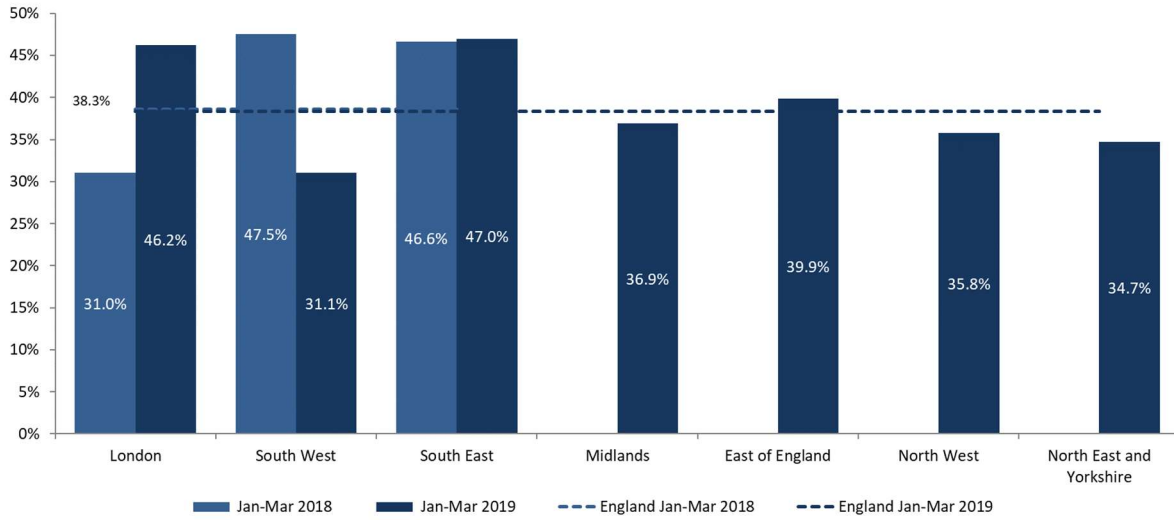


¹ Other reason includes: “I haven’t had time to visit a dentist”, “I’m on a waiting list for an NHS dentist”, “NHS dental care is too expensive”, “Another reason”

² 16 and 17 year olds were first included in 2018 meaning that the latest two years of data cannot be compared to Jan-Mar 2017

- These two private dentistry reasons accounted for over a third of all responses (38.3%) of those who have not tried to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years. This amounts to an increase of 0.2 percentage points upon the previous year.
- However there are marked regional differences, varying from 31.1% in South West to 47.0% in the South East (Figure 9)².
- South West and South East regions have both increased from the previous year. These increases have been 0.5 and 0.4 percentage points, respectively.

Figure 9. Percentage of respondents who have not tried to get an NHS dental appointment in last two years as they went private



² The boundaries for Commissioning Regions altered this year. North divided into North West and North East & Yorkshire, Midlands & East divided into Midlands and East.

To get current results (January to March 2019) please click on the following link:

https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/2019/07/11/gpps_dent_8492_822742/

To access the full dental results for previous years, please click on the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/category/statistics/gp-dental-statistics/>