

Summary of the Dental Results from the GP Patient Survey – January to March 2022

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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 2022 dental results and makes comparisons – where appropriate – to previous survey results.

The GP Patient Survey was significantly re-developed in 2018 to keep pace with changes in frontline general practice. This year two questions have changed from last year. The first covering reasons why people did not try to make an appointment with an NHS dentist and the second why people were not successful in making an appointment with an NHS dentist.

Dentistry in 2021-22 continued to be disrupted by the covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, this included Infection Prevention Control guidance limiting capacity to see dental patients. This impact is reflected in the results presented here.

General Survey Information

- For the 2022 GP Patient Survey – conducted between January and March 2022 – 2.5 million GP patients age 16 and over were contacted and 720,000 replies were received. This represents a 29% response rate; a decrease of 6 percentage points compared to 2021 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 in order to ensure greater accuracy.
- Survey region and ICS breakdowns are based on the GP practice of the respondent and not the address of the dentist.

Next publication:
July 2023

Previous publications:
[Statistics » GP Patient Survey Dental Statistics: January to March 2021, England](#)

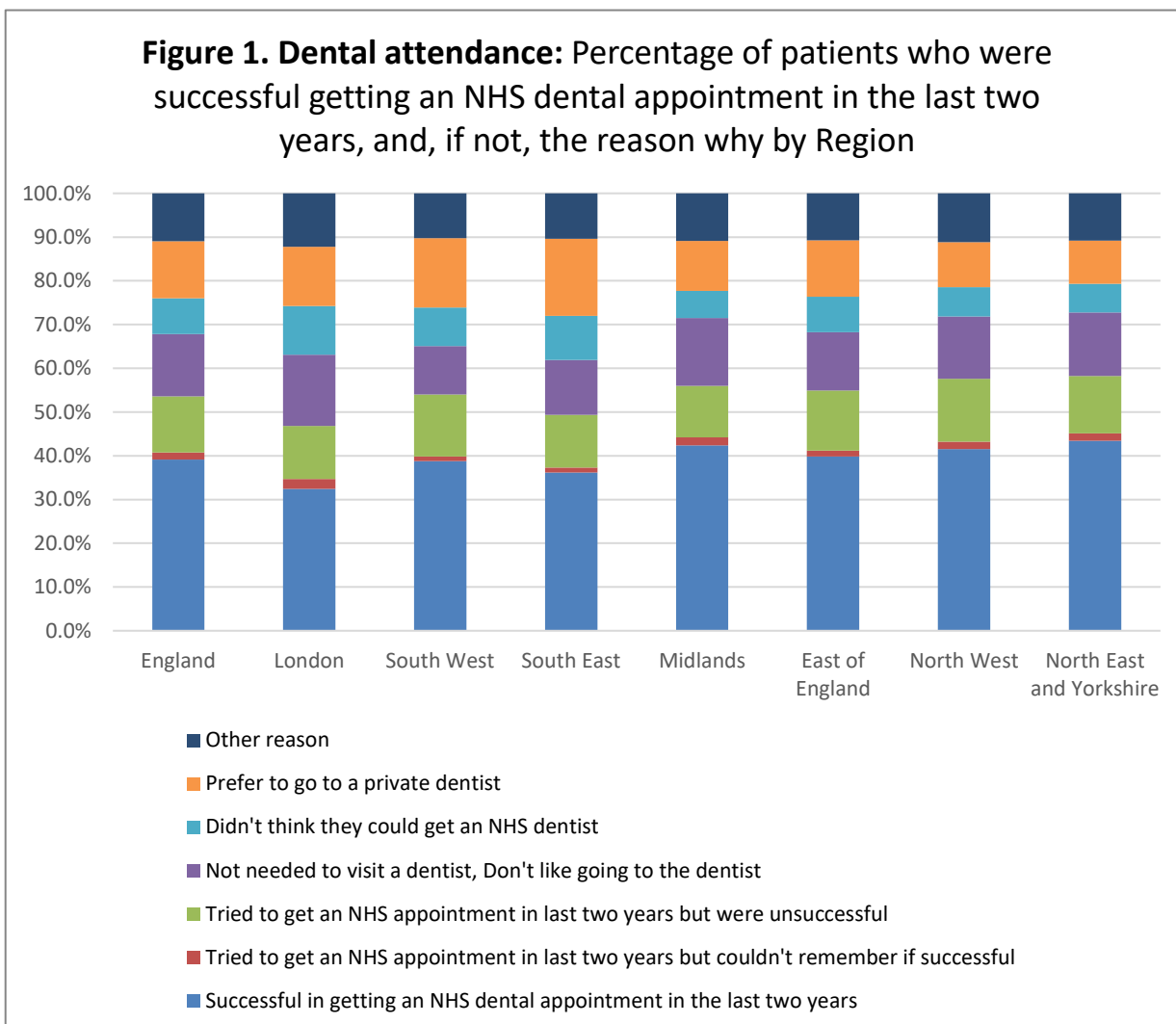
Responsible Statistician:
Caroline Keef

Feedback or queries:
caroline.keef@nhs.net



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 regions:



Other reason includes: "I'm on a waiting list for an NHS dentist", "NHS dental care is too expensive", "Another reason".

- To note the list of reasons for lack of success has changed this year, making a direct comparison with previous years inappropriate.
- The percentage of people unsuccessful in getting NHS dental appointment in 2022 (12.9%) remained almost same as that of 2021 (12.5%).
- There was a regional variation in the percentage of respondents who received an NHS dental appointment in the last two years, ranging from 43.5% in the North East and Yorkshire to 32.4% in London (Figure 1).
- The South East has the largest proportion of patients who preferred private dental care at 17.6%.

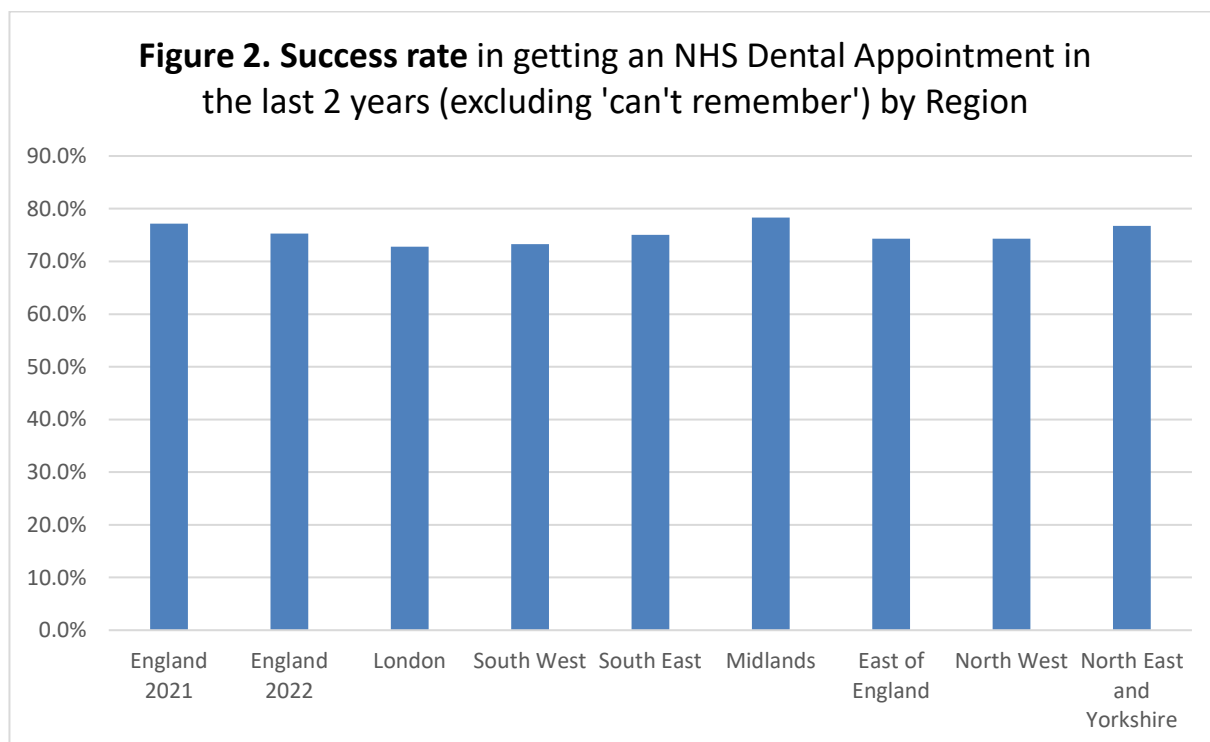
Tried to get an NHS dental appointment

- 51.9% of all respondents tried to get an NHS appointment in the last two years, the maximum recall period recommended by NICE guidelines¹. 41.7% of respondents had tried to get an NHS dental appointment in the last year compared with 36.2% of respondents in 2021. For respondents in 2022 31.5% tried to get an NHS dental appointment within the last six months and 19.5% 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 56.4% followed by the North West at 55.8%. In contrast, the rates remain lowest in London at 45.2% followed by the South East at 47.7%.

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

Success in getting an NHS dental appointment

- Of those who tried to get an appointment in the last two years, 73.0% 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 75.3%. This is compared to 77.1% in the previous year (excluding 'can't remember'). This is compared to 73.9% in 2021 and 93.8% in 2020.
- The success rate for respondents who had not been to the practice before was much lower, at 31.5%, compared with 81.8% who were successful when trying to make an appointment at a practice they had visited before. In 2021 success rate was 51.0% for patients visiting a 'new' practice compared with 78.7% trying to make an appointment at a practice they had visited before. Comparative figures for are 70.5% for 'new' practices and 95.8% for patients trying to revisit a practice. These figures relate to people trying to make an appointment in the past two years.
- This year we asked for reasons given when respondents were unsuccessful in making an NHS dentist appointment. The most common reason was 'No, no appointments were available' with 45.6% of unsuccessful respondents stating this, the second was 'No, the dentist was not taking new NHS patients' with 32.0% and 22.4% were unsuccessful for another reason.
- Regionally, the success rate for people who tried to get an NHS dental appointment was highest in the Midlands (78.3%). London had the lowest success rate (72.8%) of all the regions (Figure 2).



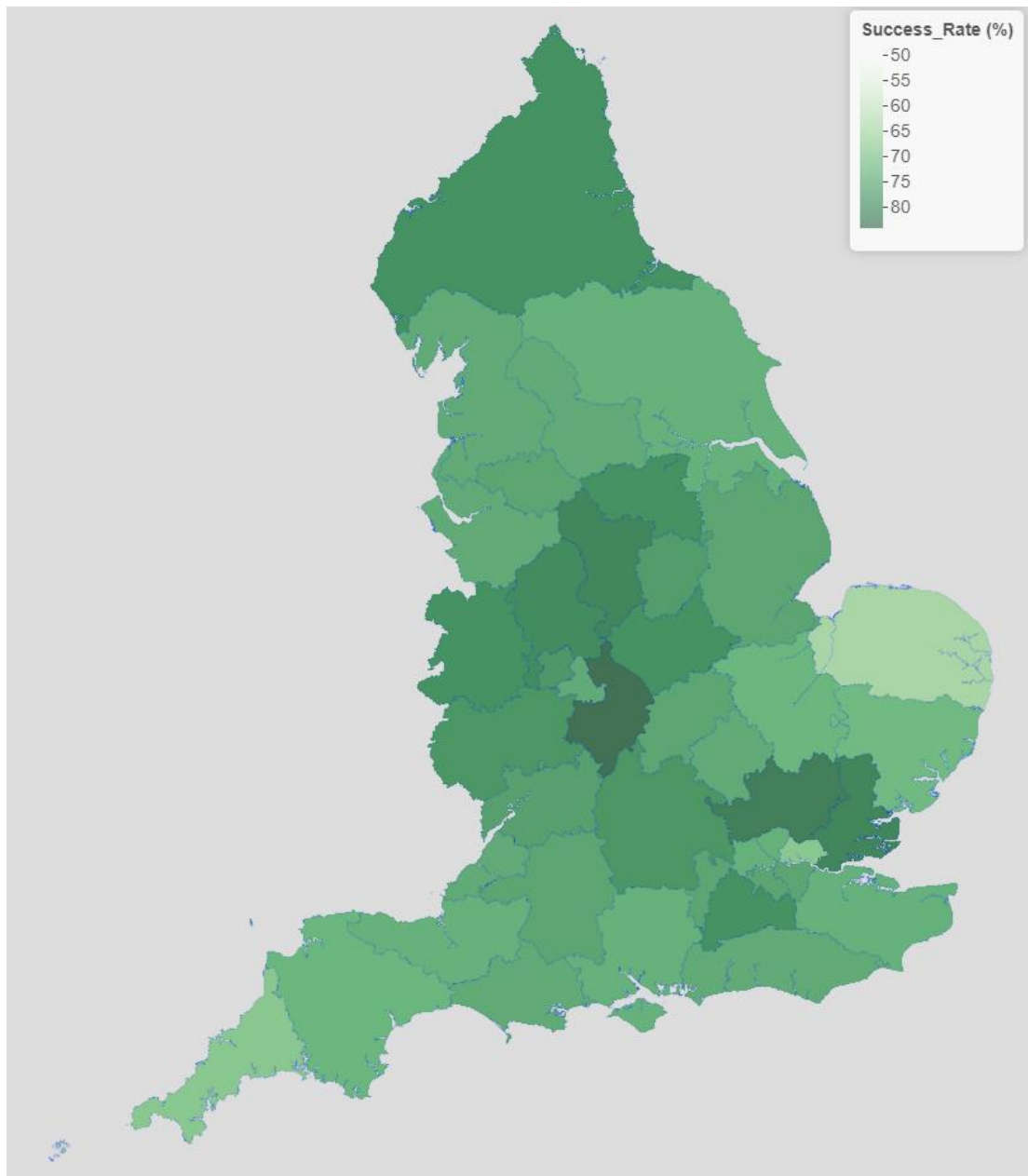


Figure 3. Percentage of respondents who tried to get, and succeeded in getting, an NHS dental appointment in the last two years, at Integrated Care Systems (ICS) level, January to March 2022 (excluding “can’t remember”).

- The top three ICSs with the highest success rates for those who tried to get an appointment in the last two years (excluding “can’t remember”) were NHS Coventry and Warwickshire ICS (84.2%) NHS Joined Up Care Derbyshire ICS (80.8%), and NHS Mid and South Essex ICS (80.5%).
- The bottom three ICSs with the lowest success rates for those who tried to get an appointment in the last two years (excluding “can’t remember”) were NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICS (63.6%), NHS North East London Health and Care Partnership ICS (68.1%) and NHS Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly ICS (68.2%).

- The lowest success rate was reported by 25-34 years (65%) age group (Figure 4) with younger adults generally having lower levels of success. The age group with the highest rate of success was 75-84 years (82%). In 2021 the age group with lowest levels of success were 25-34 (70%) and the age group with highest levels of success were 16-17 (77%).
- The ethnic group with the highest success rate was White (75%) the group with lowest success rate with 'Other' (59%). In 2021 the same groups had highest and lowest success rate, White ethnic group had a success rate of 73% and other ethnic group had a success rate of 64%.

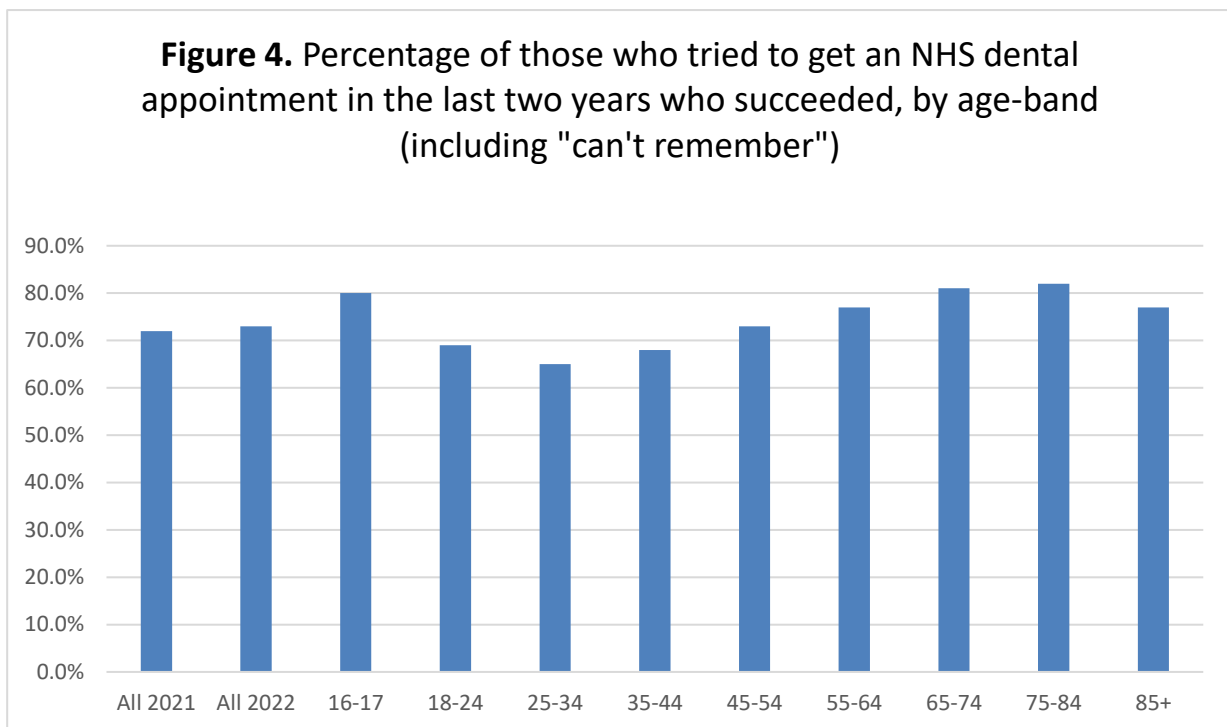
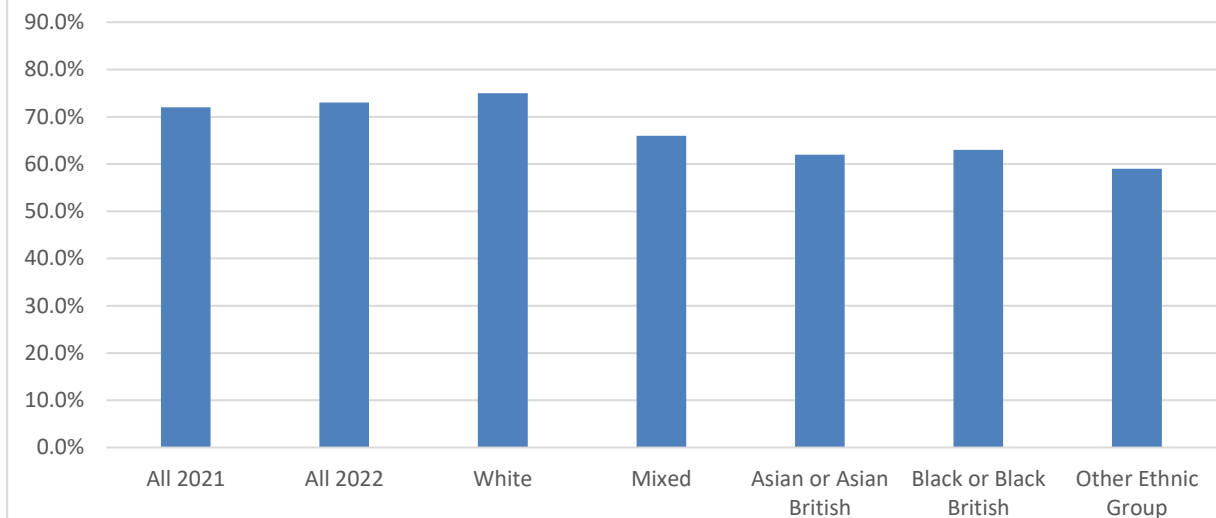


Figure 5. Percentage of those who tried to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years who succeeded, by ethnicity (including "can't remember")



Overall experience of NHS dental services

- Of the respondents that tried to get NHS dental care in the last two years, 78% of respondents rated their NHS dental experience as positive. This is lower than 2021 which was 81%.
- In January to March 2022, 46% had a very good experience and 32% had a fairly good experience. Meanwhile 10% said it was neither good nor poor, and fairly poor and very poor had a 5% and 4% share of the total respectively.
- Satisfaction rates with the overall patient experience of NHS dental care was the highest in North East and Yorkshire and Midland (80%) (Figure 6).

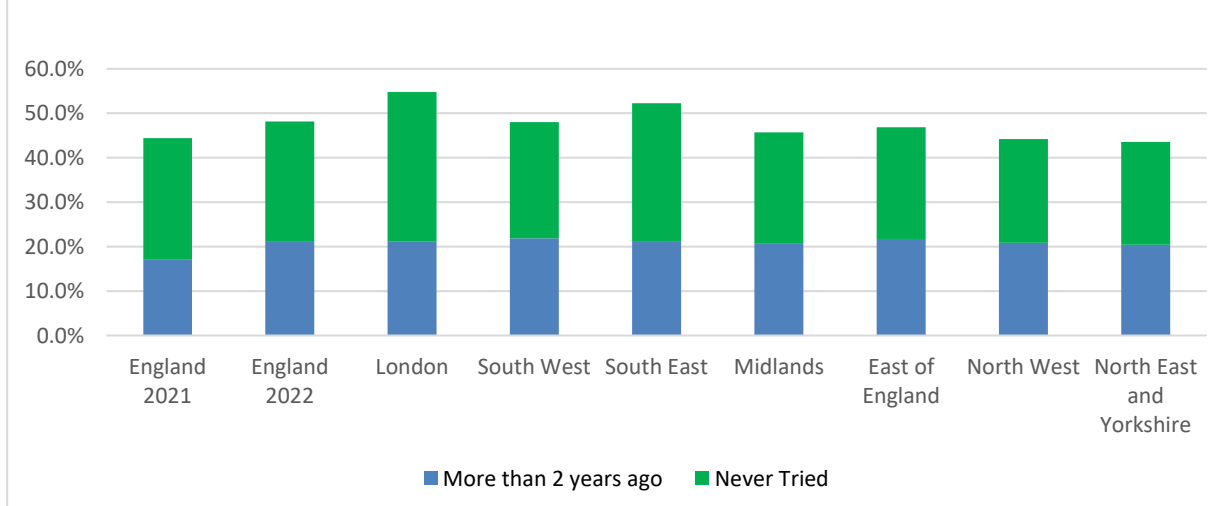
Figure 6. Positive experience of NHS Dental Services from all those who tried to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years



Did not try to get an NHS dental appointment

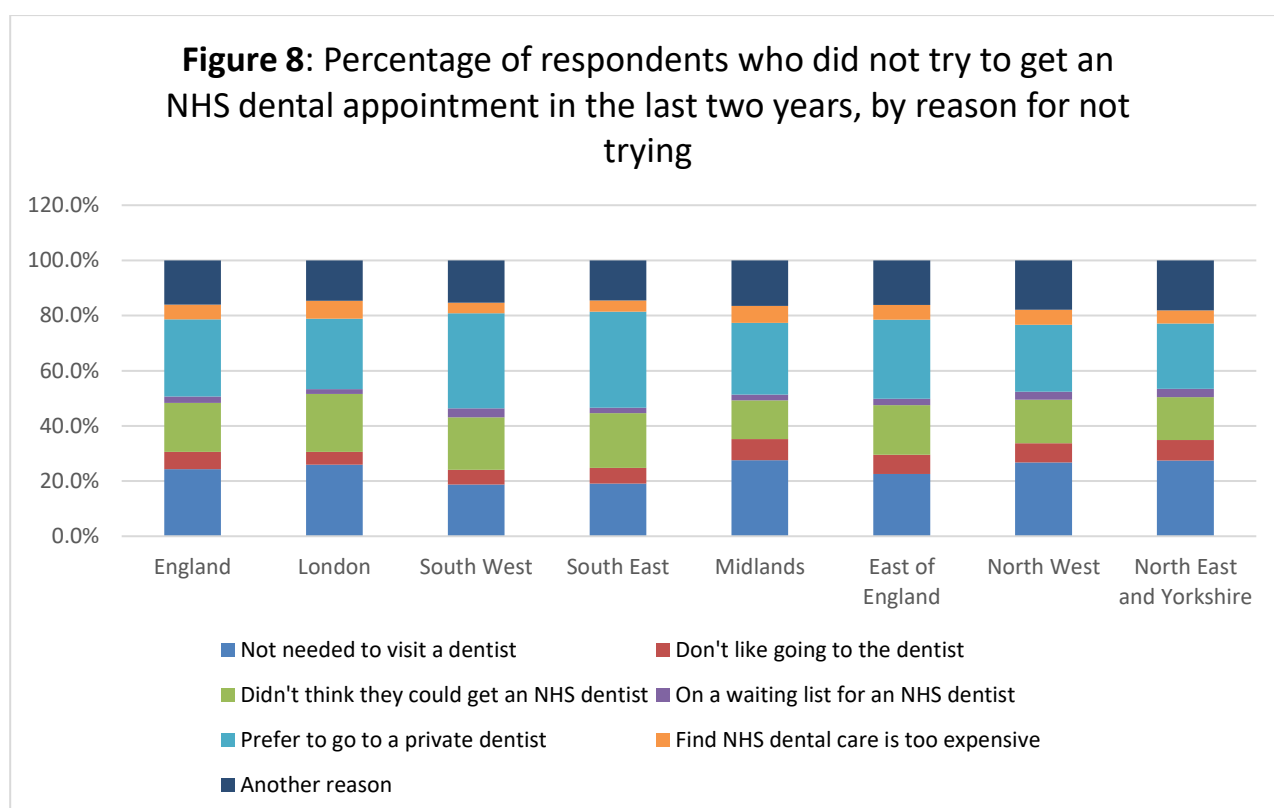
- In total 48.1% of all the respondents stated that they had not tried to get an NHS dental appointment in last two years. Of these 27.1% stated they never tried to get NHS dentist appointment while 17% stated they tried more than 2 years ago (Figure 7).
- For the respondents who have never tried to get an NHS dental appointment, London had the highest proportion with 33.6%.

Figure 7. Percentage of all 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



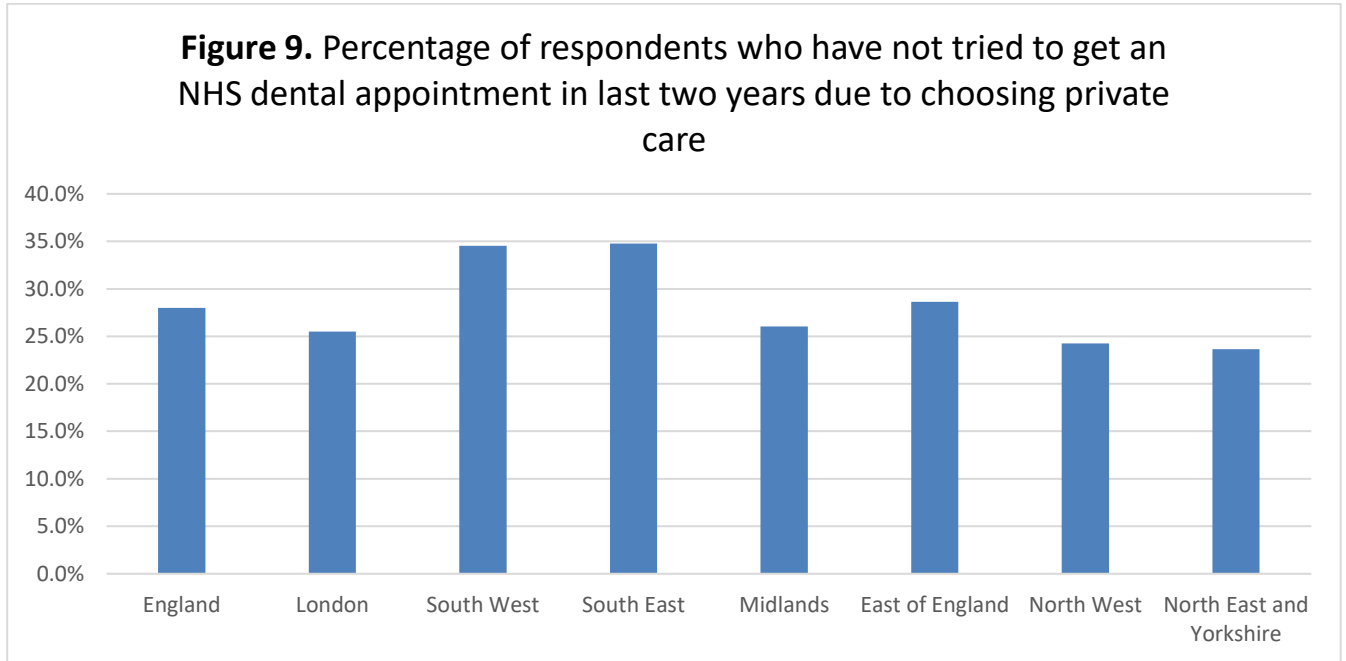
Reasons for not trying to get an appointment

- Excluding people who stated they prefer to go private 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 “didn’t think they could get an NHS Dentist” or “not needed to visit a dentist” with 42.0% of the respondents stating one of these reasons (Figure 8), 24.3% stating they have not needed to visit and 17.7% not thinking they could get an appointment. An additional 6.3% of people stated that haven’t tried to make an appointment because they “don’t like going to the dentist”.
- Of the respondents who didn’t try to get an NHS dental appointment who gave their reason as “didn’t think they could get an NHS Dentist” this response is highest in London (20.9%) and the lowest in North East and Yorkshire (15.6%). In both 2021 and in 2020 13.4% 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”.
- Almost similar proportion of respondents in London (6.6%) and Midland (6.1%) mentioned that they found NHS dental appointment is too expensive.



- In South West (34.5%) and South East (34.8%) respondents mentioned they prefer to go private dentist and North East and Yorkshire 23.7% of the respondents

mentioned the same. (Figure 9). In 2021 it was 42.5% and in 2020 it was 46.5% in South West and in South East it was 41.8% in 2021 and 45.1% in 2020. It is possible these results are affected by the removal of 'stayed with my dentist when they went private' from the response options. In previous years people who gave this response were included as people who preferred to go private.



To get current results (January to March 2022) please click on the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/2021/07/08/gp-patient-survey-dental-statistics-january-to-march-2022-england/>

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/>

Annex A – Changes in 2022 survey and comparability with 2021 survey

2022 Question number	2022 Question wording (no change)	2022 Question responses (new codes are highlighted, removed codes are crossed out)	2022 results comparable to 2021?
Q48	When did you last try to get an NHS dental appointment for yourself?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the last 3 months • Between 3 and 6 months ago • Between 6 months and a year ago • Between 1 and 2 years ago • More than 2 years ago • I have never tried to get an NHS dental appointment 	Yes
Q49	Last time you tried to get an NHS dental appointment, was it with a dental practice you had been to before for NHS dental care?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Can't remember 	Yes
Q50	Were you successful in getting an NHS dental appointment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • No, no appointments were available • No, the dentist was not taking new patients • No, for another reason • Can't remember 	No
Q51	Overall, how would you describe your experience of NHS dental services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good • Fairly good • Neither good nor poor • Fairly poor • Very poor 	Yes
Q52	Why haven't you tried to get an NHS dental appointment in the last two years?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I haven't needed to visit a dentist • I no longer have any natural teeth • I haven't had time to visit a dentist • I don't like going to the dentist 	No

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I didn't think I could get an NHS dentist• I'm on the waiting list for an NHS dentist• I stayed with my dentist when they changed from NHS to private• I prefer to go to a private dentist• NHS dental care is too expensive• Another reason | |
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