Dental Statistics – NHS Registration and Participation

Statistics as at 30 September 2019
Publication Date: 21 January 2020

About this release

This release by Information Services Division reports on NHS dental registrations in Scotland between September 2000 and September 2019. In addition, it provides data on contact with an NHS dentist between September 2006 and September 2019.

Main Points

Registration

5.2 million people were registered with an NHS dentist as at 30 September 2019 (95.7% of the Scottish population), an increase of 2.3 percentage points since last year.

Registration rates were similar for children and adults (94.3% and 96.0% respectively).

99.3% of adults living in the most deprived areas were registered with an NHS dentist compared to 90.2% in the least deprived areas. This variation may reflect the use of private dentistry or the availability of free NHS dental treatment for adults who receive certain benefits.

Registration rates for children living in the most deprived areas were similar to the rates for those living in the least deprived areas.

Contact with an NHS Dentist (Participation)

As at 30 September 2019, 7 out of 10 registered patients (3.6 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 (83.7% compared to 65.4%).

Children and adults from the most deprived areas are less likely to have seen their dentist than those from the least deprived areas. For children, 79.0% of patients living in the most deprived areas had seen a dentist in the preceding two years, compared to 88.8% of patients living in the least deprived areas. For adults, the corresponding figures were 60.8% compared to 71.5%.
Background

This report only includes data on patients registered with an NHS dentist; data for patients registered with or treated by private dentists are 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.

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 2021 and will present data as at 30 September 2020.