

# ***NHS DENTISTRY IN EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE***



**REPORT | MARCH 2024**

## Introduction

This report summarises the problems people in East Dunbartonshire raised when asked about NHS dentistry. Many people responded positively, saying that they were registered with an NHS dentist and were happy with the service they receive. However many others described the problems they face, from being unable to register with an NHS dentist, reluctantly going private, waiting longer for appointments, to the relocation of the dental practice in Campsie. Some people said that they are travelling outside of East Dunbartonshire for appointments. This report brings together people's experience in order to illustrate these problems. Hopefully by acknowledging the challenges we can begin to find solutions and ensure that everyone has access to excellent NHS dental care.

## Many people registered

Feedback from people who are registered with an NHS dentist was broadly positive. It is clear that many are glad for the service they receive.

- "Registered and use the best NHS dentist ever she's amazing x"
- "Have a Brilliant NHS Dentist in Drymen"
- "I'm registered as an NHS patient in Kirkintilloch and have received excellent service from both the dentist and hygienist and reception staff."

## Unable to register

Getting registered with an NHS dentist was a problem which many people raised, with some facing long waiting lists or going without care.

- Tommy Smith: "I've had lots of trouble with this, it's incredibly difficult to get registered as an NHS patient at any Surgery and as it stands, I've still not found one with any space."
- Yvonne Haggerty: "No dentists in Lennoxton, impossible to get on waiting lists with anywhere local."
- "Terrible time can't get a dentist anywhere for me and my kids no 1 taking on nhs patients"
- "Family of 4 unable to get registered anywhere. My son is 5 and has never been seen by a dentist"
- "Me and the kids are registered but my husband can't get registered anywhere, appointments have to be made months in advance however the emergency appointments are always same day and fairly fast."
- "I have been over 40 years with the same practice in Milngavie and was extremely disappointed when just over a year ago they announced that they were going private. I have now been on another NHS practice waiting list for 1 and a half years with no outlook as to when I'll be accepted."

## Dentists going private

Other people reported that their practice had stopped providing NHS treatments and had gone private.

- Liz Gallacher: “My dentist was NHS but not anymore, she said she couldn’t continue as NHS she couldn’t afford it but now I can’t afford it 😞”
- Jean McCluskey: “My dentist practice in Milngavie is now private. Since I like my dentist, I am now on Denplan. The only NHS dentist in Milngavie has a waiting list over a year long. This is the fault of the NHS not funding dentistry. You cannot expect dentist to be out of pocket. And no I'm not a dentist!”
- James Cowan: “The Milngavie dentist my family was with turned private after being with them over 30 years, now we have to travel further to get check-ups & treatment.”
- “Our dentist has just gone completely private, no longer accepting nhs patients including children. Trying to find someone who does is a challenge.”

While some people have looked for an alternative NHS practice, others said that they have paid for private dentistry instead.

- “I was with the Allander Dental practice in Milngavie for many years. Last year they stopped providing NHS services. Since the only NHS practice in Milngavie has a waiting list over a year long I reluctantly stayed with my dentist. My husband and son also are with this practice. We joined Denplan. This costs us £ 48.50 a month. We are lucky in that we can afford this but what about people who can't? I don't blame the dentists, it's entirely the fault of the funding model. Dentists can't afford to give NHS treatment as it costs them more than they are given for supplying it.”
- Michelle Martin: “I've paid private to avoid this. My LO had to go on a year’s waiting list to get registered via the NHS. Luckily, I registered for it as soon as she started getting teeth in.”
- Marion Myatt: “I have been at the same Dental practice on the NHS for over 46 years in Maryhill I have now went private along with the NHS so I can get my 6 months check-up twice a year. As it’s going to yearly then every 2 years.”

## Increased times between check-ups and difficulties getting an appointment

Another common theme from the responses was people facing longer waits between check-ups. Others said that it is difficult to see a dentist.

- Gillian Monk: “Difficult to get an appointment. Thought about switching but other dentists in the area are either not taking on NHS patients or have long waits for an appointment.”
- “I am used to being seen every six months but this has now changed to annually. I can still be seen if I have a problem at any time though if I am not in pain the wait can be quite long. In my opinion this change is a step in the wrong direction and will lead to poorer dental outcomes.”
- Shona Angus: “I'm registered as an NHS patient in Kirkintilloch and have received excellent service from both the dentist and hygienist and reception staff. [...] Check-ups also changed from 6 months to annual. I would prefer 6 months just to make sure teeth are ok but I don't

usually require treatment so it might not be a problem. I feel quite lucky to be registered with an NHS dentist hearing about problems others have had.”

## Relocation of the Campsie dentist

People raised the relocation of the Campsie dental practice to Riddrie, and difficulties in accessing the practice as a result.

- Karen McQuarrie: “Lennoxtown "Campsie Dental practice" has had no dentist for (?) A year if not more, and we've just had letters saying it's relocating.....to RIDDRIE?!?!”
- Pauline Mcallister: “Hello we live in Lennoxtown until covid we had a dentist called Campsie dentist this was in our very small village he closed with no warning but a few weeks ago we got a letter saying the practice was delighted to be re-opening. Great or so we thought they are opening in Riddre we do not have a car my husband is 81 and I am 69. How do they think we can get there now I have to get two buses to Bishopbriggs. To be told they don't know how long the dentist will be there.”

## Travelling for treatment

Some people described travelling outside of East Dunbartonshire to see a dentist because they couldn't register with a local NHS practice.

- “Absolute nightmare finding an nhs dentist for myself and my two kids. It seems that many don't have any space or are only interested in new clients willing to go private. I ended up having to go outwith East Dunbartonshire to get one.”
- Jane Allan: “My daughter and granddaughter are registered in Kirkintilloch. They moved to Argyle and Bute and they won't register them because they are registered elsewhere. They need to do a 3 hour round trip to be seen. The nursery dentist can't believe what's happening either. They have tried to register my granddaughter and it won't allow her and they won't accept her if they take her off the register in Kirkintilloch 🙄.”
- “When I moved into Bearsden from Glasgow I could not find an NHS dentist in Bearsden or anywhere in east Dunbartonshire. Each one stated they would only take new private patients. I eventually got an NHS dentist in Glasgow City Council, Drumchapel after over a year of trying elsewhere. Even at that it had taken months from call to appointment to treatment because there are so many patients to see.”