

Sunderland City Council

Oral Health Promotion Update

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Responsibility for Oral Health Promotion

The statutory dental public health responsibilities of local authorities include the following:

- Securing the provision of oral health improvement programmes to improve the health of the local population
- Securing the provision of oral health surveys to facilitate the assessment and monitoring of oral health needs
- The planning and evaluation of oral health promotion programmes
- The planning and evaluation of the arrangements for provision of dental services as part of the health service
- Water fluoridation programmes affecting the authority's area, the monitoring and reporting of the effect of water fluoridation programmes
- Participation in any oral health survey conducted or commissioned by the secretary of state
- Supporting the Department of Health and Social Care in any future consultations on water fluoridation schemes



Key Challenges



Access to dentists remain a significant national challenge which has progressively got worse since the pandemic



Many prevention schemes such as the Supervised Toothbrushing Programme were halted during the lockdowns due to schools and early years settings closing.



As the size of the older population increases in Sunderland so does the need for oral health provision amongst the elderly population residing in care homes.

National and Local Context

- During 2020/21 and 2022/23, Sunderland compared well to the North East, with a rate of 108.3 per 100,000 hospital admissions for dental caries in those aged 0-5 years, and has the lowest rate of admissions within the North East. The Sunderland rate is significantly lower than both the North East (389.2) and England (178.8) averages.
- 83.6% of adults in Sunderland received access to NHS dental services compared 80.1% in the North East and 77% for England.
- During 2017-19 Sunderland's mortality rate from oral cancer, all ages, is 8.2 per 100,000 compared to the North East's rate of 6.0 and England at 4.7.
- In the 2023 Oral Health Survey of 5-year-old Children conducted by the National Dental Epidemiology Programme (NDEP) during the 2021-2022 school year shows the national prevalence of children with enamel or dentinal decay being 23.7%. compared to 25.6 % in Sunderland and 22.2% for the North East.
- During 2017-19 Sunderland had a rate of 20.7 per 100,000 oral cancer registrations compared to the North East (18.2) and England (15.4) averages.

The vision of this oral health strategy is to improve the oral health of all people living in Sunderland. It aspires to promote the best available oral health across the life course, reduce oral health inequalities and lay solid foundations for good oral health throughout life.

The strategy was formed following an oral health needs assessment which describes the services currently commissioned to meet those needs.

There is a proven relationship between oral and general health.

Tooth decay is the most common oral disease affecting children and young people in England, yet it is largely preventable.

Our oral health promotion programmes focus on supporting our most vulnerable communities who tend to experience poorer oral health.

Our aim	How we can achieve our objectives
Promote oral health through healthy food and drink	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Support good oral health by encouraging and enabling healthier food and drink options which reduce sugar in-take 2 Commission interventions that encourage and support breastfeeding and healthy complementary feeding (weaning) 3 Promote healthy food and drink that are lower in sugar in settings that the local authority delivers or commissions e.g. leisure, education, social and residential care and local food outlets
Promote oral health by improving levels of oral hygiene	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Increase the take up of supervised tooth brushing programmes for pre-school and primary school children at high risk of poor oral health 5 Train front line staff to provide demonstrations on how to clean teeth among those at high risk of poor oral health 6 Commission programmes that provide free toothbrushes and toothpaste to all pre-school and primary school children, prioritising targeted interventions for those at high risk of poor oral health
Improve population exposure to fluoride	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7 Support the Department of Health and Social Care in any future consultation on fluoridation of water 8 Increase the availability of free toothbrushes and toothpaste to pre-school and primary school children, prioritising targeted interventions such as fluoride toothpaste for those at high risk of poor oral health 9 Commission targeted/universal fluoride varnishing programmes for young children in areas with high rates of tooth decay

Our aim	How we can achieve our objectives
Improve early detection, and treatment, of oral diseases	<p>10 Maximise all opportunities for signposting to local NHS dental services</p> <p>11 Promote the benefits of visiting a dentist throughout the life course</p> <p>12 Raise awareness of eligibility for free check-ups, prioritising those at high risk of poor oral health</p>
Reduce inequalities in oral health	<p>13 Look for opportunities to embed oral health promotion within all health and wellbeing policies, strategies and commissioning</p> <p>14 Promote targeted oral health promotion activities and interventions among vulnerable groups; young children, children in cared for accommodation, people with diabetes, people who smoke, consume high quantities of alcohol or use drugs, people with a learning disability, older people and migrant/asylum seeker population.</p> <p>15 Equip the wider health and social care workforce with the knowledge and skills to recognise the link with neglect and complex social circumstances and ensure provision of care for those at high risk of poor oral health.</p>

Update on the Key Recommendations in the Strategy

- Establish a local oral health improvement and advisory group to promote oral health messages to the general population
- Increase the number of children and young people who have access to targeted toothbrushing
- Establish the oral health requirements of vulnerable groups within the city, including new arrivals from areas where access to dentistry has been significantly limited
- Establish the commissioning arrangements and activity data for the Community Dental Service
- Ensure that opportunities to promote measures to improve oral health are maximised in local programmes of work
- Establish a supervised toothbrushing programme in special education needs schools
- Establish a targeted offer for children in special education needs schools to have access to the targeted fluoride varnishing programme
- Prepare to support the Department of Health and Social Care when it comes to any future consultation on fluoridation of water in Sunderland

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Thank you!