

**Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Board**  
Meeting to be held on Monday, 15 July 2024

**Corporate Priorities:**  
Delivering Better Services  
Caring for the Vulnerable

**Oral Health**

Contact for further information:

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**Brief Summary**

Oral health is one of the key markers of overall health in our community and contributes to general wellbeing. The report provides some contextual information relevant to Lancashire. Representatives from the Local Professional Network – Dentistry/NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board, and the University of Central Lancashire School of Medicine and Dentistry have been invited to the meeting to discuss the current oral health issues in Lancashire, including opportunities to improve oral health outcomes and address dental health inequalities.

**Recommendations**

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

- (i) Receive and discuss the presentations from dental health professionals.
- (ii) Identify future opportunities for collaboration to improve oral health in Lancashire.

**Detail**

Oral health is a key marker of the general health of a community and contributes to general wellbeing. Tooth decay is still the most common dental disease that affects children. It can result in significant pain and eventual tooth loss, with an adverse impact on school and family life.

Tooth decay can cause problems with eating, sleeping, communication and socialising. Maintaining good oral health during childhood is essential and is the basis for good oral health in adulthood. Brushing with fluoride toothpaste twice daily is key to preventing tooth decay. Lancashire County Council has been working to increase rates of toothbrushing, engaging with communities to understand the barriers to effective toothbrushing, and implementing a range of initiatives, including the provision of toothbrushes and toothpaste by health visitors and commissioning supervised toothbrushing support in early years and reception settings.



The management of tooth decay and its consequences is also costly to society. Improving the oral health of children is a priority linked to Best Start in Life, nationally and locally.

[Lancashire Insights](#) provides useful local context.

In particular:

Decayed, missing and filled teeth of five-year-old children

- In the Lancashire-12 area, the average number of teeth (1.16) affected by decay per child is significantly worse than the England average (0.80). Within the Lancashire-12 area this ranges from 0.53 in Ribble Valley to 1.87 in Preston (2018/19).
- In the Lancashire-12 area, 27.4% of five year olds were affected by visually obvious dental decay in 2021/22, this is significantly worse than the England rate (23.7%).
- Within the Lancashire-12 area, in Pendle (41.9%), Hyndburn (35.4%), Preston (32.6%) and Burnley (29.3%) the proportion of five year olds affected by visually obvious dental decay is significantly higher than the England rate.

Hospital admissions for dental caries (0-5 years), 2020/21 - 2022/23

- At an authority level, Lancashire-12 has a rate of 389.7 per 100,000 and is significantly worse than the England rate (178.8).

### **Access to Dentistry Services**

NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria has developed a dental access and oral health improvement programme to improve access to primary care dental services in the high street and to improve oral health.

Primary care dental services includes:

- Routine care for people who require a check-up and any follow-up care.
- Urgent dental care for those in immediate need of support.

The University of Central Lancashire's School of Medicine and Dentistry has a dental clinic with clinical facilities that support the training of dentistry students, whilst providing access to dental services for local people.

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