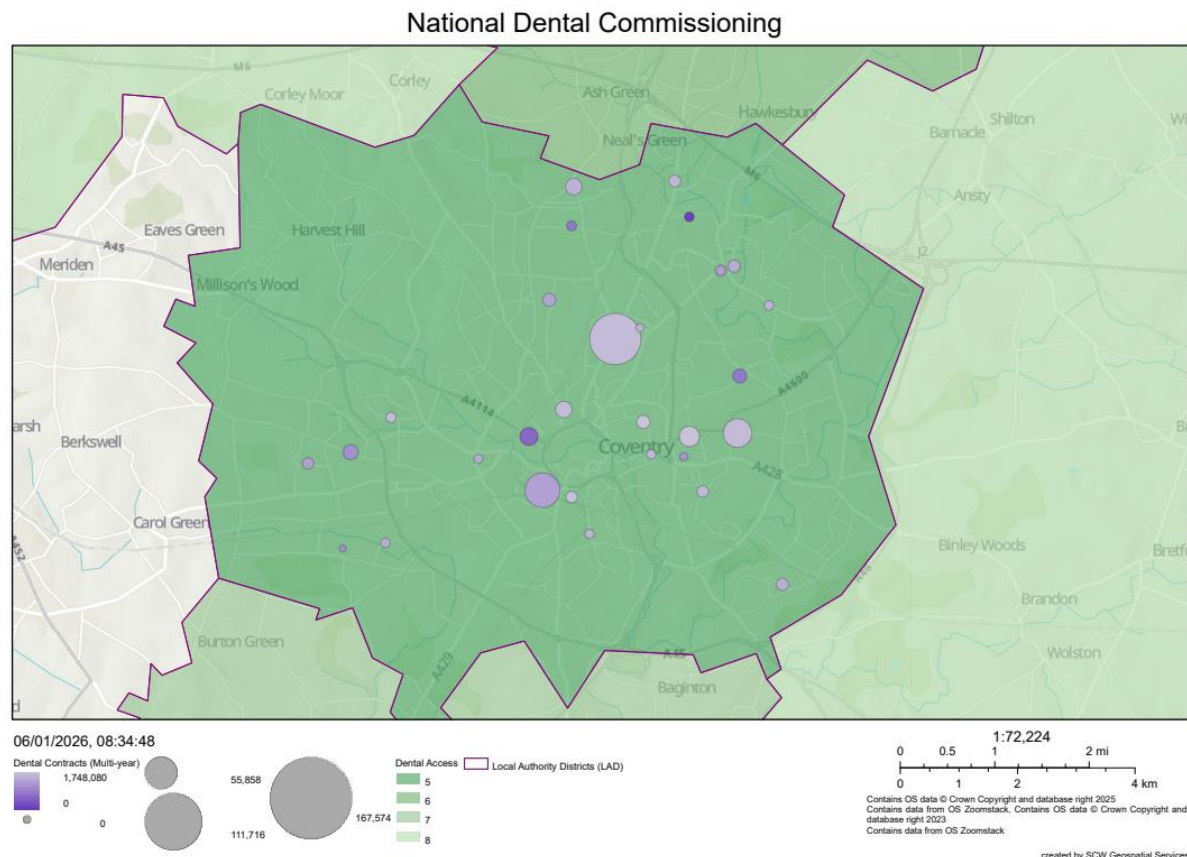


Report To and Date:	Coventry Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) January 2026
Report Title:	Dental Services - Overview, Performance and Strategic Plan
Report From:	Alison Cartwright, Chief Integration Officer, Coventry and Warwickshire ICB
Author:	Tim Sacks, Director of Primary Care, Coventry and Warwickshire ICB Sarah Johnson, Head of Primary Care
Previous Considerations and Engagement:	None
Purpose:	For Information

Coventry Dental Services Overview

1. There are a number of differing dental services available from providers for the population of Coventry, depending on condition and need. These are listed below;
 - 23 Dental practices providing general dental services only
 - 7 Dental practices provide both general dental services and orthodontics
 - 1 Orthodontic Specialist Practice
 - Total number of Units of Dental Activity (UDA) commissioned = 542,692
 - Total number of Units of Orthodontic Activity (UOA) commissioned = 24,241

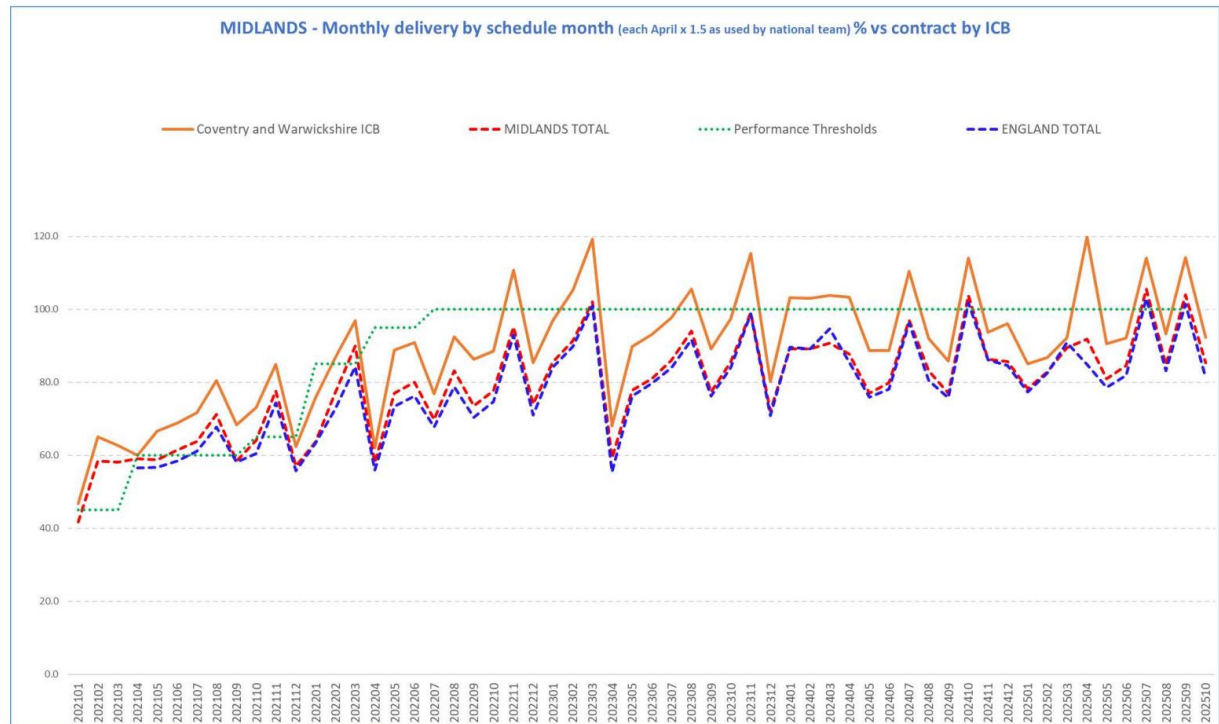


Coventry and Warwickshire Provider Dental Contract Performance

2. Dental providers in Coventry and Warwickshire continue to perform well when benchmarked with other ICBs nationally. This has helped in the recovery of dental services across the system. This has mainly been due to the number of independent providers dominating the dental market as opposed to corporates. In addition, C&W have a greater number of other dental service providers delivering a broader range of services in a primary care setting which in turn takes pressure of secondary care services e.g. intermediate oral minor surgery and community dental services in a community setting.
3. Restoration and recovery of NHS dental services since the COVID-19 pandemic has enabled dental practices to deliver increasing levels of dental activity. The enabling of such measures has resulted in practices within NHS Coventry and Warwickshire ICB to restore contracted activity delivery in line with pre-pandemic levels. Whilst the outcome of returning activity delivery to pre-pandemic levels is good news, the impact on any surplus funds available for local investment through the underspend of dental contracts is limited due to dental budget being allocated to practices already delivering their annual contractual target.

4. 2025/26 contract delivery consistently tracks above Midlands and England totals, this is shown in the following graphs:

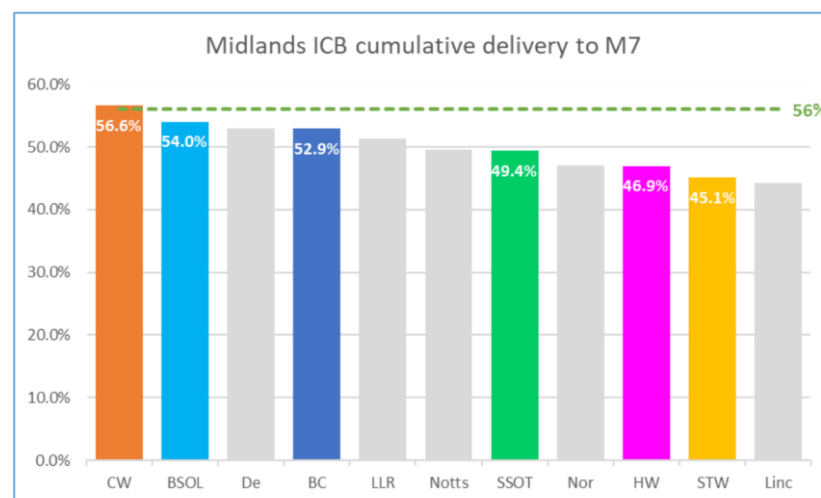
Graph 1:



Graph 2:

Cumulative year to Month 12 percentage delivery

Model – October 56% (April 6% to October 56%)



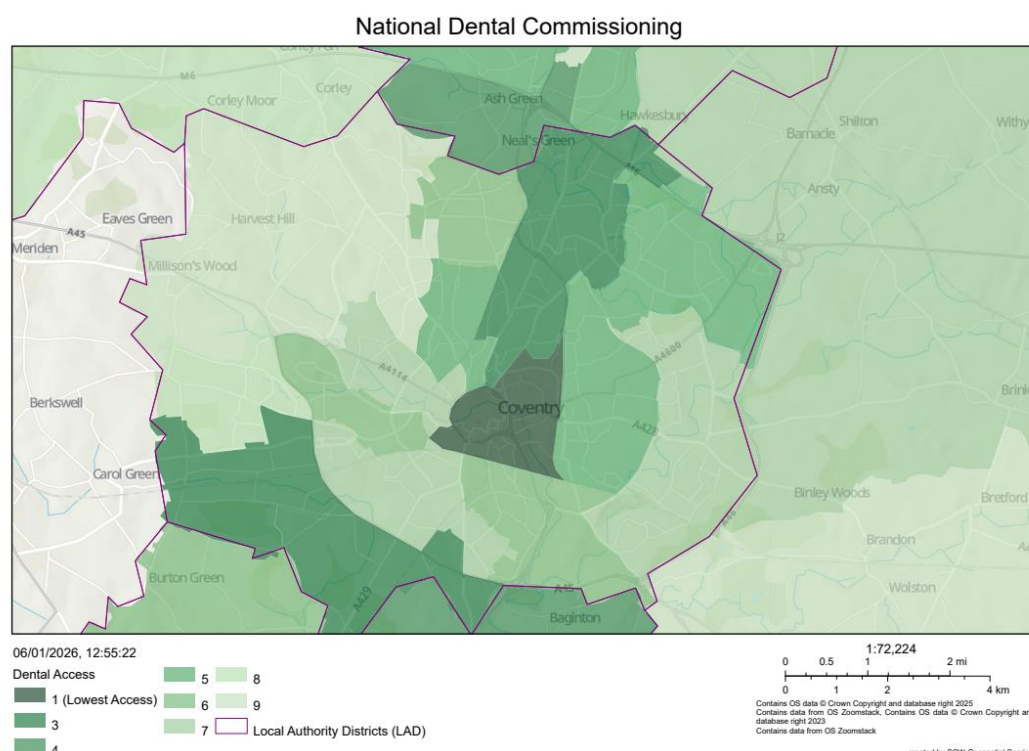
Data source: BSA main delivery dashboard (EDEN) which includes all contracts paid via BSA (vast majority)

Coventry and Warwickshire Provider Dental Access Rates

5. The latest dental access data from NHS BSA January – June 2025 shows Coventry at level 5 Access Decile (1= poor access, 10- good access)

Group	Pop. Accessing NHS Dentistry	Total Pop.	Access Rate	Comparison to National Average
All	92,170	355,600	25.92 %	Lower than national average of 26.51 %
Adults	61,432	276,653	22.21 %	Higher than national average of 21.76 %
0-17	30,773	78,947	38.98 %	Lower than national average of 44.63 %

Group	Access Rate July-Dec 2019	Current Access Rate
All	26.54 %	25.92 %
Adult	39.9 %	22.21 %
Child (0-17)	22.89 %	38.98 %



6. As of December 2025, 64% of all practices are accepting at least one patient cohort, this is 24% above the national percentage

Choose ICB:

Coventry and Warwickshire ICB

Measure	No of Practices	% of Practices
The number and percentage of general dental practices that have confirmed through NHS Profile Manager that they are currently accepting new NHS patients for routine appointments.		
Accepting new NHS patients information (General dental practices)		
Number of general dental practices profiles	89	
Number of practices who have given a recent update on whether they're taking on new NHS patients	78	88%
Number of practices which are accepting at least one patient cohort	57	64%
Number of practices that are accepting children aged 17 or under	56	63%
Number of practices that are accepting adults 18 and over	48	54%
Number of practices that are accepting charge exempt adults	50	56%
Number of practices that are not accepting new patients	21	24%
Number of practices who have not given a recent update on whether they're taking on new NHS patients	11	12%

Updates to Dental services in Coventry and Warwickshire

7. **700k Unscheduled and Urgent Care Appointment Allocation** - The Government's manifesto committed to securing 700k additional urgent dental care appointments per year for the duration of this parliament. Coventry and Warwickshire has been given a local target of 2,740 per annum to meet. To achieve this the ICB uplifted the minimum UDA rate across Coventry and Warwickshire to £31 from 1st April 2025, this increase has been directly aligned with the Government's manifesto commitment to expand additional unscheduled urgent care dental appointments. 6 providers located within Coventry accepted this investment in return for delivering additional urgent/unscheduled appointments.
8. **2025/26 Urgent Dental Care Incentive (UDCI) Scheme** -To bolster the Government's Manifesto commitment to expand unscheduled and urgent care, on 25th September, NHSE announced the launch of the national urgent dental care incentive (UDCI) Scheme, an in year financial incentive scheme for mandatory services contract holders, with the aim of bolstering the additional capacity that ICBs have already commissioned. [NHS England » Urgent dental care incentive scheme](#).
9. The UDCI Scheme requires participating contractors to deliver an increase of 25% urgent care courses of treatment compared to their estimated baseline delivery for the current financial year, based on activity from the first 4 months of the financial year, as calculated by NHSE. Contractors who achieve this target will be eligible to receive an incentive payment of £50 per additional course of treatment. Where a contractor achieves 70% of this target, a partial incentive payment will be made. On 24th November 2025 NHS England updated the published urgent dental care incentive (UDCI) scheme guidance, allowing anyone who has not previously signed-up a second opportunity to do so, they also lifted

the payment cap once a provider reaches the 125% target, so they are eligible to receive a further £50 for each urgent course of treatment delivered above the 125% Total Activity Target. This will continue to reward them for enhanced delivery.

10. In Coventry and Warwickshire 96 offer letters were issued to providers. Currently, 47 providers have accepted the offer to participate in the scheme, of which 19 providers are located within Coventry. The ICB Communications Team are promoting the scheme through a series of short videos – focused on the types of ‘urgent dental care’ issues that people may experience, featuring local dentists from our system. These will be pushed through ICB internal and external channels and shared with system partners too for further amplification. Messaging will also tie back into the ‘choose the right service for your care’ messaging
11. **Intermediate Minor Oral Surgery (IMOS)** - The IMOS service is a specialist referral service in primary care providing complex dental extractions for patients who meet the clinical criteria. Following a successful procurement exercise a preferred provider has been identified for Coventry. The provider is currently mobilising services in preparation of the contract commencement date of 1st April 2026.
12. **Community Dental Support (CDS) Practice Programme** – A two-year contract extension has been issued to the current Coventry scheme provider. The aim of the scheme is to improve access to care for children particularly for those at high risk of dental disease by securing additional capacity in CDS Support Practices. These practices will provide certain aspects of Level 1 services for patients referred into CDS, who have been assessed as not requiring a high degree of specialist treatment.
13. **Commissioning of Additional Units of Dental Activity (UDAs)** - Priority investment areas were identified by considering access rates, deprivation indicated by number of LSOAs of IMD 1/2 in each ward and caries experience prevalence. Coventry Central and East was the geographic area, across the whole of Coventry and Warwickshire ICB, that showed the lowest access, the highest prevalence of experience of caries and the highest levels of deprivation. Consequently, this was identified as priority area 1 for investment. Further investment is being undertaken to commission an additional 49k UDAs across all 6 priority areas including Coventry, this additional investment aims to be commissioned from 1st April 2026.
14. **Other Local Dental Investment Schemes 2025/26**
 - Multidisciplinary Dental Golden Hello Schemes for the targeted recruitment and retention of therapists and nurses.
 - Primary Care Orthodontic Waiting List Initiative

- Funding 2025/26 Year End 110% UDA delivery
- Public Health Initiative - Oral Cancer Pathway Pilot
- Time-Limited Additional Non-Recurrent Activity (Feb/March 2026)

- 15. Oral Health Improvement** – This work has been commissioned by the Local Authority and is complimentary in improving Oral Health and reducing Oral Health inequalities:
- Training of all Coventry Health Visitor Teams (1-8 and FNP) and distribution of OH resources to wards with the highest prevalence of dental decay
 - Training of staff in EYs settings. E-learning accessible to all. Bespoke support targeted to areas with highest need
 - Training of care home staff (cascade model via Oral Care Champions) and provision of resources e.g. denture labelling kits. All care homes in scope. Prioritisation undertaken with support of e.g. IPC colleagues. E-learning available to all.
 - Training of those that support the homeless (inc handbook developed to help staff help service users manage access to free NHS dental care where appropriate)
 - Training of staff in Family Hubs.
 - Training of school nurses.
 - Training of midwives.
 - Roll out of Supervised Toothbrushing Programme to targeted areas with highest levels of OH need and deprivation

NHS Dentistry Contract: Quality and Payment Reform

- 16.** On 16th December 2025, the government published its response to the NHS dentistry quality and payment reforms consultation. The package of reforms consulted on are designed to:
- secure delivery of the government's commitment to provide additional access to urgent dental appointments and ensure a safety net is in place to allow any patient with an unscheduled care need to get rapid support on the NHS
 - introduce new clinical and payment pathways to improve care for patients with unmanaged progressive disease (complex care needs)
 - incentivise more evidence-based interventions including through greater use of dental professional skill mix
 - improve the quality of care which is delivered through better supporting learning and development activities
 - help dental professionals to feel part of the NHS

17. The proposed changes are intended to deliver benefits for both patients and the profession and represent a move away from some of the features of the current unit of dental activity (UDA) payment model, which dental teams have indicated is a barrier to delivering NHS care. The government is aiming to introduce the proposals from April 2026 onwards and the specific timing for the delivery of each proposal will be communicated to the sector in due course.
18. It is hoped these national changes to the NHS dental contract (which are hoped to be in place for April 2026, following legislative change) will reduce some of the barriers dental practitioners feel exist to providing NHS dental care. These changes may contribute to retention of the workforce, improved oral health and reduced oral health inequalities.

Conclusion

19. Although dental provision in C&W performance is second best nationally, we are aware that there is further work to do to address and reduce inequalities in access.
20. There is a need for further national dental contract reform to maintain and improve the current level of NHS dental provision.
21. In the meantime, there is a need to encourage the profession to stay working within the NHS by supporting the dental workforce and practice by exploring other opportunities to meet population need, with a particular to focus on reducing health inequalities.
22. The ICB will work with local providers with the support of the hosted Dental team and public health colleagues to develop a clear plan to support access and reduce inequalities.

Recommendations

The Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) are recommended to:

- Note the contents of the report.
- Identify any further recommendations