

*Scottish Borders Health & Social Care
Integrated Joint Board*



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NEEDS ASSESSMENT: ORAL HEALTH AND DENTAL SERVICES	
Purpose of Report:	To present the findings of the oral health needs assessment, setting out priorities for action and recommendations to inform a strategic plan for oral health
Recommendations:	The Health & Social Care Integration Joint Board is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ratify the report for publication and wider dissemination b) Include oral health in their strategic commissioning plan c) Agree to commission the Health Board/Public Health Directorate to develop a strategic plan for oral health and dental services
Personnel:	No direct implications at this stage
Carers:	Consultation/engagement with carers will be undertaken as recommendations from the report are taken forward to develop a strategic plan
Equalities:	EQIA will be carried out as part of the strategic plan development.
Financial:	No direct impacts as majority of dental funding received direct from SG
Legal:	N/A
Risk Implications:	The needs assessment highlights 10 priorities for action. Many of these have become more acute as a result of the pandemic, for example increased inequalities and disruption to oral health improvement activity are expected to have had a negative impact on oral health and increased service pressures have exacerbated issues around recruitment and retention and access to dental care. A new strategic plan is urgently required to implement the recommendations of the report and support effective remobilisation.

SBAR: NHS Borders Oral Health Needs Assessment

Author: Morag Muir, Locum Consultant in Dental Public Health, November 2021

SITUATION

An Oral Health Needs Assessment (OHNA) was undertaken to review oral health and dental services in the Borders. The resulting report identified ten priorities for action and included recommendations to inform a strategic plan for oral health.

BACKGROUND

The South East and Tayside Dental Public Health Network were approached in early 2018 with a request to undertake an OHNA with a view to developing a new strategic plan for oral health.

The needs assessment drew on data gathered at local and national levels and included engagement with members of the public and dental professionals working across hospital, general and public dental services and oral health improvement team.

The report was completed in early 2020, however emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed progress towards the next steps, including development of the strategic plan.

ASSESSMENT

The OHNA provides a benchmark against which impacts of the pandemic on oral health and dental services in the Borders can be assessed. As services remobilise, intelligence from the report will be of value in informing the recovery efforts.

The ten priorities for action identified in the report have been reviewed and remain equally important, if not more so, as we emerge from the pandemic. While there are as yet limited data to assess the specific impacts of the pandemic on oral health, we are aware that inequalities, a key determinant of oral health, have widened and issues surrounding access to dental care have become more acute.

There is now an increased urgency to develop a strategic plan which, in addition to addressing the priorities identified in the needs assessment, will inform and support the remobilisation of oral health improvement and dental services to overcome the additional challenges arising from the pandemic.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It should be noted that the Strategic Planning Group supported the approach outlined at their meeting held on Wednesday 02 February 2022 and that, as a result, an associated draft direction has also been drafted for consideration for approval at the IJB.

- The IJB are asked to ratify the OHNA report for publication and wider dissemination
- The IJB are asked to include oral health in their strategic commissioning plan
- The IJB are asked to commission the Health Board/Public Health to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for oral health and dental services to take forward the recommendations of the OHNA