

Nine out of ten patients would recommend their dentist, Which? survey finds



A survey of 7,422 members of Which? the UK consumer champion, yielded positive results for dentistry. The survey asked Which? members if they had seen an NHS or private dentist over the past three years and asked them to rate their experience. The majority of respondents (57%) were private patients and most were happy with the quality of treatment; nine out of ten said they would recommend their dentist.

When asked to score the dentist they had seen most recently, the Which? members awarded independent dentists an average satisfaction rate of 86%. The average satisfaction rates of patients attending a branch of one of the corporate chains was over 60%, ranging from 75% for Portman to 67% for Together Dental and Clyde Munro.

The findings, reported in the February issue of the *Which?* magazine, are welcomed by the team at Ross Brooke Dental, specialist providers of business advisory, tax and accountancy services. RBD co-founder Linda Giles said the survey provided a more balanced perspective of UK dentistry services which had been beset by negative media coverage relating to NHS access issues. She added: 'Comparisons of NHS and private dentistry fail to take account of a whole host of differences between the two offerings. They cannot be compared on price alone. It can be overlooked that the majority of NHS patients pay for their treatment and cannot always get the care they want, such as cosmetic dental treatment.'

The *Which?* article, entitled '*Disappearing dentists*', highlights that a key driver for the survey was to get a picture of NHS dental provision.

Other issues arising from the article:

- The best score for value for money across all the dentists was three stars (out of five)
- Among private patients there were complaints about a lack of price transparency ahead of treatment
- Payment plans are a positive but *Which?* urges readers to read the T&Cs carefully
- Access to an NHS dentist is still a major issue but there appears to be acceptance that NHS dentistry is in decline (although the survey was carried out prior to the announcement that more money was to be allocated to NHS dentistry)
- Patients are encouraged by *Which?* to shop around on cost for private treatment.

Linda continued: 'This survey shows how much work needs to go into educating the public about the differential between private and NHS dental services. All in all, this survey yields positive results which should help dentists who have no choice but to leave the NHS and it confirms the view of Ross-Brooke Dental that dentists should be relying heavily on internal marketing to grow their practices – encouraging their happy loyal patients to spread the word.'

Charity appoints new Chairman



Mark Topley

Gold for Kids, a charity which helps transform the lives of children living in poverty by collecting and recycling unwanted crowns and bridges from dental practices, has appointed a new Chairman to its board.

Mark Topley, founder of the coaching and consultancy firm Purpose Driven Business, has over 25 years experience in the charity sector, 20 of them in dentistry.

A leading authority on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Mark said he was really pleased and honoured to have been chosen as Chairman, commenting: 'This charity is a brilliant concept, developed by its founders, dentists David Holmes and Leticia Casanova, who have impressively led it to where it is today.'

'Gold for Kids stands out due to its unique and effective approach. It partners with dental practices across the UK, collecting gold and precious metals from dental work and donating them to help children's charities. This not only supports sustainability but also turns everyday dental procedures into a chance to make a big difference in children's lives.'

'I'm looking forward to working with our amazing team, our committed supporters and the dental community to grow our influence and help. By working together, we can turn simple donations into a strong force for good, improving the lives of children all over the UK.'

For more information about the charity, to register interest or to request a collection, visit www.goldforkids.org.