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Treatment in urgent dental care: an ethnographic study

Submission date
20/03/2017

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
22/06/2017

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
09/04/2021

Condition category
Oral Health

[ ] Prospectively registered
[ ] Protocol
[ ] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[ ] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims:
Nearly one-in-three people choose to see a dentist only when they have a dental problem, such as toothache or abscess. Urgent dental treatment is focused on addressing pain and stabilising the problem; it is usually delivered within high-street dental practices or out-of-hours dental clinics. According to clinical guidelines, optimal treatment for urgent dental problems usually involves an intervention, such as extraction of a tooth. Prescription-only treatment plans, such as for painkillers or antibiotics, are rarely indicated. Published research provides some evidence (from interviews with clinicians) to explain why provision of urgent dental care often does not comply with clinical guidelines. The aim of this study is to identify what factors in dentist-patient interactions influence treatment during actual urgent dental appointments.

Who can participate?
Adults attending an urgent NHS dental appointment (and chaperone if used) and the clinician treating them.

What does the study involve?
All patients attend their appointments as they usually would. Each appointment is audio-recorded and the clinicians are asked to complete short questionnaires after each one. In-depth study of a selection of cases involves analysis of the recordings, observation notes and questionnaires, together with follow-up interviews with patients and clinicians.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
There are no direct benefits for patient or chaperone participants; clinicians will be reimbursed for the time taken delivering the study which is in excess of time spent normally treating patients. There are no direct risks involved with participating.

Where is the study run from?
Six General Dental Practices and two Unscheduled Dental Care clinics across Lancashire and West Yorkshire (UK)

When is study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
October 2015 to March 2018

Who is funding the study?
National Institute for Health Research (UK)

Who is the main contact?
Ms Wendy Thompson
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Contact information

Type(s)
Public

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Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number
32833

Study information

Scientific Title
Which factors in dentist-patient interactions influence treatment in urgent dental care?

Acronym
TRUCE

Study objectives
The aim of this study is to assess which factors in dentist-patient interactions influence treatment in urgent dental care.

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
Bradford/Leeds REC, 09/02/2017, ref: 16/YH/0487

Study design
Observational; Design type: Qualitative

Primary study design
Observational

Study type(s)
Other

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Specialty: Oral and dental health, Primary sub-specialty: Oral and dental public health; UKCRC code/ Disease: Oral and Gastrointestinal/ Diseases of oral cavity, salivary glands and jaws

Interventions
Patient participants will be recruited when they present for urgent dental care appointments. Following initial consent (from the patient and also anyone else who they bring with them into the appointment), appointments will be observed and/or audiorecorded. Urgent NHS dental appointments usually take between 10 and 20 minutes. Patients may be contacted (up to three months after their appointment) for follow-up telephone interview which will last around 30 minutes.

Clinician participants (dentists and dental nurses) will be observed/audio-recorded during 16 dental appointment. At the end of each appointment, each clinician will complete a very short questionnaire (taking less than 30 seconds). Follow-up telephone interview with a selection of the clinicians will also take place up to three months after the appointments.

Intervention Type
Other

Primary outcome(s)
Identification of factors in the dentist:patient interaction which influence urgent dental treatment, through analysis of transcripts of urgent dental appointments; observation field notes, clinician questionnaires and Interviews with patients and clinicians.

Key secondary outcome(s))
No secondary outcome measures

Completion date
31/03/2018

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
Patient Participant Inclusion Criteria:
1. Aged over 18 years
2. Attending an urgent NHS dental appointment
3. Able and willing to provide valid consent to participate in the research

Chaperone Participant Inclusion Criteria
1. Aged over18 years
2. In attendance during an urgent NHS dental appointment
3. Able and willing to provide valid consent to participate in the research

Clinician Participant Inclusion Criteria:
1. Registered with the GDC
2. Professional indemnity is in place and covers any activity undertaken during the course of this research, including any harm to participants in the conduct of the research
3. Willing to provide valid consent to participate in the research

Participant type(s)
Patient

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Adult

Lower age limit
18 years

Sex
All

Key exclusion criteria
Patient Participant Exclusion Criteria:
1. Currently experiencing severe or debilitating pain or distress
2. Attending for routine dental treatment
3. Attending for private dental treatment
4. Accompanied during their appointment by a chaperone who is a minor (< 18 years)
5. Accompanied during their appointment by a chaperone who is not able and willing to provide valid consent to participate in the research.

Clinician Participant Exclusion Criteria:
1. Provides only private dental treatment to adult patients
2. Currently subject to any condition on their registration (including from the NHS England Area Team and the General Dental Council). Any registrant who subsequently becomes subject to any condition during the course of the research will agree to notify the CI in a timely fashion.

Date of first enrolment
30/05/2017

Date of final enrolment
31/08/2017

Locations

Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre
Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust
New Mill
Victoria Road
Bradford
United Kingdom
BD18 3LD

Sponsor information

Organisation
University of Leeds

ROR
https://ror.org/024mrxd33

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
National Institute for Health Research

Alternative Name(s)
National Institute for Health Research, NIHR Research, NIHRresearch, NIHR - National Institute for Health Research, NIHR (The National Institute for Health and Care Research), NIHR

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
National government

Location
United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are/will be available upon request from Research Data Leeds.

IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article		04/09/2020	09/04/2021	Yes	No
HRA research summary			28/06/2023	No	No
Participant information sheet	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes