

Waiting times for new patient referrals to the special care consultant clinic within a UK Dental Hospital: A three-year retrospective re-audit

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Aim and Objectives: To measure the waiting times of new patient referrals (NPR) to University Dental Hospital Wales, special care dentistry department between November 2017 and October 2018 in accordance with the Welsh Government's 26 and 36-week standards for assessment and treatment waiting times. To determine the proportion of appropriate referrals, staff compliance with BDA Case Mix Scoring and proforma completion. Additionally, to compare assessment and treatment waiting times to Audit Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 in assessing the effect of implemented changes to staff and service provision over a three-year period (2016-2018). To develop tailored recommendations to facilitate compliance with standards in providing efficient and effective SCD care that meets patients' individual needs.

Materials and Methods: Reviewed referral letters, day sheets, completed proformas and 157 patient files for data collection.

Results: In total, 32% of NPR had their first assessment within 26-weeks, whilst 33% had first treatment within 36-weeks. Government standards were not met. The majority (98%) of NPR were appropriate, 72% had a case mix score recorded and 61% had proformas completed.

Conclusion: Patients requiring SCD services often have multiple health conditions or disabilities. Therefore, access barriers, appointment failures or cancellations, resulted in increased waiting times. Changes to staff and service provision greatly impact SCD patient waiting times. Increasing clinic frequency and/or staffing number would reduce waiting times. Further work force planning and refinement of shared care and referral pathways is necessary to achieve the agreed standards and maximise the service provided.

Biography

William Timmis is a 5th year dental student, predicted with a 1st class honours from Cardiff University, due to graduate in June 2021. He has presented his research at two national conferences, a European Summit and an International Congress. As an undergraduate, He had been selected for various awards, most notably for his finalist shortlisting for the Tooth Wise: Future of Dentistry Award. William shows a fervent interest in novel dental technologies that facilitate more tailored and holistic treatment to overcome the inherent challenges in providing effective care that meets patients' individual needs.