

Appendix 3

NHS Dental Services data

NHS Digital (now part of NHS England) publishes an annual report that brings together data on NHS dental activity in England for a 12-month period. This report summarises information about NHS dental activity broken down to dental practice level (including clinical treatments and dental workforce) and information on the number of patients seen by an NHS dentist.

Dental activity is measured in two ways: Courses of Treatment (CoT) delivered and Units of Dental Activity (UDA). A CoT is defined as a patient examination, an assessment of their oral health and the planning of any treatment to be provided because of the examination and assessment as well as the provision of the planned treatment to that patient. CoT are banded according to the most complex treatment in the course, ranging from Band 1, which consists of a check-up and simple treatment e.g. examination, x-rays and prevention advice, to Band 3, which includes complex treatments e.g. crowns, dentures and bridges etc. There can be significant differences between CoT within the same band. For example, a CoT with several large fillings would have the same treatment band as one with a single small filling.

UDA are weighted CoT and are used in the NHS dental contract system. Each course of treatment includes a number of UDAs. The number of UDAs per course of treatment is indicative of the complexity of the treatment delivered.

Dental practices are assigned to a local authority based the physical location of the practice (not where the patients seen by each practice are resident).