

Response - OOH dentistry:

Your response ID is ANON-QWFQ-DRDP-9. Please have this ID available if you need to contact us about your response. Submitted 30th August 2019.

Do you agree with the proposal for six centres for out of hours dental services across the West Midlands to cover weekends and bank holidays?

No

Whilst 6 new centres across the West Midlands have been proposed, it is not obvious in the consultation document as to why those sites have been selected. Whilst we recognise that Worcestershire residents will gain an OOH site in Redditch, the county will lose two OOH centres in Kidderminster and Evesham, both of which are town centre sites with easy access and are well used.

Do you agree with the proposal to provide three weekday evening centres across the West Midlands from which patients can receive telephone advice and urgent dental treatment if needed?

Yes

Do you think the changes proposed would improve the services in your area?

No

Currently the OOH service is provided at weekends and Bank Holidays from town centre sites in Evesham, Kidderminster and Worcester.

Whilst we recognise that Worcestershire residents will gain an OOH site in Redditch, Worcestershire will lose two OOH sites in Kidderminster and Evesham, both of which are town centre sites and are well used. There will be a reduced access to OOH services for residents in the Kidderminster and Evesham areas.

Do you feel that there are any particular groups of patients who would be disadvantaged by the changes that are proposed?

Whilst there will be a benefit to residents of Redditch, people in Kidderminster and Evesham will experience reduced access to services and longer travelling times.

In particular we are concerned that the following groups will be disadvantaged:

Vulnerable patients who find it difficult to engage with services such as homeless people, people with severe mental health issues, and people with substance misuse issues.

Transient populations such as seasonal fruit pickers and travellers, particularly in the Evesham area.

Patients in areas of deprivation who would find the extra costs of travel difficult, and may not have access to a car. Whilst mention is made of aligning services to public transport there is no mention of any assessment made of the actual availability of public transport especially on Sundays and Bank Holidays. From some locations there is limited public transport access in Worcestershire, in particular at the weekend.

If you have views that are not covered in the previous questions, or would like to add anything, please do so here:

It is not clear from the consultation document whether the interconnectedness of community dental services has been considered from a patient viewpoint and whether, by removing OOH from Kidderminster and Evesham, it might increase demand for other services in those areas e.g. in hour emergency access services at those locations.

We understand that the dental centres in Kidderminster and Evesham have been recently refurbished. Is any consideration given to the totality of dental services provided at the Kidderminster and Evesham sites and whether reducing OOH services might affect the long term viability of those sites? This is a particular consideration given that we are aware that NHSE are currently undertaking consultation on special care dentistry which may result in service change.