



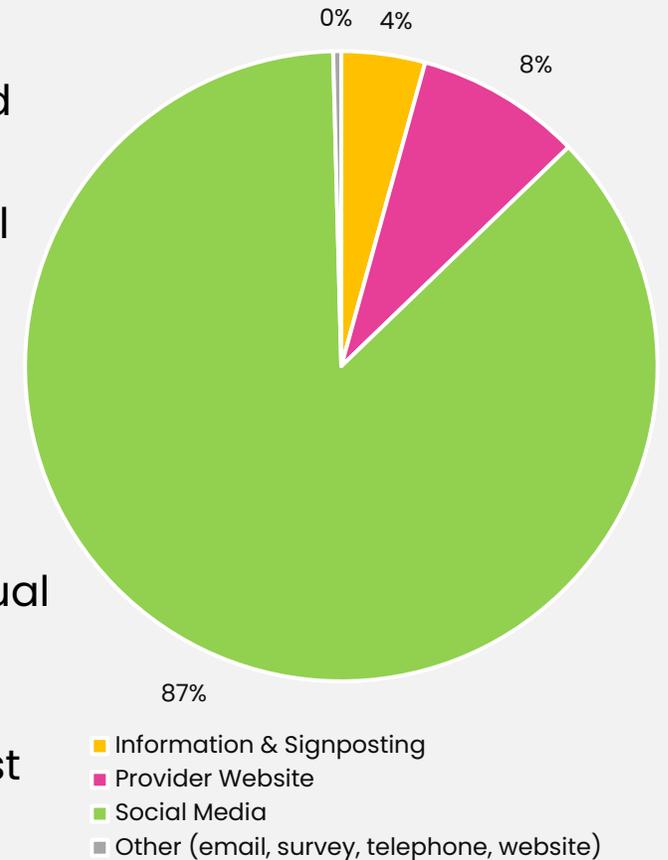
**Dentistry in Tower Hamlets – January
2021 to January 2023**

healthwatch
Tower Hamlets

Our data

- Stored in Community Insights System (CIS) – used by all Healthwatch organisations in North East London.
- Service user reviews are collected from social media, service provider websites, NHS Choices, Google Reviews etc., as well as from our outreach and engagement activities.
- Issues relating to different service aspects are identified, and positive, neutral and negative sentiments are applied to each issue.
- Issues are categorised into pre-determined themes. There are 32 different themes in total.
- Overall, there were 6333 issues identified from 1353 reviews. (Multiple issues and sentiments can be identified per review.)
- When analysing the overall feedback for dental care and comparing individual dental services, we have taken into consideration all themes and issues identified from the feedback
- However, in terms of themes, we have analysed the ones that had the highest number of comments relating to them. These were *Advice/Information, Booking, Cost, Hygiene, Quality, Staff Attitude, Support, Timing, User Involvement, and Waiting List.*

Source of Feedback



Key Findings

Overall, the feedback regarding dental care in Tower Hamlets is positive.

User Involvement, Hygiene, Quality, and **Staff Attitude** had the highest proportion of **positive** comments relating to them.

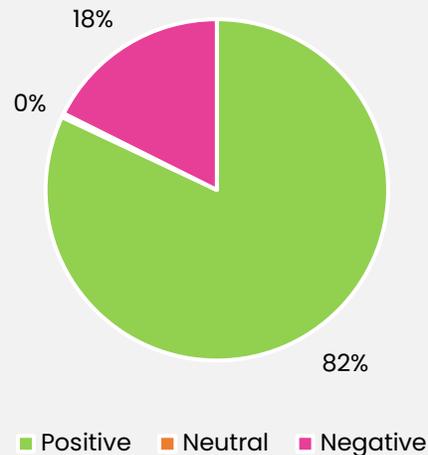
Cost, Waiting List, and **Booking** had the highest proportion of **negative** comments. It seems that people are:

- Experiencing issues with accessing NHS dental care – many people commented on having contacted dentists around Tower Hamlets and having been told that practices are not currently accepting NHS patients.
- Struggling to access dental care due to not being able to afford private care.
- Having to wait a long time for appointments.

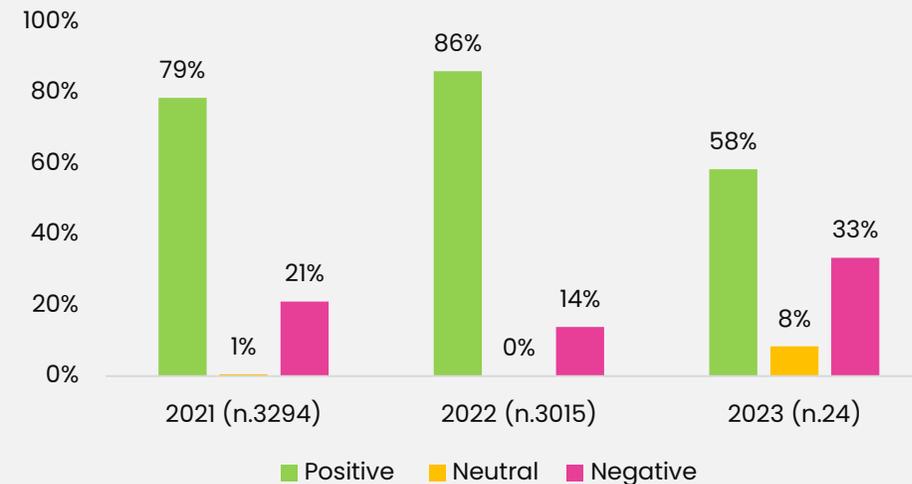
Sentiments around Dental care in Tower Hamlets

- Out of all the issues identified from the feedback received between January 2021 and January 2023, majority of the feedback (82%) was positive. The total number of issues identified each year has been included in the Proportion of Sentiments per Year- graph.
- Compared year on year, there was a decline in the proportion of negative feedback in 2022 and an increase in the proportion of positive feedback. For 2023, there is too little data available to make a comparison.

Proportion of Sentiments Jan 21 to Jan 23

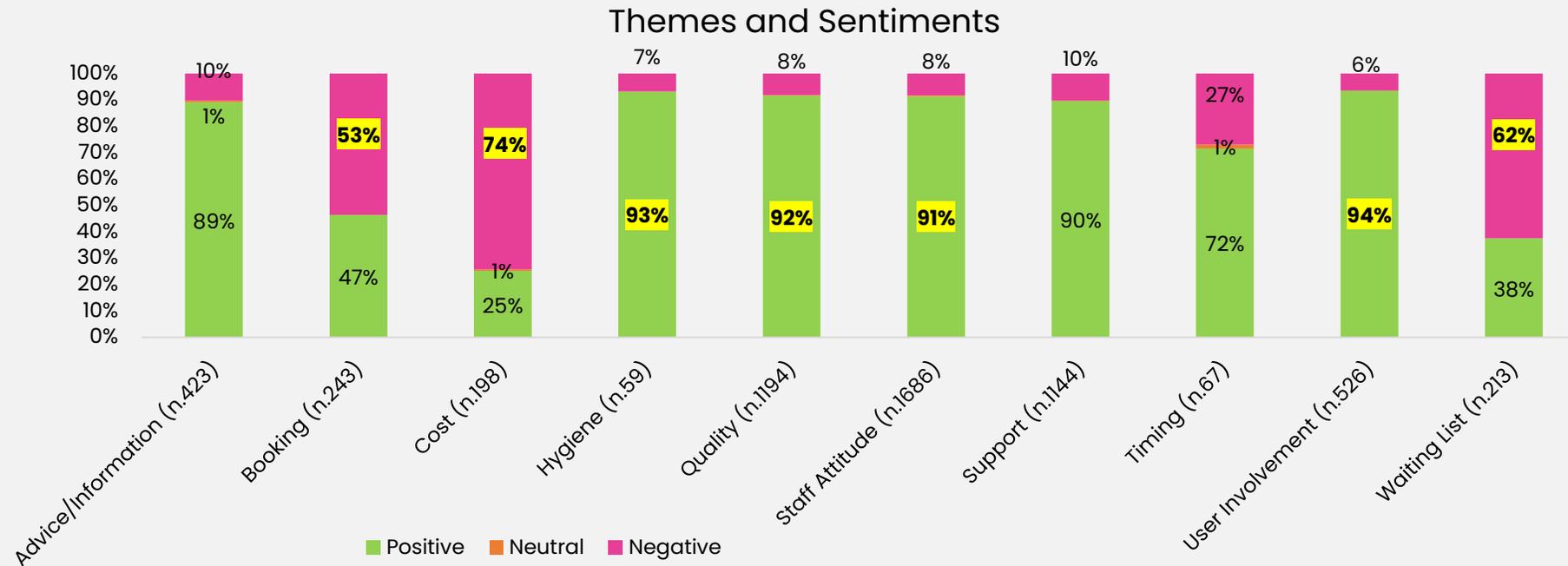


Proportion of Sentiments per Year



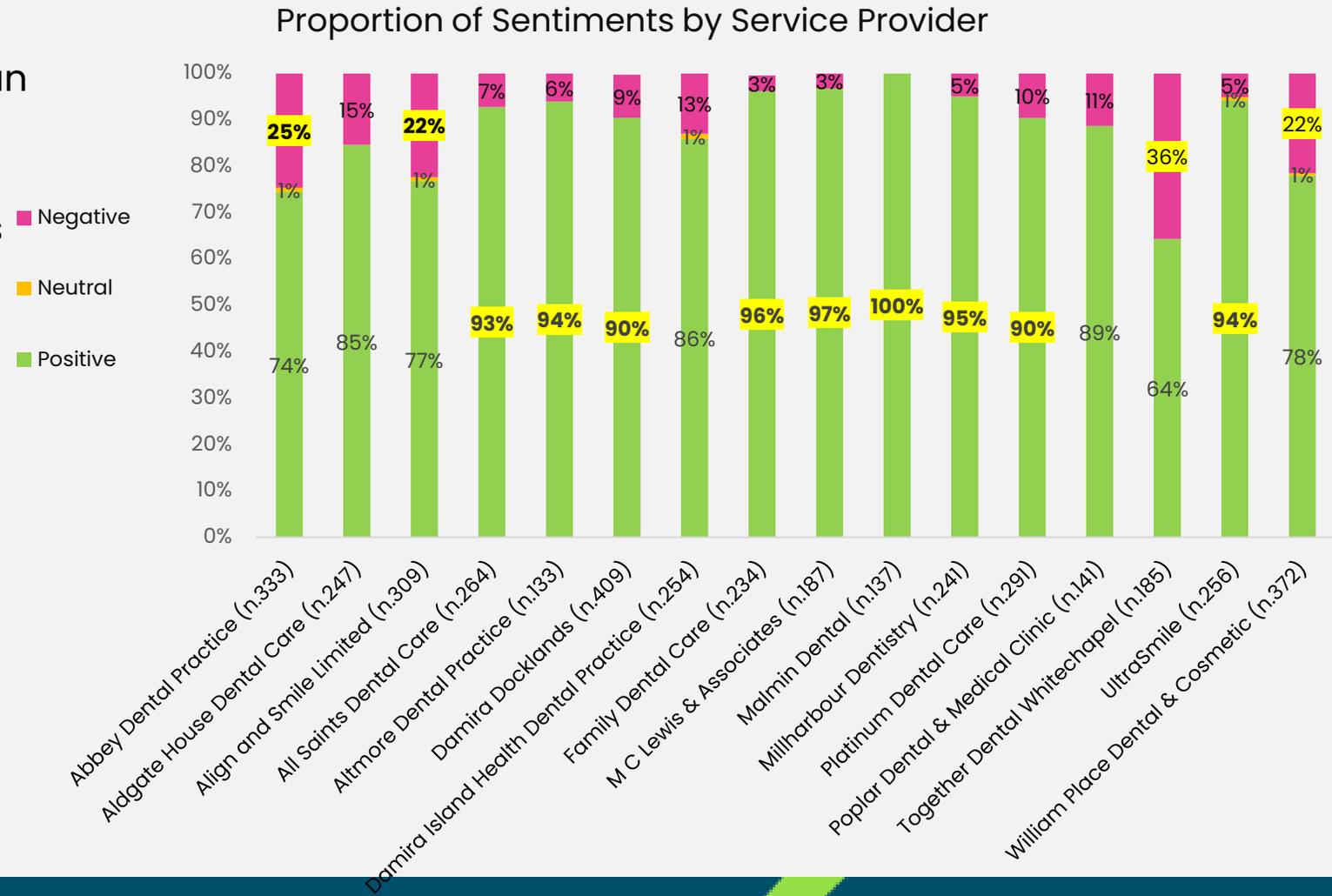
Breakdown of Key Themes

- *Staff Attitude* (n.1686) and *Quality* (n.1194) had the highest number of comments relating to them, and *Hygiene* (n.59) and *Timing* (n.67) the lowest number. The total number of comments relating to each theme has been included in the graph.
- *User Involvement* (94%), *Hygiene* (93%), *Quality* (92%) and *Staff Attitude* (91%) had the highest proportion of positive comments.
- *Cost* (74%), *Waiting List* (62%), and *Booking* (53%) had the highest proportion of negative comments.



Sentiment by Primary Care Networks (PCNs)

- When comparing the services that had received the most comments (more than 100), majority had 90% or higher proportion of positive comments.
- Out of these services, Damira Docklands (n.409) and William Place Dental & Cosmetic (n.372) had the highest number of reviews and Altmore Dental Practice (n.133) and Malmin Dental (n.137) had the lowest. The total number of comments for each of the services is included in the graph.
- Together Dental Whitechapel, Abbey Dental Practice, Align and Smile Limited, and William Place Dental & Cosmetics had the lowest proportion of positive comments.



Sentiment by Primary Care Networks (PCNs)

- The highest proportions of the negative comments related to the following themes:
 - Abbey Dental Practice: *Staff Attitude (18%), Support (17%), and Quality (15%)*.
 - Align and Smile Limited: *Staff Attitude (17%), Cost (13%), and Support (13%)*.
 - Together Dental White Chapel: *Waiting List (20%), Booking (15%), and Cancellations/Service Charge (11%)*.
 - William Place Dental & Cosmetics: *Cost (19%), Staff Attitude (16%), and Support (15%)*.

Positive Feedback

Below comments relate to the themes that had the highest proportions of positive feedback: *User Involvement, Hygiene, Quality, and Staff Attitude.*

User Involvement

“The staff in this Dental practice are amazing. Very friendly and helpful. I feel at ease every time I go which is needed as I've had a phobia of dentist for many years. Shamira who is my dentist is outstanding. She's been extremely patient and came in my "dental journey" with me. She really did cater for my particular needs. She has gone out of her way to help me with procedures but also my inner fear. She definitely goes on a journey with you. Plus super friendly!” (Service user at Family Dental Care)

“Excellent service overall — clear and transparent pricing and high quality service. Couldn't recommend Aidin more, I haven't been to the dentist in a while but he showed great professionalism and patient manner and went out of his way to make sure that I felt comfortable during the procedure.” (Service user at Damira Island Health Dental Practice)

Hygiene

“Great experience at All Saints Dental Care, definitely deserves 5/5! Very clean waiting area and surgery, the receptionist was really kind and helpful. I had a treatment with Dr Ajay Joshi, great specialist, explained everything I need to know prior my treatment. Thanks to all kind people working there, I will recommend to my friends and family!” (Service user at All Saints Dental Care)

“I have been visiting Platinum Dental for over 2 years now. I have been treated with great care, especially as I'm very fearful of visiting the dentist, the staff have always put you at ease and ensure the best well-being for you. My hygienist is super when it comes to working on my dental issues, she is really friendly and I'm at ease with her. The overall experience with Platinum Dental has been great so far, they are very flexible with scheduling appointments, always provide regular reminders for appointments, they are very cautious around Covid and cleanliness is spot on in my opinion, very safe to visit.” (Service user at Platinum Dental Care)

Positive Feedback

Quality

“Lovely, friendly and efficient practice. Time is always taken to explain the best way of looking after your teeth at home. The emphasis is always patient-focused, which is reassuring. I've been going there for over 20 years and wouldn't consider changing!!” (Service user at Millharbour Dentistry)

“This is a lovely and friendly practice-- my children have received excellent treatment. The staff really care and go the extra mile to make sure you receive good care. We love Dr Rohini and the reception staff!! Great service in dental hygiene too.” (Service user at Altmore Dental Practice)

Staff Attitude

“I have been with Abbey Dental for the past year and my dentist Mona is one of the most nicest dentist I have ever met. She made me feel calm and she instantly knew what was wrong and referred me to the team that I required. There needs to be more dentists like her and she deserves a 5 star 😊!” (Service user at Abbey Dental Practice)

“Just wanted to say a Big Thank you to Dr Oana and nurse, a very kind and genuinely caring dentist with attention to patient request whist managing to obtain professional results to high standard of care. My gratitude is also extended to nurse Joanna, whose patience and professionalism help in buffering the occasional anxiety of a dental appointment. Both Dr Oana and nurse Joanna make a fantastic team at Damira Docklands where I always return with pleasure for the care, kindness, attention, patience and high standards (of cleanliness and care).” (Service user at Damira Docklands)

Negative Feedback

Below comments relate to the themes that had the highest proportions of negative feedback: Cost, Waiting List, and Booking.

Cost

“Dentist claims to be NHS but once you register as an NHS patient, they won't actually let you book an appointment, they claim that even the waiting list is closed, and the only option is to pay a hefty private fee. Always pushing private services, aesthetics and teeth whitening. They refused an NHS appointment for a basic check up for my 4 year old. Dreadful service and clearly very financially driven. Today I received an email telling me that I would be de-registered unless I booked a (private) hygienist appointment, but they still won't allow me a check up. Awful.” (Service user at William Place Dental & Cosmetic)

“Chose between staying in pain or paying large sums. I was referred for an NHS tooth extraction. When I first called they said they did not have the referral. I called my dentist to ensure it was sent; it was. I called back 5 minutes later and they actually looked and had the referral. They said I couldn't book it in though, and that I would be called in the next week to book an appointment with the actual extraction at least a month from now; but if I wanted to do it privately I could get it done in two days. I am in extreme pain and the options they've presented to me are waiting a month or paying a large amount. I am really unimpressed with the timelines and how expensive it is to get proper care.” (Service user at Align and Smile Limited)

Waiting List

“Such a let down with appointments. Booked a critical appointment in 5 months only to be told half way through that it had to be cancelled due to no NHS Dentist available. Was told I have to call back after 3 months! Infuriating to say the least!” (Service user at Together Dental Whitechapel)

“Deeply unimpressed. Had a temporary emergency filling here at the end of July 22 and now the Dentist who did it has suddenly and permanently 'left the country', they seem to only have locums, and no availability to do the follow up permanent filling (other than on a Wednesday which I can't do) until November! Might have been a decent practice in the past, but if they think this is any way to run a customer focused business, think again. Will go elsewhere in future. (Service user at Poplar Dental & Medical Clinic)

Negative Feedback

Booking

"I work in England. I have no dentist here. I have very bad tooth ache for 3rd day already. I could not sleep, I could not eat, I could not exist normally. I tried to find some NHS dentist because I have not enough money for private dentist. I have contacted many dentist but no one from them taking new patients through the NHS."

"I can't find an NHS dentist anywhere in Tower Hamlets . My son is in severe pain, he just started an apprenticeship making £90/week, there's no way he could afford to pay privately. It's really unacceptable- we tried 25 dental practices; they all claim to be NHS and they all have appointments available this week- but only for private patients. We also tried going through 111 for dental triage and he was denied any help, despite being in severe pain."

"[...] I am really struggling to find an NHS dentist in the area. My wisdom teeth are really causing me gyp and I am not sure what to do about it. I rang 7 dentists this morning and they all said they are not taking new patients."