

## Overview of London's Dental Hub Pilot – based on an actual patient experience (feedback via Ipsos MORI)

**Why a Hub?** Before the pilot, patients calling NHS 111 with urgent dental problems were assessed and signposted to local providers. During evenings, weekends and Bank Holidays, 3 services provided dental nurse triage and booked urgent treatment slots if appropriate – with NHS 111 adding little value. A Dental Hub operating throughout the OOH period meant that these patients could be directed away from NHS 111 via Interactive Voice Response (IVR) messaging and could reach one of these 3 providers more quickly. As well as providing a better patient experience, this pilot has improved NHS 111 capacity and therefore overall Urgent and Emergency Care system resilience.

**Who took part?** The 3 existing dental triage providers operated the Hub with a rota of non-NHS 111 call handling staff and dental nurses. The Hub was accessed via NHS 111, provided patients selected the appropriate IVR option, which meant that all 4 NHS 111 providers in London benefited from this pilot.

**What changed in NHS 111?** No operational change. Use of IVR had a positive impact on NHS 111 capacity. The opening hours of the dental triage providers were extended, with one covering the overnight period. NHS England also increased the number of urgent treatment slots available to these providers.

**What's next?** A Dental Hub will be part of the new functionally integrated urgent care service. As now, the Hub will be fronted by IVR messaging and call handlers; however, the call handlers will be part of NHS 111, with an abbreviated NHS Pathways assessment and ITK referral to a new pan-London dental triage service.

### **An actual patient experience:**

