



***Access to Dental Services for
disabled people in Bury***

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Executive Summary

Questionnaire for the dental practices in Bury

- There were 15 out of 29 responses (52%) to the questionnaire for the dental practices.
- 87% of the dental practices are currently able to accept disabled patients.
- All the respondents stated they have wheelchair access to their dental surgery.
- 33% of the dental practices have an induction loop in their surgery.
- 47% respondents stated that they have a disabled car parking space for disabled visitors.
- 67% of the respondents stated that they have a fully accessible surgery.

Patient survey

- 22 patients/service users returned the survey to Healthwatch Bury.
- 68% of the respondents have a disability.
- The highest age range represented is 50-64 years (50%)
- 95% of the respondents have visited a dental clinic in last 6 months.
- 64% of the patients who responded to the survey felt that the staff members are aware of their disability and their individual needs.
- When asked from the patients how they felt treated by their dentist, 57% of the respondents stated 'excellent, 29% stated 'very good' and 14% stated 'good'.

Introduction

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 stated that Healthwatch would be established in April 2013. Healthwatch Bury is now an independent company with its own Board and membership.

The aim of Healthwatch is to give adults, children and young people (both individuals and communities) a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care are provided in the locality and to help people to get the best out of those services. We believe that the best way to do this is by designing local services around people's needs and experiences.

Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people and our expertise is grounded in their experience. We are the only body looking solely at people's experience across all health and social care services. We are uniquely placed as a network, with a local Healthwatch in every local authority area in England and clear links to Healthwatch England, the Health and Wellbeing Board and Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

As a watchdog with statutory powers, our role is to ensure that providers of local health and social care services and commissioners, put the experiences of people at the heart of their care.

Healthwatch Bury will provide the evidence base for decisions at all levels, helping to improve health and social care services. Healthwatch Bury will also facilitate the flow of information in the opposite direction, signposting patients and the public to information that will help them make choices about their care.

Healthwatch Bury guiding principles are:

- **People First** - We listen carefully to users of health and social care.
- **Partnership** - We work in partnership with other groups, seeking a stronger voice, together.
- **Inclusion** - We seek the views of those who are not often heard.
- **Critical Friendship** - We celebrate excellence; support service improvement and speak out when we have concerns.

Healthwatch Bury list of key priority areas are based on the Bury Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy's top five priorities (2015-18):

Priority 1: Ensuring a positive start to life for children, young people and families.

Priority 2: Ensuring comprehensive advice and support is available to enable people to adopt healthy lifestyles and enjoy positive wellbeing.

Priority 3: Helping to build strong communities, wellbeing and mental health.

Priority 4: Promoting independence of people living with long term conditions and their carers.

Priority 5: Supporting the creation of healthy, sustainable environments.

Background Information

There are currently 29 NHS funded dental practices in the Metropolitan Borough of Bury. ¹

The concerns around access to dental centres were first brought to the attention of Healthwatch Bury by Ron Shambley on behalf of Bury Coalition for Independent Living service users. Bury Coalition for Independent Living (BCIL) is a charitable, user led organisation. It is made up of the Bury Society for Blind and Partially Sighted People, Bury Involvement Group in Mental Health (BIG), Bury Independent Learning Development (Bury ILD) and Bury Deaf Society and individual service users. BCIL's goal is to help people live independent lives. ²

The concerns were around the access to dental practices and the attitude of some dentists towards disabled people. When Healthwatch Bury asked people to share their experiences about dentistry in Bury, through social media, more comments were made that gave us a reason to look into this issue further.

Healthwatch's role is to gather people's experiences and make them known to the service providers and commissioners of the services. Therefore, it is our duty to collate further evidence and notify relevant people when the organisation becomes aware of a potential concern.

A meeting with representatives from Healthwatch Bury, Bury Coalition for Independent Living and Bury Society for the Blind and Partially Sighted was held in February 2015 to agree the best methodology for the project.

Healthwatch Bury presented a table that reflected the availability of the disabled facilities for all the dental practices in Bury. The information was taken from NHS Choices website on 22nd January 2015. The table highlighted that there are still many dental practices that don't have disabled facilities and the issue is very concerning. Please see the Appendix 1 for further information.



Engagement Methodology

Healthwatch Bury (HW Bury) used a variety of methods to collect information from the community regarding access to dental services for disabled people living in Bury.

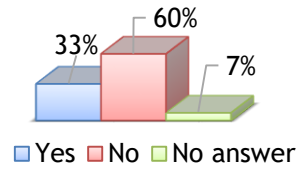
- **Social media** - HW Bury encouraged members of the public to give feedback about their experiences regarding dentistry provision in Bury via Twitter, the website and email.
- **Questionnaire for the dental practices in Bury** - HW Bury distributed the questionnaire to all 29 dental practices in Bury to identify how accessible general dental practitioners, working in the Bury area, think that their services are and to identify the barriers they face in providing care for disabled people. 52% (15 practices) returned the survey to the Healthwatch Bury office.
- **Patient Survey** - Healthwatch Bury sent out the dental patient survey to a range of community organisations in Bury. These organisations were:
 - Bury Coalition for Independent Living
 - Bury People First
 - Communic8te
 - Bury Society for the Blind and Partially Sighted People
 - BIG in Mental Health



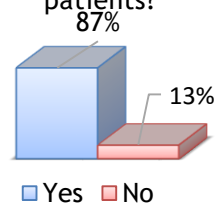
The patient survey was also sent out electronically to Healthwatch Bury members and key local stakeholders (e.g. Bury Clinical Commissioning Group, Bury Third Sector Development Agency, Pennine Acute Hospitals Trust, Pennine Care Foundation Trust) for further distribution. 22 people returned the survey by post and email.

Questionnaire for the dental practices in Bury - Key Findings

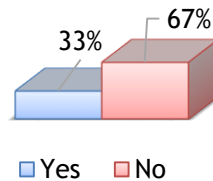
1. Does your dental surgery currently accept NHS patients?



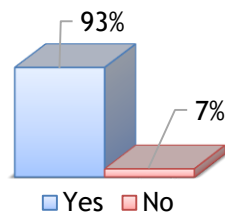
2. Is your surgery able to accept disabled patients?



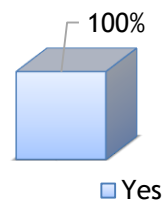
3. Do you provide domiciliary care?



6. If required, are you able to provide a treatment room on the ground floor?

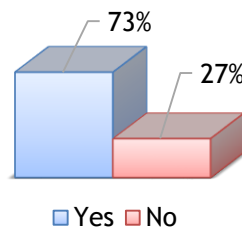


7. Do you have wheelchair access to the surgery?

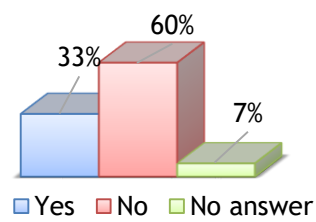


All respondents stated that their surgery has got wheelchair access, although two use the rear door of the building.

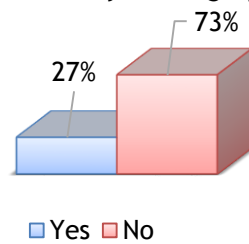
8. Do you have an accessible patients' toilet?



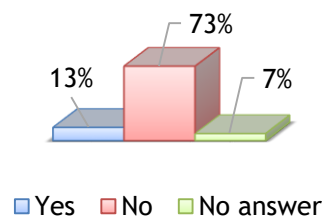
9. Do you have an induction loop available for the patients in your surgery?



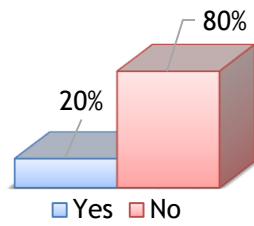
10. Do you provide a signing service for the patients in your surgery?



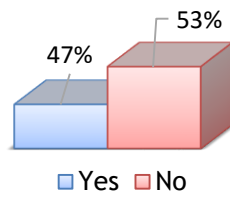
11. Do you provide a Braille translation service?



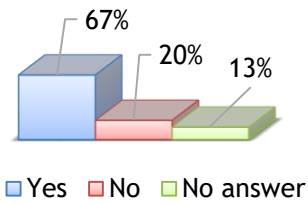
12. Do you provide RNID typetalk?



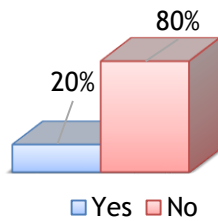
13. Do you have disabled parking spaces available for the patients?



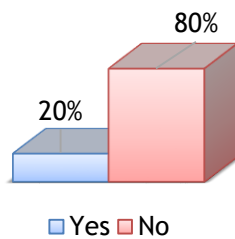
14. Please assess if you have a fully accessible surgery according to previous questions?



15. Do you have large print leaflets available in your surgery?



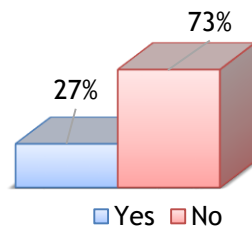
16. Do you provide large print appointment cards?



17. What would make it easier to provide fully accessible dental care?

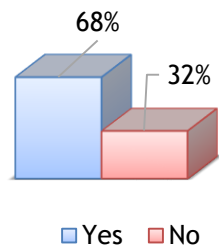
- Surgery grants
- Funding
- Better entrance for wheelchairs, unable to negotiate the ramp
- Larger toilet for wheelchair users
- Improvements to items brought up in the questionnaire
- Impossible to provide fully accessible dental care from the premises we work from
- Large print

18. Would you be interested in attending awareness raising training for staff members at the surgery?

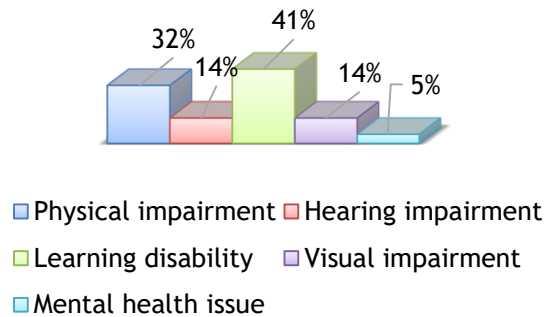


Patient Survey - Key Findings

1. Are you a person with a disability?

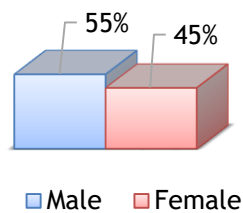


2. Please indicate what type of condition you have?

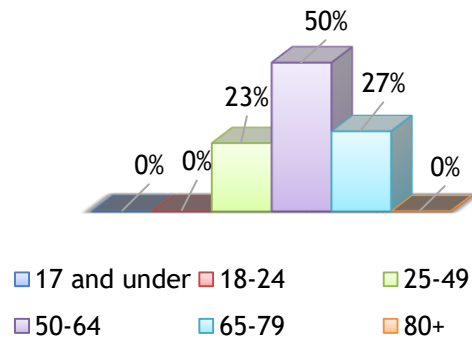


Please note that some patients stated that they have more than one condition.

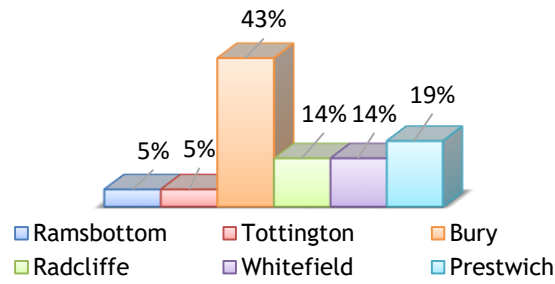
3. What is your gender?



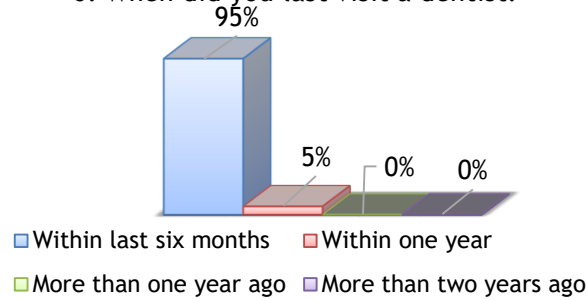
4. What is your age range?



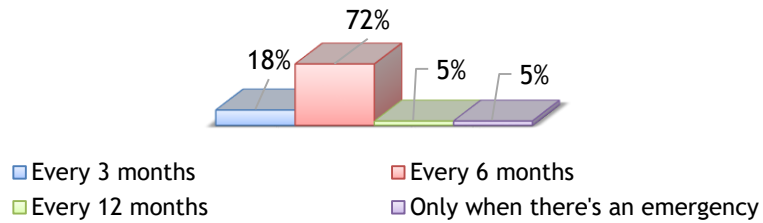
5. Please indicate in which area of Bury you live?



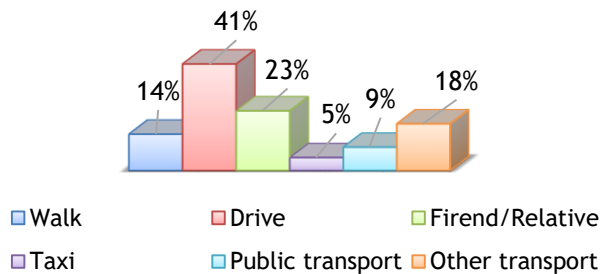
6. When did you last visit a dentist?



7. How often do you go for dental check-ups?

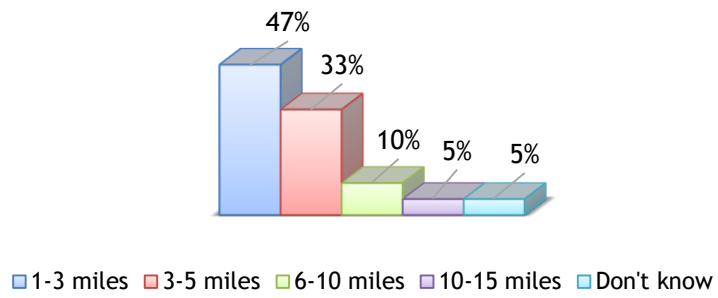


8. How do you usually travel to your dental practice?

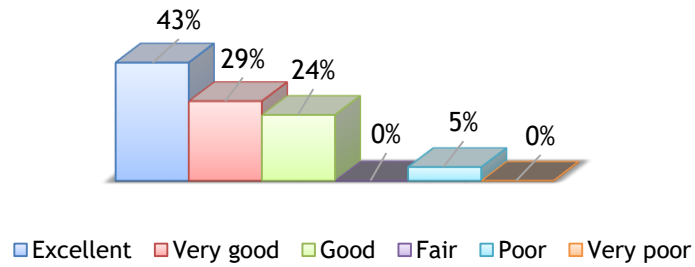


Please note that few patients indicated that they use more than one form of transport. Other transport included

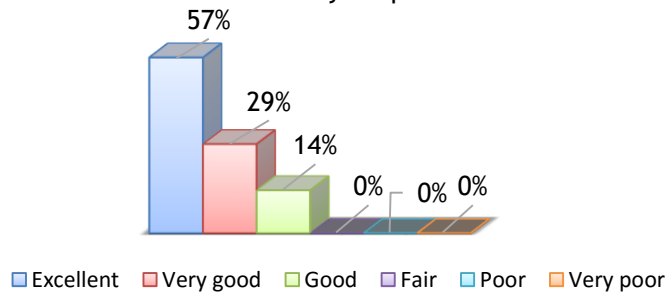
9. How far do you travel to your dentist?



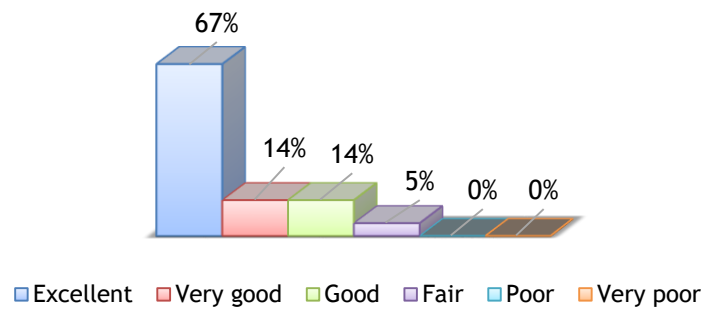
10. How do you rate the way you are treated by receptionists at your dental practice?



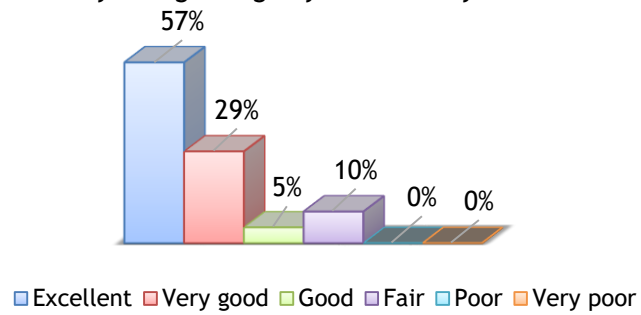
11. How do you rate the way you are treated by the dentist at your practice?



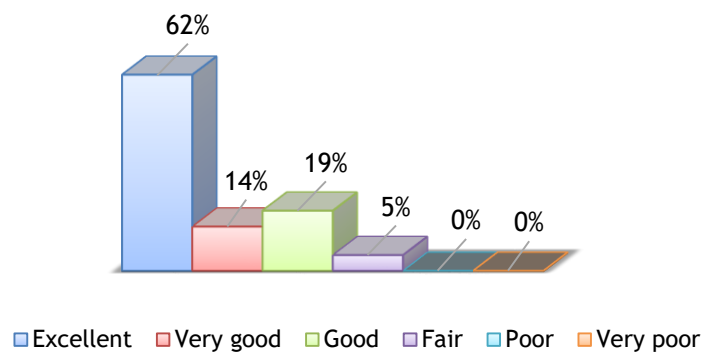
12. Please rate how well the dentist put you at ease during your examination?



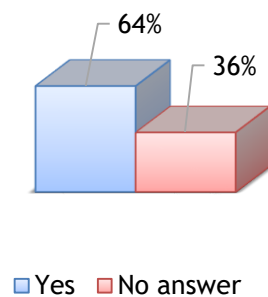
13. Please rate how well the dentist communicates with you regarding any treatment you need?



14. Please rate the dentist's care and concern for you?



15. If you are a person with a disability, do you feel that staff members are aware of your disability and your individual needs?



16. We are interested in any other comments that you may have. Please write them here.

Is there anything particularly good about your dental care?

- Very friendly, relaxing. 🗣️
- The communication, showing an interest in me and what I am up to and have been doing for the last 6 months. 🗣️
- How the staff are with me. 🗣️
- Attitude of dentist and all staff. 🗣️
- Dentist gives me special toothpaste. 🗣️
- I have confidence in my dentist and find him very caring and professional. He makes me feel comfortable whilst I am having treatment and always gives me thorough, very understandable explanation of the treatment that needs to be carried out and why. 🗣️
- Dentist is very kind and understanding. Reception staff are helpful. I was given an emergency appointment early. 🗣️
- Friendly, welcoming and do a great job. 🗣️
- Great dentist, very funny man, get on well with him. 🗣️
- Tells it as it is (wonderful). 🗣️
- The practice I visit is for private patients only. When I first came to Whitefield the dentist took on NHS patients also. However, as I've been with this dentist for 29 years I stayed with him as I was comfortable with him. However the fees are now very expensive and as I have recently retired I would like to go to an NHS dentist but don't know of any that are 'good' dentists and have availability. 🗣️
- They do not overcharge or do unnecessary treatment. 🗣️
- Quite pleasant dentists at the practice. 🗣️
- Always been with them. When management changed hand they took me off the list. After a year, they admitted it was their fault and took me back on. 🗣️
- Friendly, caring staff and dentist. 🗣️
- Dentist stops and waits so that I can swallow. 🗣️

Is there anything that could be improved?

- As parking is limited, my mum has to take me. If there was better parking, I could drive there myself. 🗣️
- A fee structure determined on whether you are working or not. 🗣️
- Frustrating that it feels like always having products from a certain brand recommended. Feels like they have a deal with Oral B. 🗣️
- Better awareness of opening hours. 🗣️

Any other comments?

- Access is poor, especially for wheelchair users. I would benefit from handrails especially in bad weather. 🗣️
- The dentist and staff can see I am disabled and treat me very well. 🗣️
- All disabilities shown to be considered not just a few. 🗣️

Conclusion

The majority of dental practices who replied to the survey, stated that they are currently able to accept disabled patients and all the respondents stated that they have wheelchair access to the surgery. More than half the respondents did not have disabled car parking spaces available for their patients.



About two thirds of the surgeries stated they do not provide a signing service, Braille translation service, RNID Type Talk and do not provide patients with large print leaflets. Only one third of the surgeries stated that they have an induction loop available. Two thirds of the respondents stated that they have a fully accessible surgery for their patients.

The majority of respondents to the patient survey had visited their dentist in the last six months and about two thirds of the respondents visit their dentist every 3 - 6 months. 68% of those who responded had some form of disability. Nearly half the patients only have to travel 1-3 miles to their dentist, the other half have to travel more than 3 miles to their dental surgery.



The majority of the patients who completed the survey were very happy with the way they are treated by the receptionist and the dentist at their practice and feel the dentist puts them at ease during their examination. Two thirds of the respondents felt that staff members at their dental practice are aware of their disability and their individual needs.

Recommendations

- Ensure that all the dental practices in Bury have an induction loop available for the patients in their surgeries.
- Provide patients with large print information leaflets in the dental surgeries, if relevant.
- Arrange disability awareness raising training for the customer facing staff in the dental practices.
- Provide car parking spaces for disabled patients.
- Ensure that a text message, email facility or letter reminder is available for the patients with a hearing impairment.
- Ensure that patients are notified well in advance regarding any changes to their dental service.
- Ensure that any reasonable adjustments are made to make surgeries more accessible for people with disabilities.

References

1. NHS CHOICES [Online] Available from: <http://www.nhs.uk/> [Accessed 22nd January 2015]
2. BURY COALITION FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING [Online] Available from: <http://www.burycil.org.uk/> [Accessed 17th September 2015]

| | Dental Practice | Disabled Parking | Wheelchair access | Disabled WC | Signing service | Induction loop | RNID Type Talk | Braille translation service | Accepting NHS patients (22/01/15) |
|-----|---|------------------|-------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | Parkhouse Dental Practice | No? | Yes | ? | ? | Yes | ? | ? | Yes |
| 2. | Bell Lane Dental Practice | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | ? | ? | No |
| 3. | Spring Lane Dental Practice Ltd | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | ? | ? | No |
| 4. | Smile Transformation & Cosmetic Services Ltd. (Mr. S. Nulty) - Ramsbottom | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| 5. | Smile Transformation & Cosmetic Services Lt. (Mr. S. Nulty) - Tottington | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | ? | ? | No |
| 6. | St. Mary's Place Dental Practice | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | ? | ? | No |
| 7. | Synergy Dental Clinic Bury Ltd. | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No |
| 8. | Dental Access Centre - Moorgate PCC | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | N/A |
| 9. | Neil Larah's Dental Surgery | No | Yes | No | No | Yes | ? | ? | No |
| 10. | A V Jacobs & S Lazarus Dental Surgery (406 Dental) | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| 11. | Mr A Saleem - 311 Walmersley Road | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| 12. | Cohens Dental Surgery | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No |
| 13. | Mr S Patel Dental Surgery - 112 Walmersley Rd | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| 14. | Mr M Poltawski Dental Surgery - 400 Brandlesholme Rd. | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | ? | ? | No |
| 15. | Mr DM Vallance Dental Practice - 55 Bury Old Rd. | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | ? | ? | No |
| 16. | Michael Haffner & Associates | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | ? | ? | No |
| 17. | D P Lustman's Dental Surgery | No | Yes | No | No | Yes | ? | ? | No |
| 18. | Mr R J Dorrington - 225 Bury New Rd. | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| 19. | Mile Lane Dental Practice | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| 20. | Mr N Mohammad - 112 Bury Old Rd. | No | No | Yes | No | No | ? | ? | Yes |
| 21. | Mrs JM Mason - 37 Knowsley Street | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| 22. | Unsworth Smile Clinic 57 Parr Lane | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| 23. | St Andrews Dental Care | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | ? | ? | No |
| 24. | Whitefield orthodontic Clinic | No | No | No | No | No | No | Yes | No |
| 25. | Mr GJ Paysden - 3 Deansgate, Radcliffe | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | ? | ? | No |
| 26. | Dr P V McCrory's Dental Surgery | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes | ? | ? | Yes |
| 27. | Bolton Street Dental Practice - 64 Bolton Street, Ramsbottom | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes | No | No | No |
| 28. | Carisbrook Dental Surgery | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| 29. | Dental Practice - 83 Bolton Street, Ramsbottom | No | Yes | No | No | Yes | ? | ? | No |

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