



Suffolk and North East Essex

Access to NHS Dentistry in Suffolk (excluding Waveney)

For patients that are not currently able to access a dentist it is recommended the 'Find a dentist NHS' website is used. This lists the NHS practices closest to the entered postcode/town. NHS Dental practices are required to update this at least quarterly each year. It is worthwhile looking at this website regularly. [Find a dentist - NHS](#)

Urgent and Unscheduled Dental Care

People experiencing dental pain that needs urgent intervention should contact 111 (online or by telephone). The Urgent Care Dental Service offers appointments seven days a week, including evenings, at dental practices across Suffolk and North East Essex. These appointments are for both adults and children who fall into one of two groups:

- those assessed as requiring dental care within 24 hours or as soon as possible, including those in pain and those who have infections or excessive bleeding from their gums or cheeks
- those assessed as requiring care within seven days, unless the condition worsens, including those who need fillings, have loose crowns or bridges, or those who have broken a tooth by biting on something

During these appointments, the immediate problem will be treated and patients will be given advice on how to care for their oral health. Patients may be treated by a combination of dental practice staff including dentists, dental therapists, dental hygienists and dental nurses. Some patients may also be referred to another practice for any ongoing oral health needs following the initial treatment.

Advice to give to patients who may need this service

Patients can access these appointments by contacting NHS111 or by telephoning one of the practices offering these appointments directly.

The Dental Prioritisation and Stabilisation Service (DPASS)

The Dental Priority Access and Stabilisation Service (DPASS) was a pilot running for 18 months to provide additional access to dental services for the most vulnerable and in need populations in Suffolk and North East Essex. This service has now been extended to 31 March 2026. The priority groups eligible for appointments under this scheme are:

- People who are homeless.
- Transient populations including immigrants.
- People who have a learning disability and/or are Autistic.
- Children in care.
- Care leavers.
- Urgent and emergency care patients.
- Those awaiting any NHS procedure that requires Oral Stabilisation.



Suffolk and North East Essex

- Residents of Care Homes and Nursing Homes (in-practice care, not domiciliary visits).
- High dental risk patients.
- People living with dementia.
- Sex workers.

There are currently 18 practices across Suffolk and North East Essex offering these appointments and appointments can be booked either through 111 or by contacting the practice directly. Eligible people booking appointments will need to state they require a DPASS appointment when telephoning so that the reception team are aware.

Up to date information on practices offering the service can be found at this link: [Dental Priority Access and Stabilisation Service - NHS Suffolk and North East Essex ICB](#) (it is necessary to register to access this information as it is held within the Professionals area of the SNEE ICB website).

Whilst the ICB is not currently actively promoting this service to the public, the concept is to support eligible people to access these appointments and hope that by sharing this with you, you will be able to raise awareness of the service with the people you support.

Special Dental Care

In Suffolk the Community Dental Service provides dental care for children and adults who cannot access a general dental practice due to their additional needs. This may, for example, be due to a physical or learning disability.

Referrals are generally made from a General Dental Practitioner. For the following groups only, referral may also come from any health or social care professional (e.g. GP, social worker, professional care home staff):

- Wheelchair user who cannot transfer without a hoist
- Patient with bariatric requirements (weight exceeds 25 stones)
- Patients who are housebound and require care at home
- Patients living in a secure mental health facility
- Patients under the care of homeless/drug & alcohol services
- Patients who are referred by a consultant psychiatrist due to significant mental health issues
- Patients with a diagnosis of autism
- Patients with a diagnosed learning disability
- Patients with a diagnosis of dementia

GDPs and health or social care professionals can make a referral via the website or contact the team directly:

<https://www.dentalhealthcareeoe.nhs.uk/referrals/>

For queries only, email to ccs.dhcs@nhs.net or call 0300 555 6667 (Option for Special Care Dental Service)