

4 August 2009

Postcode Lottery in Dentistry - Tolson

Commenting on the figures recently released showing an increase in people registered with NHS dentists in Scotland, Jim Tolson MSP for Dunfermline West said “The continuing progress made towards more people being registered with an NHS dentist is welcome. However, there are still signs, of embedded inequalities when it comes to the provision of dentistry in Scotland.

In Fife, the proportion of children aged three to five registered with a dentist has improved from 61.8% to 73% over period Jan-March 2007 to Oct-Dec 2008 but there is room for improvement yet.

NHS Fife along with Borders, Grampian, Highland, Orkney and Western Isles are all failing to meet the HEAT target of registering 80% of three to five year olds with an NHS dentist by 2010/11. The postcode lottery needs to be addressed. The Scottish Government must work harder to ensure that the increase in registration with NHS dentists benefits the whole country.”

Ends

Notes to Editor

The percentage of the Scottish population registered with an NHS dentist is 80.1% for children and 61.3% for adults as at 31st March 2009. This is an increase from 78.7% for children and 59.3% for adults as at 31st December 2008 and in line with recent trends.

HEAT targets are a core set of Ministerial objectives, targets and measures for the NHS. The Scottish government has set a target of 80% of 3-5 year olds registering with an NHS dentist by 2010/11.

The target update as of 31st March 2009 is as follows:

Ayrshire and Arran	87.8%
Borders	68.4%
Dumfries and Galloway	84.2%
Fife	75.6%
Forth Valley	83.4%
Grampian	69.0%
Greater Glasgow and Clyde	94.2%
Highland	76.9%
Lanarkshire	80.8%
Lothian	91.5%
Orkney	62.1%
Shetland	89.8%
Tayside	85.5%
Western Isles	51.4%