

There is a chronic shortage of NHS Dentists and people are suffering health issues as a result. The NFWI calls on the Government to increase investment in the training and retention of dentists and to review the current inadequate NHS contracts in order to ensure everyone can access an NHS dentist wherever they live.

Staveley WI, Cumbria-Westmorland Federation

Passed with 95.5% majority at the WI Annual Meeting on 5th June.

At the Royal Albert Hall on 5th June, WI members voted overwhelmingly, with a majority of 95% to signal their deep concern about the crisis in NHS dentistry, and to launch a campaign for change. More than 12 million people were unable to access NHS dental care in 2023 – more than 1 in 4 adults in England. And 90% of dental practices are no longer accepting new NHS adult patients. Tooth decay is the number one reason for children to be admitted to hospital.

That's why we are urging all members to get involved in our campaign to end this crisis.

We want to shine a spotlight on women's experiences of the lack of access to dentists, and to push the new government to make fixing NHS dentistry a priority.

How you can take action!

1. Write to your MP

With a new government on its way following the general election, and many newly elected MPs, now is a great time to reach out and share with them the WI's campaign and ask them to act on your behalf.

Find a template letter on MyWI at mywi.thewi.org.uk/dental-health-matters

Do make sure you personalise the letter and share your experiences to show how important it is to you.



2. Tell us your experiences about trying to access dental care

We want to know about your experiences trying to access dental care so that we can build a picture of the situation across the country.

We want to shine a spotlight on women's experiences in particular and their needs change throughout their lives. One example is during pregnancy - women are entitled to free dental care during pregnancy as this is a higher risk time for dental health – yet too many women can't access a dentist at all.

And women are much more likely to be carers – whether for children or grandchildren, or older relatives – and are often left struggling to get dental care their loved ones need.

To take part in our short survey visit [My WI](#).

3. Share your story as a dental professional

We know there are many WI members and supporters who have worked or are still working in NHS dentistry. Whether you're a dentist, dental nurse or hygienist or related role, we would love to hear from you. We would like to understand your experiences of providing care and about what needs to change to protect this vital service for the future.

To take part visit our short survey: mywi.thewi.org.uk/dental-health-matters

4. Craft a tooth fairy to give to decisionmakers

Join us in a creative and impactful campaign action to raise awareness about the current state of NHS dentistry!

We invite you to craft your very own tooth fairy and send it to your local MP alongside our template letter. This charming and symbolic gesture aims to highlight the importance of accessible NHS dental care and urge our representatives to take action.

Let's come together to make a difference and ensure that everyone has access to the dental services they need. Get crafting and let your tooth fairy be a messenger for change!

You can find the full instructions and materials that you'll need [on My WI](#) from Monday 15 July.

Find out more

To find out more, visit [MyWI](#) or contact the Public Affairs team on pa@nfwi.org.uk.