

## **STATEMENT NUMBER 1: Agenda Item 10 – Dental Access for Adults and Children in Bristol**

Statement for Health & Wellbeing Board 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

I have read the report on Dentistry in Bristol with interest, as this has been a source of great concern in Southmead which is the ward I represent. I have recently been involved in negotiations between BCC and the Dental practice there, which is trying to expand to take on more patients. The practice is based in what was originally a Council house, but later became a dental practice. Although the initial reaction from BCC was somewhat unhelpful, as there was a demand for payment of rent due from the previous Dentist who unfortunately died, I am hopeful that the Council has now agreed to work to resolve the situation.

However, limited access to dentists, which is so important particularly for children, has now led to local people in Southmead and Horfield organising donations of toothbrushes and toothpaste for local schools in an attempt to alleviate the lack of dental care in impoverished communities.

As noted in the report quoted in today's paperwork (Oral Health Needs Assessment, South West of England) only 59% of children can access a dentist in Bristol. Access to NHS dental care is extremely important for these communities, as has been exemplified by the reaction to the closure of the St Pauls BUPA dental clinic.

Southmead and St Pauls exemplify areas of low income, poor health outcomes, and deprivation, so I do hope that everything possible will be done to ensure that they will continue to have access to NHS care.

Brenda Massey

Councillor for Southmead Ward