

NHS dentist places up for grabs

Health bosses keep mouths shut over 7,000 new places in the city



Dentist Shahzad Naseem in the waiting area of Dental Works

TODAY *mk news* can reveal what health chiefs have been keen to keep quiet – there are thousands of NHS dentist places up for grabs in the city.

A new NHS dentist, Dental Works, based near the railway station, opened its doors two weeks ago and will take up to 7,000 NHS patients.

The news will be a pleasant surprise to many who have found it impossible to find an NHS dentist.

Five hundred people have already signed up to the new practice run by Shahzad Naseem.

Currently there are 4,000 patients on the city's NHS dentistry waiting list. Patients will be allocated at a rate of 500 a week. But that means the practice still

has 3,000 places available.

The Primary Care Trust (PCT) has also revealed a further 8,000 NHS dentist places will be available across the city within the next year.

PCT bosses admitted they have deliberately kept a lid on things.

PCT spokesman John Evans said: "We decided not to publicise Dental Works opening at this time. This is because there have been long queues and chaos in other towns where new NHS dentists have opened.

"This has often resulted in those with most need, and who have been waiting longest, not getting registered. We have tried to do this in a more orderly way. I think this is a fair way of doing it."

Mr Naseem, said: "We are a brand new practice and the

staff here is new and they are just getting used to everything and the last thing we want is so many hundreds of people queuing up in the dental clinic, nobody gets seen and there is chaos.

"People are not allowed to turn and register at the practice as it will be unfair for the people who have been waiting for months.

"The PCT will be sending out letters to all the patients after they have called the hotline number.

"There are 35 practices in MK and they are all full and only one or two practices are taking new NHS patients."

Health Minister Rosie Winterton announced yesterday funding for an extra 16,000 NHS dental patients for the city.

The news came after Milton Keynes South-West

MP Dr Phyllis Starkey asked the minister to keep a watching brief on the situation in Milton Keynes given the recent transfer of several dental practices from the NHS to private dental care and the continued housing growth.

The PCT say there will be other new dental practices while existing ones will be expanded to cater for 8,000 new patients.

Mr Evans added: "There are 38 dental surgeries in MK of which two thirds have NHS patients registered with them.

"We are delighted that we have been able to make so much progress recently. It has been a difficult time for people seeking NHS dental treatment but we have been working very hard and the future looks good."

saima.sabir@mk-news.co.uk

WE BELIEVE EVERYBODY DESERVES A SECOND CHANCE!

Credit Problems? No Problem.

For A FREE Car Finance

HEALTH CHECK



Call our Qualified Finance Manager Team

Call Roger, Matthew or Kate on

01908 360222

- Finding it hard to obtain credit? We've obtained credit for hundreds of people who have been refused elsewhere who have CCJs, mortgage arrears etc.
- Personal and considerate service.
- Once assessed we will call you back with a selection of vehicles to suit your budget with over 250 used cars in stock on one site.



Bilston Road, Bletchley, Milton Keynes
www.papays.co.uk/mk



■ Anyone wanting to register with a dentist should not go to the practice in person but

should use the hotline number and have their details taken. The number is 01908 360222