



# (Smile:Together)

Social Impact Report 2018

Creating healthier, happier communities

# 2018



## Progress Page 1

Smile Together managing director Paul Critchley on the considerable progress we've made together in 2018



## Treat Pages 6-7

Our continued commitment to high standards of care and clinical excellence has seen us over-deliver on NHS contracted hours again this year



## Prevent Pages 2-3

We've reached more people than ever in the most vulnerable parts of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly with oral health education and early intervention



## Investments Page 8

More practices, new equipment and smarter technology are helping us to deliver 'dentistry with social impact'



## Reach Pages 4-5

From opening up new practices through to seeing local fishermen and their families at harboursides, we've made dentistry more accessible



## Community Page 9

We've gone even further into our communities - extending our support for our charity of the year and other local initiatives



# Progress

**When we became Smile Together, we knew there were major challenges in oral health – we'd seen them up close and taken them personally for years.**

Big problems, less funding, what to do? Sitting around and waiting for more funds from a smaller public purse wasn't an option. Every day, here in Cornwall, around 60 decayed teeth get removed from local children under general anaesthetic. If those children are from deprived areas, they are twice as likely to be going through that trauma than those in other areas. In addition, 49% of adults in the UK don't have an NHS dentist.

That is fundamentally why we became an employee-owned social enterprise - so we could be free to have a go at tackling oral health inequalities and give people access to regular and high quality dental care.

2018 has been another transformational year for our team - new technology, new policies, new people and new facilities. Mixing all of that change with the significant demands placed on our services, it is credit to the dedication of our team and our partners that we've continued to make great strides.

Amongst all the demands and change, we have focussed our social impact on three clear priorities - Prevent, Reach and Treat. This year we have:

- **got more local children learning about oral health and saved the NHS more money than we've ever done**
- **made it possible for more local people to see a dentist than ever before**
- **invested more into our clinical environments**

I'd like to encourage you to appreciate the considerable progress we've made in 2018. To our team: you should be rightly proud of your achievements this year, reversing trends with your dedication and professionalism. To commissioners, politicians and businesses: we appreciate your support but need your continued engagement more than ever. We are sure that this report provides evidence that together we have the right formula to continue making sustained progress.

That is real impact. Together, we can continue delivering our vision of making Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly healthier and happier.

**Paul Critchley**  
Managing Director





# Prevent

**We aim to reduce tooth decay among the most vulnerable parts of our community by intervention and education**

We know that prevention is fundamental to our vision and this year we've invested more and achieved more than ever before. We've been able to do that by continuing to deliver our contract with Cornwall Council and significantly increasing the number of organisations to partner with us in supporting our Brighter Smiles campaign. 14 of them have generously funded us to see over 1,000 more children than we did last year.

The impact of this activity is significant in many different ways - from giving children greater confidence through to preventing large sums coming out of the NHS budget. The return on investment model here is proven by other great oral health campaigns across the UK.

Rather than going it alone, we've reached out to fellow campaigners in the North of England including Claire Stevens, NHS Consultant in Paediatric Dentistry, who popped in to see us this summer. Her insight and advice was much valued and will help us step up our campaign next year.

Our steering group, led by Chris Hines who knows a thing or two about campaigning from his Surfers Against Sewage days, are looking to lobby for greater understanding from politicians that this issue is entirely preventable.

Based on the clear return on investment figures we show here, we are expanding our Brighter Smiles team with the recruitment of an additional oral health specialist nurse. This enhanced resource, combined with increasing commitment from more local organisations, means we are in a strong position to improve the oral health of our local children even further.

**"Brighter Smiles has made such a positive difference in our school community."**

**Jenny Wood**  
Year 4 teacher  
Carclaze Community Primary School



## Reducing tooth decay among the most vulnerable parts of our community by intervention and education

Issue	Activities	Results
Tooth decay is the number one reason for admission to hospital amongst children	Brighter Smiles works in conjunction with Cornwall Council's Public Health team to bring education and intervention to targeted primary schools and children's centres	1,466 pupils receiving Cornwall Council funded support (toothbrushing clubs, fluoride varnishing and oral health education)
An average of 3 days of school is missed per pupil due to dental pain and treatment. Combined with the economic burden of parental absence from work, this becomes even more significant	Our additional campaign work funded in partnership between Smile Together and local organisations	11 more local organisations engaged and proactively supporting our campaign
Decay rates in children from deprived areas are twice those of children in other areas	We promote additional school age activities aimed at educating children and parents/carers regarding oral health	1,026 additional pupils have been treated and educated by our Brighter Smiles campaign
	Local and national activities and campaigns to support good oral health	Increased engagement in national campaigns such as World Oral Health Day and National Smile Month

### Our impact at a glance

**£109,080**

Spent on toothbrushing clubs, fluoride varnishing and oral health education\*

**£365,335**

Saved from the NHS budget from our investment in toothbrushing clubs, fluoride varnishing and oral health education\*

**149%**

Increase in number of pupils seen by our Brighter Smiles team

**1:13**

Prevention is better than cure ratio – for every single prevention engagement, we're providing dental treatment for 13 patients

\*Source: Public Health England  
Return on investment figures - toothbrushing clubs (£1=£3.06); fluoride varnishing (£1=£2.29); oral health education (£1=£4.89)



# Reach

**We aim to reduce health inequalities within our communities by bringing accessible dental treatment to those who need it most**

With the opening of two new Brighter Dental practices, taking our total to five, we are making dentistry much more accessible for local people. Recognising the potential impact of physical barriers such as public transport, car parking and disabled access, we've based our Brighter Dental practices in the very heart of local communities rather than more prominent high street positions. By providing our services in these locations and improving our existing facilities, we're enabling more local people to access regular dental care.

In fact hundreds of local people have taken advantage of our half price initial examinations and our 'Children Go Free' campaign, and now have a positive and lasting relationship with a local dental practice and the reassurance that brings to their family.

The net result of this is that 2018 has been a year of tremendous progress in playing our part in tackling a large NHS waiting list in the county. Next year, with the opening of our brand new, purpose-built dental centre at Harleigh Road in Bodmin, we'll further increase accessibility and capacity - a massive step forward for dentistry in Cornwall.

Reaching out to those who need us most is something that the Smile Together team is passionate about. It goes beyond contracted hours and into our private lives – there is no better illustration of this than our Smiles at Sea initiative which this year saw our volunteers give 340 hours of their time and travel over 2500 miles to care for the local fishing community across Cornwall and Brixham. Smiles at Sea was funded by the Seafarers Hospital Society and delivered by Smile Together in partnership with The Fishermen's Mission and Healthy Cornwall. 70% of those seen had not seen a dentist in the past 5 years.

**"A new lease of teeth - wonderful!"**

Newlyn Fisherman



## Reducing health inequalities within our communities by bringing accessible dental treatment to those who need it most

Issue	Activities	Results
49% of adults and 42% of children do not have an NHS dentist in England	Smile Together operates from community locations for its dental services and treatments and also reaches further into our communities enabling greater access to care	9,443 patients registered across Brighter Dental (NHS and private)
	Low price introduction for adults across Brighter Dental encouraging regular dental visits even if no NHS place is available	538 adult patients registered for regular private dental care with Brighter Dental
	Patient Plan offering across Brighter Dental encouraging regular dental visits and reducing cost barriers	Increased number of patients accessing plans, spreading the costs of dentistry
Just 15-20% of 2-year-olds see an NHS dentist in Cornwall	'Children Go Free' offer across Brighter Dental allowing children to be seen even if no NHS place is available	Almost 100 children seen for free across Brighter Dental
For some Cornish communities the demands of their work don't fit in with the opening hours of regular dentists	Smiles at Sea initiative to bring dentistry to fishing communities across Cornwall and Brixham	115 fishermen seen and 52 referred for further subsidised private dental treatment with Brighter Dental

### Our impact at a glance

**1,580**

More children regularly seeing a dentist in Cornwall through Brighter Dental

**6,556**

More patients seen by Brighter Dental this year

**115**

Members of the fishing community seen by our Smiles at Sea volunteers

**1:4**

Improved access to dental care ratio – for every Brighter Dental patient we see, 4 people remain on the NHS waiting list



# Treat

## We aim to ensure all patients receive high quality dentistry focussed on patient care and clinical excellence

True to our NHS roots, treating our patients with the highest standards of dental care is what we consistently strive for. Of course, we very often care for local people who are in extreme pain and discomfort through our West Country Dental Care service. In such challenging circumstances, we are very proud to hold a 97% satisfaction rating from the national NHS Friends & Family test.

Thanks to the professionalism and dedication of our clinical and professional support team, we have once again surpassed the number of patients we are contracted to see by NHS England. In fact, we treat over 50% more special care patients which remains a huge source of pride for us.

We are making a genuinely positive impact, not just improving oral health but also by boosting levels of self-confidence, particularly in younger patients through our specialist orthodontic team.

Our commitment to clinical excellence is evidenced by a major financial commitment to our practices and surgeries, through new and improved equipment and facilities as well as the development of a dedicated Training Academy for our employees to facilitate their Continuing Professional Development (CPD). This has seen our level of team training and development rise above the base level CPD requirement.

**"Easily the best experience I've had at a dentist and while having a wisdom tooth removed at that!"**

St Austell patient





## Ensuring all patients receive high quality dentistry focussed on patient care and clinical excellence

Issue	Activities	Results
An estimated 50% of people don't have access to regular dental care and there are almost 16,500 people on the NHS waiting list in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly	We maximise the number of appointments and treatments available across West Country Dental Care and Brighter Dental, including emergency appointments both daytime and out of hours	We treat over 40,000 patients per year, 9,524 patients seen in emergency appointments with 254 of those provided by Brighter Dental complementing the services of West Country Dental Care
Sugar makes up 14% of the daily calorie intake of 4- to 18-year-olds; the official recommendation is to limit sugar to no more than 5% of daily calorie intake	Our Brighter Smiles campaign includes toothbrushing clubs, fluoride varnishing and oral health education	2,492 pupils treated and educated this year
Cornwall's population of people with a long-term limiting illness or disability is more than twice the national average at just over 20%	Availability and quality of specialist dental care for those who need us most	1,688 special care patients seen (contracted by NHS England to see 1,076)
Limited capacity in terms of our facilities and people to meet the demands on our dental services	Significant investment in our locations to ensure high quality clinical environments, recruitment of new people, both clinical and professional support, and enhanced team training and development including a new Training Academy	Developing a brand new, purpose-built dental centre for our community. New clinical equipment such as OPG x-ray machines, hand pieces and autoclaves for sterilising, and regular repair and maintenance programme minimising patient cancellations due to equipment failure

### Our impact at a glance

**£379,611**

Investment made in our clinical environment

**97%**

Extremely likely/likely to recommend us  
- NHS Friends & Family Test

**57%**

More special care patients treated than we are contracted to see

**73,000**

Items of dental equipment decontaminated this year

# Investments

When we launched in 2016, one of the things our team felt passionately about was enhancing our clinical environments and treatment options for patients – to improve our dental services, exceed patient expectations and enable everyone to deliver above and beyond what we're commissioned and contracted to do. We are proud to have been able to invest over £1m, underpinning our mission of delivering 'dentistry with social impact'.

In the last twelve months we've provided additional Brighter Dental provision in Newquay and Bodmin, purchased new clinical equipment for our West Country Dental Care surgeries and completely refurbished four dental surgeries from Saltash to Penzance. We've maintained our branded fleet of vehicles yet expanded our daily service to support our clinical decontamination and courier requirements as well as our Brighter Smiles campaign.

We purchased the wonderful former grammar school on Harleigh Road in Bodmin and consulted with NHS England and our emergency and special care patient groups, gaining their overwhelming support for our plans for the building. We are now transforming it into a brand new, purpose-built dental centre for our community, specifically designed by our team for our patient groups, including those with complex health requirements. In line with our local sourcing policy, Cornwall-based family firm Brady Construction began work on the site in September 2018 and together we are aiming for completion Spring 2019.

We've made significant investment in new IT equipment this year and in building and developing our team, rolling out a brand new Training Academy to support their clinical compliance and personal and professional development. We invested in our first two apprentice dental nurses who have both accepted full-time clinical roles with us upon qualification. We're proud that in a challenging and evolving recruitment market, we continue to attract talented individuals to work with us.

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**39%**

Increase on surpluses  
reinvested

**30%**

Increase in employee numbers  
since becoming employee-owned

**70%**

Of our team are shareholders  
in Smile Together

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# Community

As an employee-owned social enterprise, and thanks to the passion and dedication of our team, we're able to reach further into our communities, making even more of a difference to those who need us most.

On both a professional and personal level, our team invest in what we do - from training as Dementia Friends and volunteering their own time to deliver Smiles at Sea, to actively fundraising for Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust (CAAT), our charity of the year. Our Community Chest sees our shareholding employees nominating local initiatives to benefit from our support, where they themselves contribute to the local community - anything from purchasing new equipment and marketing materials to revamping sports kit. Our shareholders also enjoy opportunities presented via our valued partners, from attending the annual CAAT summer ball and TEDx Truro to heading off in a 1970s #lovewhereyoulive campervan for a sunny weekend on Dartmoor!

Together we engage with key national initiatives from National Smile Month and World Oral Health Day to Social Enterprise UK Social Saturday and Employee Ownership Day, building awareness of our work in local communities. This has led to us working in partnership with other social enterprises and employee-owned organisations to mutual benefit - from cross-promotion of one another's opportunities to donating equipment to Computeraid when we upgraded our own IT equipment, to support those in the developing world.

We seek to build pride in Smile Together, achieving recognition in prestigious national and regional awards such as the UK Social Enterprise Awards, and proactively engaging with thousands of people through our social media channels.



Finalist Health & Social Care  
Social Enterprise, UK Social  
Enterprise Awards 2018

276,111

Audience reached  
from social media accounts

36,701

Visitors to  
Smile Together websites



**(Smile:Together)**



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