

Patient story – Western Cheshire

The patient was referred to Community Dental by her mental health team as they felt her GDP did not have a good understanding of autism.

The patient arrived at the initial assessment with her father for support, as she lives alone.

She has previously had treatment with her own GDP, with local anaesthetic. She is very anxious and uses a stress ball throughout assessments. She was assessed by the Dentist who created a treatment plan to be completed by our therapist.

On the day of the appointment, the patient arrived in the waiting room on time for her treatment but on entering the surgery she burst into tears. We sat her down and asked her what was wrong. She was in a terrible state and couldn't stop crying. She eventually confessed to us that she had self-harmed. She had a dirty cloth wrapped around her hand and explained she had used razor to harm herself.

A member of staff went out to get the first aid box and another staff member continued to talk to her, she opened up and explained that it wasn't the first time she had self-harmed. Her wound was cleaned and redressed, both the patient and staff felt the injury needed further attention.

We asked if she had anyone she could discuss how she was feeling with? Eventually she agreed to contact her Mental Health Support staff and they agreed to meet her at A&E.

The patient attended our clinic on that day with no intension of having dental treatment done, but needed someone and that someone were the two staff members who attended to her. She was a very fragile young woman who needed help and we were her port of call.

The outcome without her visit to our dental clinic could have turned out very differently. Instead, she had a positive outcome both with us, A&E and the support of her Mental Health Team.

The next day two bouquets of flowers were delivered to the Fountains for the two members of staff, from the patient's family.