# Woman in Dorset Extracts Tooth with Pliers Due to Inaccessible Dental Care



In May 2021, Tobye Spencer, a 57-year-old woman from Poole in Dorset, began seeking dental treatment for a painful tooth exacerbated by pancreatitis. Despite reaching out to over 100 NHS and private dental surgeries across the south coast of England, she was unable to secure an appointment due to full waiting lists. This led her to pull out the tooth herself with pliers in July 2023.

Tobye's dental issues stemmed from severe pancreatitis, diagnosed in 2018, which caused frequent vomiting and significant tooth decay. Her attempts to find a dentist included calling practices within a 40-mile radius of her home, but none were willing or able to take her on, citing full lists and the financial impracticality of accepting NHS patients over private ones. Financial constraints also prevented her from opting for private dental care, estimated to cost up to £800.

Currently, Ms. Spencer has just eight natural teeth remaining, along with a dental bridge of three fake teeth installed in Spain in 2005. Her condition has impacted not only her ability to eat certain foods but also her confidence and mental well-being. Despite improving some of her health issues, the absence of accessible dental care remains a significant concern for Ms. Spencer.

Having contacted the health ombudsman and her local MP with limited success, Tobye continues to advocate for a dental appointment to restore her teeth and confidence.