

Wales

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# Dental Digest

## Foreword

by Colette Bridgman, Chief Dental Officer, Wales

**Colleagues, welcome to the 12th edition of Dental Digest. It is the first edition I have the privilege of contributing to and I trust dental teams in Wales will find the topics of interest. It is just over three months since I took up the role of Chief Dental Officer for Wales and thank you all for the welcome I have received.**

The new 5 year programme for Government – “Taking Wales Forward” was published soon after I came to work in Wales; it confirmed that good health underpins the ambition. We know that having good oral health, being free from pain, being able to socialise and eat without discomfort or embarrassment is integral to good health.

Good oral health contributes to a child’s ability to attend school, to learn and play and it contributes to adult well-being, whatever age. For younger adults it allows them to parent and work well and therefore dentistry and good oral health is integral to ‘Taking Wales Forward’ vision.

In many introductory meetings I have encountered a positive recognition of the contribution oral health improvement and dental teams are making in Wales.

I am looking forward to building on the successful programmes initiated by my predecessor David Thomas, working with you to add value to what has already been achieved in Wales such as the impact of the Designed to Smile Programme. Yet, I acknowledge there are challenges and barriers we will need to collectively address to improve oral health and dental services.

Not everyone in Wales can access quality, timely and preventively focussed primary dental care. We know there is higher prevalence of poor oral health in more economically disadvantaged groups and yet the resources we have in dental services are taken up, proportionately more often, by the least disadvantaged. We need to be ambitious to ensure that as many children as possible are decay free by 5 years old and that all adults, particularly those experiencing poor oral health can access responsive, preventive and quality dental care and advice. How can we make this a reality in Wales?

I have been introduced to the prudent healthcare approach. It is based on four key principles – co-production; care for those with the greatest need first; do only what is needed; reduce



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inappropriate variation – and the related idea of only-do-what-only-you-can-do, which means that healthcare professionals should be working at the maximum of their clinical competency – in other words more skill mix is needed.

In my view these principles are being implemented in the prototype dental practices with good results. For a 'prudent dental health care' approach to become a reality for other teams in Wales requires that 'systems and processes' and contracting supports new ways of working. I would like to widen these opportunities, to share and implement learning from the prototypes, with other dental teams through contract reform.

I hope many of you will become involved in collaborative work to shape how that could be made to work for you in practice and be implemented to benefit patients and the public in Wales.

**The refresh of the National Oral Health Plan in 2017 will include a framework to begin this work. To be effective and adopted, any such change needs to be clinically led and owned by patients and dental teams. I will, therefore, end my first dental digest foreword by wishing you all Happy Christmas and a collaborative, productive and healthy New Year.**

## Fighting flu in dental practice

Flu arrives every winter and causes ill health and time off work. Every year a small number of people in Wales die from flu, while more are admitted to hospital. Front line health care professionals such as dental teams are more at risk of catching flu than the general public. Some dental patients are at an increased risk of complications and they include people with long-term conditions like diabetes, those aged 65 and over and pregnant women where flu can be dangerous to them and their baby.

We have a professional responsibility to reduce our chances of being ill and to reduce the risk of passing on flu to patients. Annual flu vaccination remains the single best way to protect against catching and spreading flu. Contact your health board to see if you can have a flu vaccination in the occupational health service.

Public Health Wales have published comprehensive guidance for dental teams on their web site:

[www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/88375](http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/88375)

Peidiwch anghofio  
eich brechiad fflw  
blynyddol

**CURWCH FFLW**  
**CYN IDDO GURO CHI!**  
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Don't forget to  
have your flu  
vaccine this year

**BEAT FLU**  
**BEFORE IT BEATS YOU!**  
 [beatflu.org](http://beatflu.org)

# New HIW website and the dental workbook

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales recently launched its new web site which has new features to enable dental teams to access information about practice inspections and

the Dental Workbook more easily:  
<http://hiw.org.uk/about/whatwedo/inspect/dental/?lang=en>

## HIW General Dental Practice Inspections Annual Report 2015-16

HIW have published their second annual report on their inspections of dental practices

<http://hiw.org.uk/reports/natthem/2016/?lang=en>

133 practices were visited throughout Wales and HIW found that patients were generally happy with the dental services they received.

The great majority of practices inspected were clean, tidy and well organised with staff clear and knowledgeable about their responsibilities ensuring that dental care and treatments were provided safely and in a timely, dignified and respectful manner.

There were, however, instances where information about costs and charges were not clearly visible to patients, some decontamination procedures that could be made more robust and practices where arrangements needed to be made to ensure

that radiographic equipment was fully compliant with regulatory requirements.

The report concluded that dental professionals were committed to their jobs and keen to provide a high standard of dental services.



## Private Direct Access Practices

Dentists who provide any private examination, prescription or care for patients attending private direct access practices are reminded of the need to be registered with HIW to provide dental private care.

The new Private Dentistry Regulations will come into force in Spring 2017 and will

require all private direct access practices to register with HIW. The Welsh Government, HIW and the GDC will liaise to communicate with DCPs who may be working in private direct access practices to ensure they are aware of the new Regulations when they come into force.

# Incident reporting

A recent Dental Deanery survey on extraction of the wrong tooth (WTE) raised a number of interesting points which have highlighted the importance of dental practices reporting incidents to their health board.

In particular, it emerged that WTE is not a “rare” event and about 30 per cent of respondents described personal processes or systems put in place to reduce the risk of WTE. The survey also noted that dental nurses have a valuable part to play in preventing WTE. They should feel empowered to “speak up”

if the wrong tooth is about to be extracted and this must be encouraged by dentists and team leaders.

Dentists should note that reporting an incident is not about apportioning blame. We would like dentists to report incidents such as WTE to health boards so that lessons can be learnt and to aid the sharing of best practice. Further, we wish to remind dental teams of the need to report any serious patient safety incidents to their health board.

## Informed Consent – The Montgomery Test

The law in relation to consent changed last year following the Supreme Court Judgement in the case of Montgomery v Lanarkshire Health Board.

Legally, clinicians (including dentists, dental hygienists and therapists) must now take reasonable care to ensure that patients are aware of any material risks involved in a proposed treatment and of reasonable alternatives. This case brings the law in relation to the disclosure of risks when obtaining consent to treatment in line with the guidance issued by regulatory bodies such as the GMC and GDC.

The GDC Standards for the Dental Team include information about consent which will help dental team members to comply with good practice:

[www.gdc-uk.org/Dentalprofessionals/Standards/Pages/home.aspx](http://www.gdc-uk.org/Dentalprofessionals/Standards/Pages/home.aspx)

It is important for GDC registrants to recognise patients as individuals and to be aware of each patient’s situation and medical history.

Find out what they may want to know or consider significant or important, as well as discussing any risks that you would consider to be relevant to the patient.

When explaining the benefits of the various treatment options, registrants should take care not to overstate or exaggerate the outcomes for a particular treatment. You must be able to substantiate any claims about benefits and avoid raising patients’ expectations of the results of particular treatments.



# Mouth Cancer e-learning

To coincide with Mouth Cancer Action Month in November, the Wales Deanery Postgraduate Medical and Dental Education, Cardiff University launched an all-Wales e-learning resource for dentists, doctors, pharmacists and other registered healthcare professionals which can be accessed here:

<https://learning.wales.nhs.uk/login/index.php>

A User Guide for you to undertake the e-learning can be accessed here:

[http://gpcpd.walesdeanery.org/images/mouth\\_cancer/NHS\\_WALES\\_Userguide\\_\\_mouth\\_cancer.pdf](http://gpcpd.walesdeanery.org/images/mouth_cancer/NHS_WALES_Userguide__mouth_cancer.pdf)



## Health concerns about energy drinks especially for young people

Maria Morgan, Senior Lecturer in Dental Public Health at Cardiff School of Dentistry recently published a paper which highlights that children are drinking sports drinks regularly, for social reasons and because they like the taste.

The paper also highlights the need for dental health professionals to be aware of the

popularity of sports drinks with children when giving oral health education or advice or designing oral health promotion initiatives:

[www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/view/367709-children-consuming-sports-drinks-unnecessarily](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/view/367709-children-consuming-sports-drinks-unnecessarily)

## Emergency drug kits

There have been several reports (following dental practice inspections) of dental practice emergency drug kits being out of date. In one case the midazolam was a year out of date!

Practice teams are reminded to check their emergency drug kit regularly to ensure the drugs are in date.

## Welsh Public Health Network E-bulletin

Dental teams will wish to see the September 2016 edition of the Welsh Public Health Network E-bulletin, published by Public Health Wales which has a specific focus on oral health:

[www.publichealthnetwork.cymru/en/get-involved/ebulletins](http://www.publichealthnetwork.cymru/en/get-involved/ebulletins)

# Word of Mouth digital magazine

The Oral Health Foundation is an independent charity dedicated to the promotion of good oral health. Their monthly digital magazine features a wide range of oral health issues and

campaigns such as “National Smile Month” and “Mouth Cancer Action Month”:  
[www.wordofmouthmagazine.org/](http://www.wordofmouthmagazine.org/)



## Regulations relating to the Tobacco Products Directive and standardised packaging of tobacco products (SPoT)

These regulations came into force on 20 May 2016. The main provisions of the Tobacco Products Directive (TPD) are: to prohibit cigarettes and roll-your-own tobacco with characterising flavours; to set minimum content size for unit packs; to update the health warnings – including general information and picture warnings on packages of tobacco. Combined (picture and text) health warnings must cover 65% of the front and back of cigarette and roll-your-own tobacco packages. This has been extended by our standardised packaging regulations; to ban certain promotional and misleading descriptors on packaging of

tobacco products such as “lite”, “natural” and “organic”; and to introduce EU-wide tracking and tracing to combat illicit trade of tobacco products.

For E-cigarettes, child resistant/tamper evident packaging is required for liquids and devices; devices must deliver a consistent dose of nicotine under normal conditions; tank and cartridge sizes must be no more than 2ml in volume and nicotine strengths of liquids must be no more than 20mg/ml; cross-border advertising is banned – this includes some print, TV and radio; and products cannot make health claims unless they are licensed as medicines.

# Computer hacking in practice

There have been several reported incidents of malware attacks known as “Ransomware” which access computer software systems by sending a rogue email. The email can appear to be official – e.g. an invoice – but once opened a ransom is sent to the practice demanding payment to rectify files that have become encrypted. This can also occur if memory sticks used outside of work are plugged into the practice computer.

Whilst attacks such as these may not constitute a breach of data protection, they can be very disruptive and worrying for the practice. Dental practices should ensure they have robust IT security and backup systems in place. All staff need to be vigilant, particularly

when opening emails. This should be discussed in team meetings and incorporated into the practice governance arrangements in an attempt to avoid any further attacks.



## Other News

### A welcome Facebook post – Eye theatre staff, Princess of Wales Hospital

The communications team at Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board were very pleased to receive feedback on Facebook recently from a lady who complemented all the staff at the Eye Theatre, Princess of Wales Hospital for treating her disabled daughter “like royalty” when she attended the hospital for dental treatment.

Staff at the Eye Theatre have made a significant contribution to the dental management of patients with a learning disability who require treatment under a general anaesthetic.

## Next Edition

**The next edition of the Digest will be issued in Summer 2017 and will include information on a wide variety of topics**

**which we hope will be of interest to dental teams in Wales.**



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