

# WELSH DENTAL COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER



**January 2025**



## Designed to Smile Annual Report 2023–2024

- 640 health visitors and students were provided with oral health education training.
- A further 832 professionals from childcare, health and social care received similar training from the Designed to Smile team.
- 642 (79%) of eligible nurseries and 531 (63%) of eligible schools provided a supervised toothbrushing programme in 2023/24.
- 4,668 nursery and school staff received training from the Designed to Smile team, to deliver their toothbrushing programme.
- 40,997 children received a fluoride varnish application at their school in 2023/24.

## Designed to Smile

Designed to Smile is the national child oral health improvement programme in Wales. It is underpinned by the scientific evidence of effective interventions to prevent childhood tooth decay, and the knowledge of where and to whom these interventions are most needed, provided by the Dental Epidemiology Programme for Wales.



Full report: <https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/designed-to-smile/information-for-professionals/monitoring-and-evaluating-the-designed-to-smile-programme/designed-to-smile-annual-report-2023-2024/>



## Public Health Wales (PHW)

PHW are the national public health organisation for Wales, existing to help all people in Wales live longer, healthier lives. With partners, PHW aim to increase healthy life expectancy, improve health and wellbeing, and reduce inequalities for everyone in Wales, now and for future generations.

PHW teams work to prevent disease, protect health, provide system leadership, specialist services and public health expertise. PHW are the primary source of public health information, research and innovation, to help everyone in Wales live healthier lives. Working together for a healthier Wales.

## Analysis of oral and pharyngeal cancer rates in Wales, November 2024

- The incidence of oropharyngeal cancer has increased between 2012 and 2021.
- Incidence of mouth cancer in men is more than twice that of women and peaks between 60 and 69 years of age.
- The tongue was the most common site for mouth cancers.
- The majority of people with mouth cancer live in deprived areas of Wales.
- Cancer of the tongue and oropharynx had the highest number of associated deaths compared to other areas of the mouth.

## PHW's Vision



By 2035, we will have achieved a healthier future for Wales. We are working towards a Wales where people live longer, healthier lives and where all people in Wales have fair and equal access to the things that lead to good health and well-being.

Full report: <https://phw.nhs.wales/files/dental-public-health/analysis-of-oral-and-pharyngeal-cancer-rates-in-wales-2024/>



## Using data to improve dental services

Workshops were carried out in 2024, facilitated by Public Health Wales, with key stakeholders to discuss the use of data to inform development of dental services.

Some of the key messages which emerged from those workshops are summarised below.



## Principles

- **Relevant:** Data must be relevant to those using the information
- **Granularity:** Increasing the precision of the data
- **Good enough:** data should only be robust enough to inform decisions
- **Available:** Utilise data which is already available
- **Trusted:** data needs to be relied upon as accurate
- **Transparent:** data should be available to all – to facilitate collective understanding

## Facilitating change

Data has the potential to facilitate change if appropriate indicators are fed back to the target population.

Information about the **lived experience** of those involved can be a powerful adjunct.

Developing a level of predictive forecasting can help to describe consequences of alternative paths.

## Communication

Central Repository: Bring data together for stakeholders to access.

Mapping and data visualisation can help to present complex data and relationships

Showing data over time enables us to establish trends (e.g. health improvements)

Understanding: It is important that stakeholders can understand the data indicators





## PREVENTING ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

In our last newsletter, we highlighted World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week.

We would like to revisit this important topic in this newsletter, with some advice on how you can help.



### How can I make a difference?

- Follow evidence-based guidance
- Antibiotics are an adjunct; not the treatment
- Do not give for inflammatory conditions
- Meaningful audit, self-evaluation and reflection
- Give appropriate messages to patients

**Use Penicillin V in preference to Amoxicillin**

## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IN DENTISTRY

In our last newsletter, we also introduced the new BDA Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

At our recent meeting, Lauren Harry gave us an overview of their work.

### Addressing inappropriate behaviour

The committee highlights the Active Bystander Concept, and encourages people to step in and address inappropriate behaviour. This might mean careless, unintentional behaviours; creepy behaviours (deliberate, discomforting); or criminal behaviours (harassment, discrimination).

### Gender pay gap

There remains a gender pay gap in dentistry with female dentists earning less than male dentists. Career breaks and part-time working due to caregiving exacerbate this. BDA aim to raise awareness and promote transparency in pay.

### New areas of focus

Neurodiversity  
Disability  
LGBTQ+  
Broader anti-discrimination initiatives, including racism and sexism, but also other forms of inequality.

If you have any queries or thoughts about the work of the WDC, please contact:

**WDC Chair: Adam Porter - [adam.porter2@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:adam.porter2@wales.nhs.uk)**

**WDC Vice Chair: Jonathan Carter - [chairgwentldc@gmail.com](mailto:chairgwentldc@gmail.com)**

**WDC Secretary: Rebecca Evans - [rebecca.evans034@gov.wales](mailto:rebecca.evans034@gov.wales)**