A HOSPITAL-BASED SURVEY OF ORAL HEALTH KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES OF PARENTS AND CARERS IN DERBYSHIRE

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Background Tooth decay is largely a preventable disease. It affects almost a quarter of 5-year-olds and was the most common reason for hospital admission for children aged 5–9 years in 2014–2015 in England. There is a huge financial burden of tooth decay on the NHS.

The aim of our survey was to ascertain the oral health knowledge and practices of parents and carers of children attending the Derbyshire Children’s Hospital.

Method Parents or carers of children attending our hospital were surveyed between August and October 2017 using an anonymised paper-based questionnaire. It was developed using the ‘Delivering Better Oral Health’ document, which is an evidence-based toolkit published by Public Health England. The questions assessed knowledge, oral hygiene regime and dietary habits. Oral health information leaflet was provided after completion of the questionnaire.

Results Derbyshire Children’s hospital is a busy District General hospital with ~87,000 visits in 2016. A total of 800 surveys were completed representing about 1% of our expected attendance per year.

Most, 414 (52%) were ≥7 years old, whilst 217 (27%) were 0–3 years and 166 (21%) were 4–6 years old. Only 187/800 (23%) of children were reported to be brushing their teeth correctly. Additionally, 114/383 (30%) of children aged 6 years of age do not regularly receive appropriate help with brushing. This was significantly worse amongst 4–6-year-olds, p=0.006.

Although 711 (89%) of parents/carers were aware of free NHS dental care for children, only 246 (31%) visited or remained in everyone on oral health and wider impact on health. Oral health should remain in everyone’s agenda to enable every child grow up healthy and thrive. Hospital visits provide an excellent opportunity.

To our knowledge, this is the first hospital based survey in England. There appears to be gaps in the knowledge of parents/carers regarding good oral health. Our survey also highlighted unhealthy dietary habits with potential implications on oral health and wider impact on health. Oral health should remain in everyone’s agenda to enable every child grow up free from tooth decay and have the best start in life. We propose oral health promotion and education for parents, carers and children. Hospital visits provide an excellent opportunity.

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THE CLINICAL SPECTRUM OF DORSAL STREAM DYSFUNCTION IN AUTISM – A RETROSPECTIVE COHORT STUDY OF 13 CHILDREN

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Aims Bilateral dysfunction of the parieto-occipital cortex, linked to the visual cortex by the dorsal stream, variably produces simultanagnosia (SIM), optic ataxia (OA), and gaze apraxia. This triad, rarely reported in childhood, comprises ‘Balint syndrome’. ‘Dorsal stream dysfunction’ (DSD) describes milder degrees of this disorder.