



Safeguarding training for your team

What level of safeguarding training does your dental team require? The Child Protection Company provides some guidance for DCPs.

All staff who work in a dental setting are required to undertake recognised, certifiable safeguarding training, and to ensure that this training is refreshed regularly. However, many dental teams find it difficult to interpret training levels and to decide who needs which course. In this article, the Child Protection Company hopes to assist you with choosing the correct level of training required for your role, by using the knowledge it has accumulated from a decade of specialising in verifiable safeguarding training.

Safeguarding training levels

There is a lot of misinterpretation surrounding safeguarding levels in the UK. One piece of statutory guidance, *Working together to safeguard children*,¹ which nearly all social, health, voluntary and community professions follow, previously measured safeguarding competences in levels. However, in 2013, the guidance dispensed with all reference to levels, and today, the only major sector that uses levels to measure safeguarding competence is the healthcare sector – which details its unique system in the Intercollegiate Document.²

In your role as a dental professional, the current safeguarding levels outlined in the Intercollegiate Document are still highly relevant to you, despite other professions such as teachers and childminders no longer needing to follow a similar system.

If you overhear somebody saying that safeguarding levels no longer apply, remember that this is only in reference to the *Working together* levels system. It is equally important to remember that the now obsolete *Working together* safeguarding levels were never identical to those in the Intercollegiate Document, and historically, this was the cause of a lot of confusion.

What does this mean for me?

In short, this means that when searching for a suitable safeguarding training course, you need to ensure that the training outcomes meet the requirements for your specific level, as outlined in the Intercollegiate Document. If you can see no reference to healthcare levels, it is always best to confirm that the course is suitable for you by contacting your NHS Trust or Local Safeguarding Children Board first.

Generally speaking, staff in a dental practice should only require the first two levels of safeguarding training. Level 1 is a requirement for **all** staff members. Level 2 is a requirement for all clinical staff, plus any non-clinical staff who perform duties that require more in-depth contact with children, young people, vulnerable adults and/or parents/carers.

It is rare that a member of general dental

for every member of staff in a dental practice: you **must** have an up-to-date certificate in Level 1 safeguarding training. Even staff who require training at Levels 2 or 3 should complete Level 1 training as well, because this provides the basic knowledge that further training will build upon.

Topics that should be covered in a Level 1 safeguarding course include:

- Recognising signs and indicators of potential abuse, including physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, FGM [female genital mutilation], child trafficking and induced illness

online Introduction to Adult/Child Protection training course developed specifically for the dental sector, which is recommended by the British Dental Association (BDA) and is recognised as being broadly in line with the Level 1 requirements of the Intercollegiate Document. The course takes between 1.5-2 hours to complete, and is equivalent to three hours of verifiable CPD. You will receive a certificate valid for two years upon successful completion.

Do I need Level 2 training?

It is safe to assume that all staff working in a

‘EVERY MEMBER OF STAFF IN A DENTAL PRACTICE MUST HAVE AN UP-TO-DATE CERTIFICATE IN LEVEL 1 SAFEGUARDING TRAINING...’



staff will require Level 3 training, which is usually reserved for specialist paediatric dentists and those who have more direct involvement with children, or who deal with child protection as a regular feature of their work – but Level 3 training may also be a requirement for staff with a lead role or special interest in child protection or dental education.

Safeguarding Levels 4 and 5 are reserved for named and designated professionals, and it is unlikely that you will need this level of training within a general dental practice.

Do I need Level 1 training?

Whether you work in a clinical or non-clinical capacity, one requirement remains the same

- Understanding how a parent/carer’s physical and mental health can have an impact on a child’s development and wellbeing
- Understanding the importance of sharing information
- Knowing what to do if concerns are not taken seriously when referring a child/family
- Online safety
- Knowledge of relevant legislation and guidance
- How to report concerns safely and seek advice
- Defining the term ‘looked after child’.

The Child Protection Company offers an

clinical capacity, as well as any non-clinical staff whose duties require them to have more in-depth contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, will require Level 2 training. Certainly, all dentists, dental nurses and other dental care professionals (DCPs) require Level 2 training, as is explicitly stated in the Intercollegiate Document.²

Topics that should be covered in a Level 2 safeguarding course include:

- All topics listed above for Level 1
- Awareness of normal child development and the ways abuse and neglect can impact this in the short- and long-term
- Understanding factors that may be associated with child abuse, eg parental mental health problems, chronic conditions, drugs and alcohol abuse, domestic violence
- The legal, professional and ethical responsibilities of information sharing, including the use of assessment frameworks and directories
- Data protection, including best practice for documenting and reporting issues, and record-keeping
- Understanding the purpose of serious case reviews
- The importance of the child or young person’s best interests as reflected in legislation and statutory/non-statutory guidance.

The Child Protection Company also offers an online Further Adult/Child Protection

training course developed specifically for the dental sector, which is recommended by the BDA and is recognised as being broadly in line with the Level 2 requirements of the Intercollegiate Document when taken alongside our online Introduction to Adult/Child Protection training course. Both courses take between 1.5-2 hours each to complete, and each course is equivalent to three hours of verifiable CPD under the General Dental Council Lifelong Learning Scheme.

You will receive a certificate valid for two years upon successful completion of the course.

Can I take online safeguarding training courses?

Rather than sitting on a waiting list for face-to-face training, or having to close the practice for a staff training day, online safeguarding courses offer a unique flexibility that many dental teams prefer. This is the reason thousands of practices have migrated to online learning in recent years.

The Intercollegiate Document states that

It is vital to remember that safeguarding training should be part of ongoing CPD within your dental practice.

A valid training certificate is an absolute requirement, but the topic of safeguarding should be discussed frequently within your teams, and all staff should continue to engage with the subject of safeguarding beyond simply completing a training course.

This applies to all members of staff, whether they work directly with children or not.

As a dental practice, you are in prime position to be able to spot signs and indicators of abuse, whether they are noticed in the waiting room or the surgery – so every member of your team should have good knowledge of how to deal with any concerns, and this should be as up-to-date as possible.

Please remember that training alone cannot enable an organisation to meet all of its safeguarding responsibilities, or all the safeguarding requirements of bodies such as Ofsted and CQC. Training is an **essential** element of a wider approach to safeguarding, which must also include appropriate policies, practices and organisational culture.

‘A VALID TRAINING CERTIFICATE IS AN

ABSOLUTE REQUIREMENT, BUT THE TOPIC

OF SAFEGUARDING SHOULD BE

DISCUSSED FREQUENTLY WITHIN YOUR TEAMS’

online training courses are appropriate for Levels 1 and 2, but that those requiring Levels 3 and above can use online training as preparation for reflective team-based learning only. So, if you are a dental professional who only requires Level 1 or Level 2 training, it is perfectly acceptable for you to complete an online training course – providing that it is certifiable, and that it makes explicit reference to the Intercollegiate Document safeguarding levels.

How often do I have to complete safeguarding training?

While the Intercollegiate Document states that staff should receive training every three years as a minimum, at the Child Protection Company, we recommend you complete a training course at least bi-annually – this is why all our training certificates are valid for two years.

1. Department for Education. *Working together to safeguard children*. 26 March 2015, updated 16 February 2017. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> (accessed November 2017).
2. Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health on behalf of contributing organisations. *Safeguarding children and young people: roles and competences for health care staff*. Intercollegiate Document. Third edition: March 2014. Available at: https://my.rcn.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/474587/Safeguarding_Children_-_Roles_and_Competerences_for_Healthcare_Staff_02_0_0....pdf (accessed November 2017).

A version of this article was first published in Dental Nursing.

Special offer for BDJ Team readers

Until Wednesday 31 January 2018, BDJ Team readers can save 10% on all purchases of the Child Protection Company's online Introduction to Adult/Child Protection and Further Adult/Child Protection training courses. Simply visit www.childprotectioncompany.com, select the courses you would like under 'Training', 'Dental', and add them to your basket, then quote the code BDJTeam10 when prompted at the checkout.

For more information about safeguarding training for your dental practice, the friendly customer service team at the Child Protection Company are happy to assist any time. Call 01327 552030 or email help@childprotectioncompany.com.

Read more on safeguarding

- What is safeguarding? <https://www.nature.com/articles/bdjteam201778>
- Elder abuse and the dental team <https://www.nature.com/articles/bdjteam201664>
- Why are vulnerable children not brought to their dental appointments? <https://www.nature.com/articles/bdjteam2016156>
- Child protection: FGM <https://www.nature.com/articles/bdjteam201681>
- Child Protection and the Dental Team CPD: An introduction to safeguarding children in dental practice (BDA course) <https://cpd.bda.org/course/info.php?id=53> (three hours of verifiable CPD)

Is your practice owner a BDA Expert member? Expert members receive two free Child Protection Company courses which they can allocate to anyone within their practice.

bdjteam201811