



The Oral Health Foundation referred to the figures as 'appalling' and called for the Government to do more to help address the dangerous levels of sugar consumed by children in the UK, in addition to better oral health education for children and new water fluoridation schemes.

The extractions of multiple teeth in under-18s in England cost the NHS £36.2 million - a 17% increase on the 36,833 procedures carried out in 2012/13.

The British Dental Association (BDA) condemned ministerial indifference towards the new statistics. The Government's centrepiece policy 'Starting Well', aimed at improving oral health outcomes for 'high risk' children, has no new funding attached, and is operating in parts of just 13 local authorities in England. Activities in London are thought to cover just three wards in the Borough of Ealing.

BDA Chair Mick Armstrong said: 'This short-sightedness means just a few thousand children stand to benefit from policies that need to be reaching millions.'



Sharing bags

On 26 January Action on Sugar called for a complete ban on all confectionery price promotions and a sugar tax on all confectionery of at least 20%. This follows a new product survey by the group of leading experts, based at Queen Mary University of London, who have exposed the high amounts of sugar in chocolate confectionery 'sharing' bags.

Of the 95 chocolate confectioneries surveyed, the 'sharing' bag with the highest amount of sugar per pack contained 29 teaspoons, four times an adult's maximum daily sugar intake – almost 1,000 calories.

At the time of data collection (December 2017 – January 2018) from six leading supermarkets, each retailer was actively offering price promotions on some sharing bags, which made them comparatively better value for money than smaller pack sizes.

A poll in *The Grocer* (www.thegrocer.co.uk) conducted in 2014 revealed that over one in five adults (22.1%) do not share sharing bags, but consume them alone and in one sitting. This figure was even higher for 16-24-year-olds at 35.7%.

Action on Sugar said that consumption of confectionery is the second highest contributor to sugar intake in children, after soft drinks. If price promotions on high sugar products were removed, almost two teaspoons (7 g) of sugar on average could be cut from every individual's diet per day.

More infants seen in 2017

In late January BSPD President Claire Stevens announced that 33,000 extra children aged 0-2 years old were seen in NHS general dental practices in England in the year to November 2017: extremely positive news for the BSPD's Dental Check by One (#DCby1) campaign.

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DCP students in Plymouth run hygiene workshop



A workshop run by dental therapy and hygiene students demonstrated that viruses can survive on hard surfaces for 24 hours and carry distances of around three metres.

Second-year students from the Plymouth University Peninsula Dental School ran a session at City College Plymouth for young adults with mild learning difficulties to talk about good hygiene and oral health.

They highlighted how simple steps such as good hand washing (30 seconds with thorough technique) and using a tissue when sneezing can help to stop the spread of viruses – with a virus only able to survive on a tissue for 15 minutes.

Cross-infection and how bacteria can be kept at bay were the overriding themes of the session, and students explained how good oral health is also very important to prevent oral infection and disease.

The event took place as part of the university students' Inter-Professional Engagement module – which is run on the BDS Dental Surgery and BSc Dental Therapy and Hygiene programmes in partnership with Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise (PDSE) and community engagement charity, Well Connected.

Damian Lemieszek, second-year Dental Therapy and Hygiene student, who helped deliver the session, said: 'We wanted to keep things as clear as possible, so the three key messages we focused on were good hand hygiene and its effectiveness in stopping diseases spreading, good oral hygiene and also good general hygiene.'

'We were able to deliver an interactive quiz to get the students thinking about what they already knew and dispel a few myths, and we're really pleased with how the event was received.'

Rob Witton, Director of Social Engagement and Community-based Dentistry at PDSE, said: 'The second-year Inter-Professional Engagement module is so important to help students understand the social and organisational barriers facing community groups and organisations in delivering oral health messages.'

'The City College Plymouth students were so engaged and receptive to the session – particularly the station on watching how far a sneeze can travel!'