

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

'Turkey Teeth' in children

Sir, the rise in adult patients seeking dental treatment abroad, and the risks of doing so, have been well documented in recently published articles.^{1,2} The General Dental Council, in conjunction with the Oral Health Foundation, produced useful information to support patients to make an informed decision about seeking dental treatment abroad.³ Unfortunately, this document does not cover, or indeed consider, the possibility of this occurring in children.

We recently re-assessed an eight-year-old patient, who had initially presented to our department as a seven-year-old, with a white hypomineralised anterior opacity that had no post-eruptive breakdown and caused them no aesthetic concerns. At this review visit, we were advised that the child had received invasive treatment whilst abroad. The clinical impression was that this tooth had indeed received invasive treatment, but we were unable to fully establish what had been completed. Current guidance would support far less invasive options, such as

resin-infiltration, to manage a case such as this.^{4,5} Upon discussing this with the child, it appeared their aesthetic concerns had remained unchanged, and in fact, this treatment was driven by the father's aesthetic expectations. The father disclosed that whilst receiving his own course of treatment in Turkey, he was offered management for his child's teeth, as a 'freebie'. This type of gesture could incentivise other parents, who themselves are seeking treatment abroad, to have their children's teeth managed in addition to their own, when it may not be in the child's best interest. As a profession, we should be mindful that this could become commonplace, especially given the current NHS access issues. As endorsed by the BSPD, aesthetic management of children should only be completed following a shared decision-making process, including the views of the child.⁶

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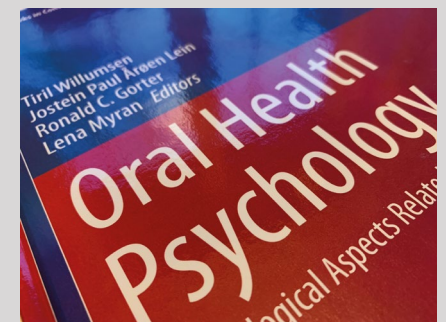
BSPD welcomes publication of 'Oral Health Psychology' textbook

The British Society of Paediatric Dentistry (BSPD) welcomes the insights and recommendations outlined in a new book called 'Oral Health Psychology'. The book is an international collaboration between dentists and psychologists who draw on scientific research as well as their personal experiences in clinical practice. Published by Springer in November 2022, this academic and practical textbook has been written by a team from Norway and The Netherlands with contributions from Paediatric Dentists and Psychologists from the University of Sheffield.

The book covers modern theories on a patient-centred approach to communication, preventive dentistry, dental anxiety and oro-facial disfigurement.¹ It provides guidance on the implementation of a trauma-sensitive approach. There is attention given to the effective delivery of preventive care and dental treatment for fearful and abused children. Further chapters address topics as varied as managing blood-injury-injection phobia, dealing with a severe gag reflex, dental professionalism and practitioner burnout.

Sarah Baker, Professor of Psychology as Applied to Dentistry, University of Sheffield said: 'We look at the importance of psychology to the maintenance and promotion of good oral health – as well as the role oral health plays in overall health using a biopsychosocial approach. It has been inspiring to work with the teams from Oslo and Amsterdam who brought their multi-disciplinary approach to bear. There is consensus that a person-centred focus on oral health can impact positively on quality of life. Our research explored the psychosocial impacts of conditions affecting oro-facial appearance, and the role psychologists can play in patient care.'

Dr Jenny Harris, President, BSPD and Consultant Community Paediatric Dentist at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, said: 'Dental teams have a duty of care to provide a safe place for children to feel that they can ask questions and speak up when they need help or feel scared. Our chapter focuses on recognising and responding to maltreatment or family violence so we can



give our patients, both children and adults, adequate help and support. We provide tools to support students of dentistry as well as experienced dental professionals. BSPD believes that Oral Health Psychology is an excellent educational resource and will help readers to solve challenges in their own clinical settings.'

Reference

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