

BSPD demands end to unethical age-profiling dental X-rays

The British Society of Paediatric Dentistry (BSPD) has called for an end to the unethical practice of taking dental X-rays for asylum seekers in an attempt to verify age. BSPD is speaking out following the news that the Home Office will be using teeth and bone X-rays to verify the age of asylum seekers arriving in the UK.

BSPD has learnt that the Home Office's new legislation that they have now approved for practice, came into force on 10 January. The details outline the use of what the Home Office calls scientific methods to be used to assess the age of asylum seekers to the UK using radiographs of molars, hands and wrists,

as well as MRI scans of thigh bones and collarbones. Failure to comply can incur penalties.

Professor Paula Waterhouse, BSPD President said: 'Age profiling using dental X-rays has absolutely no evidence base whatsoever. This wholly inaccurate approach to assessing the age of those seeking asylum in this country is morally wrong, because it means that vulnerable children will be exposed to unnecessary radiation without any clinical benefit.'

'We have been through this debate on numerous occasions and believed that it had been shelved for good. Frustratingly, it appears this is not the case. The discussion

around using X-rays for age profiling asylum seekers has been debated for nearly two decades. Our members will not be taking X-rays unless they are clinically justified.

'BSPD calls on the Government to stop this immoral and unethical practice once and for all.'



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Date for the diary

The BDA South West Dental Conference is back in Bristol for 2024!

Open to all ages and experience levels this is one of our most exciting line-ups to date with industry leaders Chris Orr, The Cornish Dentist, Tamer Theodossy and a panel discussion on the future of the NHS with the acting CDO, BDA and BAPD and at a heavily subsidised price thanks to all our sponsors.

Taking place on Saturday 17 February from 9-5pm, with the Western Counties Branch AGM following from 5-7pm, topics include:

→ Panel discussion on 'The future of NHS dentistry', featuring Jason Wong MBE, Interim Chief Dental Officer England,

Eddie Crouch, Chair, BDA Board and Simon Thackeray, GDP, Nottinghamshire and member, BAPD Board

- Safe management of the medically compromised patients in dental practice
- Onlays vs crowns: Let's clear up any confusion
- No risk smile makeovers – myth or reality?

The conference will take place at Engineers' House, Clifton, Bristol, and you can find out more information, including how to book, at www.bda.org/learning-and-development/courses-and-events/south-west-ydg-bda-south-west-dental-conference/.

Dentists back breakfast club brushing plan

The British Dental Association has welcomed moves by Labour to roll out supervised brushing programmes in breakfast clubs.

Historic modelling from Public Health England indicates targeted schemes could generate £3.06 in savings for every pound spent in the short to medium term owing to reduced treatment need.

National programmes overseen by devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales have secured record breaking improvements in oral health, and elements have been adopted worldwide in countries ranging from Chile to Israel. While some English local authorities have financed schemes, the UK Government has failed to even take forward historic pledges to consult on rollout.

British Dental Association chair Eddie Crouch said: 'Supervised brushing is a tried and tested policy, that the Government's own modelling shows pays for itself.'

'It's a scandal that decay remains the number one reason for hospital admissions among young children. Prevention isn't just better than cure it's cheaper too.'



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