

## DENTAL STUDENTS FACE WELLBEING CRISIS

The British Dental Association Benevolent Fund (BDA BF) has revealed the findings from the first-ever survey into the financial and wellbeing needs of UK dental students.

Conducted in October and November 2021, the survey was designed to explore

the financial and wellbeing issues facing dental students, to help the charity increase awareness and improve support.

Most shockingly, the report revealed high proportions of

students experienced wellbeing challenges, most notably stress or burnout (90%) and performance anxiety (77%). Around half of students were also impacted to some degree by severe wellbeing issues such as depression (55%) and bereavement (50%).

COVID-19 had a significant impact, with 74% saying the pandemic had increased their need for wellbeing support (74%). The transition to online classes and the suspension of wider university activities were highlighted as major contributing factors. However, only 33% of students had accessed some support for their wellbeing.

In terms of financial stressors, 74% of students stated that financial issues impacted them to some degree during their studies. The main contributing factors were mental health (61%), family circumstances (59%), final-year funding changes (46%) and business closures linked to Covid-19 (44%). Despite this, 51% of

students stated they had not accessed financial support even though they had experienced money problems.

Dr Ros Keeton, chair of the BDA BF, commented: 'This report reinforces the pressure and wellbeing issues that we have in not just dental students, but in the profession as a whole. It reinforces our understanding of how difficult the scenarios are that people are facing and how anxiety-making they are. We, in the UK, need to say, 'that's not a good place for a profession to be in', and we need to look at ways that we both train and support younger dentists in particular through that.

'I hope that the profession collectively responds to the survey. Because I think that's where the answer is – it's in the collective response – it's not about passing the buck.'

View a full copy of the report at: [www.bdabenevolentfund.org.uk/news/uk-dental-students-missing-out-on-vital-support/](http://www.bdabenevolentfund.org.uk/news/uk-dental-students-missing-out-on-vital-support/)



## NASDAL DENTAL CHECK BY ONE 2022 PRACTICE OF THE YEAR AWARD ANNOUNCED

Bateman and Best has been announced as the recipient of the NASDAL Dental Check by One 2022 Award

Having been on a forced hiatus since October 2019 due to the pandemic – this year's award is presented by NASDAL to recognise the outstanding commitment of practices to the DCby1 campaign. Launched by the British Society of Paediatric Dentistry (BSPD) in partnership with the Office of the Chief Dental Officer England, the aim of the campaign is to increase the number of children who access dental care aged 0-2 years, by encouraging dental appointments for babies before their first birthday.

Nick Ledingham, Chairman of NASDAL, commented: 'The last two years have been very difficult for dentistry and society as a whole. However, we have still seen huge efforts by practices up and down the UK put into DCby1. It is abundantly clear that it means so much to many practices and at NASDAL we feel honoured to be able to support this initiative. We hope our award and the £1000 cheque that the winner receives will enable them to achieve even more for access for

children and babies moving forward.

'NASDAL has always been keen to recognise business excellence in dentistry - this award illustrates that doing the right thing makes good business sense too.

'Congratulations to our winner, Bateman and Best. We were particularly impressed with the focus on expectant mothers and those who have recently had a baby to register their new borns, even if they may not have any teeth yet. This has helped children to adapt to the environment, so they can familiarise themselves to the smells and sounds of the dental practice. Since January 2019 the practice has registered 253 children under the age of 2 – very impressive when you consider the two years of pandemic.'

Dr Michael Best, Principal of Bateman and Best said: 'We are absolutely over the moon to win this award! We have always been passionate about improving the oral health of children. We believe that it is even more important that this vital area wasn't forgotten during the pandemic. We look forward to building upon this success.'

Dr Urshla Devalia, Honorary Secretary of



BSPD, added: 'I am absolutely delighted for Michael and all the team at Bateman and Best. They have shown such dedication to the cause of improving children's oral health and DCby1 - even in the most difficult of times. All the team get involved and many have undertaken additional qualifications in oral health to enable them to help even more people. They have worked hard at reaching out to the local community in nurseries and schools to those who didn't know they could bring their child into the dentist so early. I wish them well as they continue to spread the message of DCby1; they are a great example of what can be achieved.'