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the Child
Protection
Company

So, after the longest break most of us will have had in our working lives, you're finally back at work. But it's not business as usual, far from it, COVID-19 has seen to that. With the need to socially distance within the practice, wear PPE during procedures and then deep clean and leave rooms fallow between patients, it's no wonder many dental teams feel they're swimming against the tide.

And the backlog of routine appointments continues to build, with some, like hygienists, effectively writing off 2020 due to the

difficulties involved, not least of which is how to make the numbers stack up financially.

With the pandemic likely to be around through this year and potentially well into 2021 it will certainly be tough for everyone: dental teams, patients and proprietors alike.

So in all this upheaval, stress and worrying times and as practices rightly concentrate on COVID-19 protection procedures, it would be all too easy to forget that during lockdown instances of domestic abuse have been on the rise and vulnerable adults and children will have been stuck at home with their abusers, with minimal outside scrutiny.

So you may have a higher than normal number of patients presenting with a concern; would you know how to deal with it, even through your layers of PPE? To help here's a Top Ten of safeguarding tips that will help everyone in the practice, as we all get used to this new way of working.

Top ten safeguarding tips

1. Make sure all staff know who the

Safeguarding Lead is within the practice. They should already but if you've got new staff or your Lead has recently changed, make sure everyone knows who it is and how to contact them.

2. If the Lead is not present all the time the practice is open, nominate a deputy and ensure they are appropriately trained. Make sure everyone knows who the deputy is and how to contact them. This is especially important if your Safeguarding Lead is not returning to work for some time.
3. As well as staff having access to the contact details for the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy, ensure the contact details of your local authority support teams, safeguarding partners, social services and the police are included with your safeguarding policies and procedures and staff know where these are kept.
4. Double check all such contact details are correct and have not changed due to different working practices being adopted

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covers children and adults at risk and those working in a clinical capacity should also have level 2 training. Ensure your training records reflect everyone’s training status.

7. Reinforce to the entire team that everyone should be extra vigilant for any signs of abuse. More time at home for individuals who suffer from abuse means more opportunity for things to go wrong.
8. If you’re still holding consultations via video calls does your safeguarding policy say two staff have to be present?
9. Remember that with schools still closed for some year groups or parents keeping children away from school, you could be the only safeguarding trained professional a child or at-risk adult has had contact with for months.
10. Remember, anyone can be a victim of abuse, at any age, at any time.
11. There is no such thing as a wrong referral when it comes to safeguarding. Have the confidence to report any concerns

It doesn’t matter if you’re working in your dental practice on a temporary basis - the requirement remains the same - you must complete a Level 1 dental safeguarding course such as our bestselling, BDA-recommended, Level 1 Introduction to Adult/Child Protection online course, which is dental specific.

You’ll also need Level 2 dental safeguarding training if you work in a clinical capacity, or in any role with additional safeguarding responsibilities.

All dentists, dental nurses, orthodontists and dental hygienists are required to have Level 2 dental safeguarding training. In fact, all staff who work in a clinical capacity or take on any additional responsibility related to safeguarding must have Level 2 dental safeguarding training in addition to Level 1. Our online Further Adult/Child Protection course is recommended by the British Dental Association as Level 2 dental safeguarding training.

Both our Level 1 and Level 2 online courses take around 1 to 2 hours to complete and they’re each worth 3 hours of verifiable CPD under the General Dental Council Lifelong Learning Scheme.

Alternatively, we can provide ‘face-to-face’ training for your team via Zoom. Although there are restrictions in using Zoom to train, one advantage is that staff can attend from wherever they’re based, so furloughed staff can ‘attend’ from home. Our normal face-to-face training materials have been adapted to ensure the learning experience is unaffected.

If you’d like to discuss your safeguarding training requirements in further detail, our team at the Child Protection Company is currently working from home but available from 9 am to 5.30 pm, Monday to Friday. They’re more than happy to answer your questions so please get in touch on 01327 552030, or email us at help@childprotectioncompany.com.

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elsewhere (local authority staff working from home rather than their offices, for example).

5. Make sure your safeguarding policy reflects what you’re now doing in the practice, if it’s different from before lockdown (which it probably will be). Make sure all staff know about the changes and what they are.
6. Make sure everyone’s safeguarding training is up to date, even furloughed staff. All staff should have level 1 training that

and ensure that everyone on your team is equally confident to do so. Effective safeguarding is a group effort, now more than ever.

Training

We get asked all the time what safeguarding training is needed by practice staff and the answer is simple: Everyone who interacts with the public in the dental sector must complete Level 1 dental safeguarding training as a minimum.