

## WOMEN MUST GRIT THEIR TEETH AND BEAR IT WHEN IT COMES TO ORAL HEALTH

Women face heightened oral health risks compared to men, thanks to the hormonal fluctuations associated with menstruation, birth control, and menopause.<sup>1</sup>

Now, recently released data from the Wrigley Oral Healthcare Programme's 'Oral Health Index', a survey of 6,000 national representatives, has shown that more women (48%) believe there has been no improvement to accessing dental services since the pandemic, compared to men (32%).

The Index also found that nearly a third (32%) of women report they are less likely to visit a dentist due to the cost-of-living-crisis.

The findings precede the publication of the Government's Dental Recovery Plan, which is due to be released ahead of the new year in an effort to tackle the UK's NHS dental crisis.

Unaffordable dentistry is also hitting young people hard. Fifty-six percent of people aged 25 to 34-years-old believe their dental health will suffer amidst soaring living costs, and one in three would consider exploring overseas treatment options for affordability.

Separate research from Frontier Economics has shown the value preventative oral health measures could deliver, by avoiding the need for urgent treatments and making the need for check-ups less frequent.<sup>2</sup>

Introducing supervised toothbrushing programmes for children, expanding water fluoridation schemes, and encouraging the public to chew sugar-free gum could together save the NHS over £50 million per year, and save NHS dental patients £95.9 million.<sup>2</sup>

British Dental Association Chair Eddie Crouch said: 'Cost of living and access crises are creating a perfect storm. Millions are thinking twice about needed care if they're lucky enough to find an appointment, while others are looking abroad.

'Every day that passes our patients are making choices that put their oral health at risk. The government cannot remain asleep at the wheel.'

Michael Dodds, BDS PhD, Senior Principal Scientist with the Wrigley Oral Healthcare Programme said: 'The Oral

Health Index's worrying findings show us that people risk missing out on much-needed dental treatment, due to pressures on services and the rising cost of living. Maintaining good oral health should not be a luxury – it is an essential part of our overall well-being. It helps people to boost their self-confidence and enables them to carry out day-to-day activities like eating and speaking without discomfort or pain.'

### References

1. Benscosme J. Sex-based differences in oral health. *Dimensions of Dental Hygiene* 14 December 2016. Available at: <https://dimensionsofdentalhygiene.com/article/sex-based-differences-in-oral-health/> (accessed September 2023).
2. Woolley N, Camplejohn A. The economic value of good oral health. *Frontier Economics*, 25 May 2023. Available at: <https://www.frontier-economics.com/uk/en/news-and-articles/news/news-article-i10334-the-economic-value-of-good-oral-health/#> (accessed November 2023).

## BADN AGM: JOAN HATCHARD BECOMES HONORARY PRESIDENT AND REBECCA SILVER RECEIVES FELLOWSHIP



Some of the AGM attendees outside the Wellington Hotel. Left to right: Neni Irvanipour, Maja Marsh, Sherilee Bannerjee, Rebecca Silver, Anifa Stanforth, June Longdon, Preetee Hylton

At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the British Association of Dental Nurses (BADN) in November in London and via Zoom, Joan Hatchard became Honorary President.

Joan gained her National Certificate in 1988, and went on to gain post qualification certificates in Oral Health Education, Radiography, and Conscious Sedation. She became the practice manager of two busy

private general dental practices and started teaching the National Certificate course in 1989. She also gained the FAETC and the Certificate in Education (FE), and holds the City and Guilds Licentiate in Dental Nursing. Joan was an examiner on the NEBDN Panel of Examiners for the National Diploma and the Certificate in Oral Health Education. In recent years Joan has held positions on Council, first as the Chair of BADN Practice Managers' and Receptionists' National Group, and then Acting Chairman, and Treasurer. Joan is a BADN Fellow and received the 2013 BADN Award for Outstanding Contribution to Dental Nursing.

Also at the AGM, Rebecca Silver received her certificate of BADN Fellowship, and her ten-year membership badge. Rebecca was also presented with her FMC Dental Nurse of the Year London Award by President-elect Preetee Hylton. The Honorary President also presented retiring Past President Jacqui Elsdon with a bracelet from members of the Executive

Committee and Panel of Representatives.

In addition, Ruth Garrity was welcomed to the BADN Executive Committee as Treasurer and former Treasurer Michelle Brand became Chairman.

The AGM was followed by an Afternoon Tea at the Wellington Hotel for those who had attended in person.



Members of the BADN Executive Committee. Left to right: Chairman Michelle Brand, retiring Past President Jacqui Elsdon, Honorary President Joan Hatchard, Education Representative Anifa Stanforth, President-elect Preetee Hylton