

Stormont to host landmark oral health event in October

BDA Northern Ireland will be hosting an event entitled 'Oral Health Matters: A Vision for Oral Health in Northern Ireland' in The Long Gallery, Stormont, on 17 October 2019.

Improving the nation's oral health is at the very heart of the British Dental Association's (BDA's) mission. Oral health in Northern Ireland has, for many years, been considered the worst in the whole of the UK. Despite some progress, Northern Ireland continues to face considerable challenges, particularly for the youngest and oldest cohorts of the population.

The evidence shows that:

- Just 19% of 15-year-old children were considered to have 'good oral health' according to the most recent Child Oral Health Survey
- Twenty-three thousand children's teeth were extracted under general anaesthetic (GA) in Northern Ireland in 2017/18 (three times pro-rata than England)
- The Community Dental Service is currently struggling to provide a comprehensive screening and treatment service for elderly care home residents; given demographic changes, these pressures are only set to increase
- The current Northern Ireland Oral Health Strategy dates back to 2007; there is a policy vacuum in relation to oral health, and in linking oral health with wider public health goals
- Not a single extra penny of the £12.3 million sugar levy money coming to Northern Ireland in 2018/19 was allocated to additional child public health initiatives, despite the converse in England.

Tristan Kelso, Director, BDA Northern Ireland, commented: 'It is because of [this] combination of persistent health inequalities, challenges and potential opportunities - that our aim is for a renewed, ambitious vision for oral health in Northern Ireland; a vision that empowers individuals to achieve their best oral health possible and is based on wider collaboration and establishing the important links between oral health and general health outcomes. It will have prevention at its core; it will be rights-based and will proactively address oral health inequalities; and it will value our dental practitioners who are key to delivering the best possible care to their patients.'

The Oral Health *Matters* event aims to bring together a wide range of stakeholders, all of whom have a shared interest in oral health issues. A line-up of expert speakers will provide lucid insights from the worlds of dental practice, dental public health, and research and academia. They include Caroline Lappin, Chair, BDA Northern Ireland Council and Gerry McKenna, Chair of the BDA Northern Ireland Hospitals Group.

Mr Kelso said: 'We also look forward to hearing from a number of well-known public representatives on the importance of prioritising oral health, and why this matters to the people they represent. We want this to mark a significant event in turning the tide on oral health outcomes in Northern Ireland.'

The event will open with lunch on arrival at 1.30 pm and run until 4.15 pm.

Elections to the Principal Executive Committee of the British Dental Association

Nominations are sought for the following seats on the Principal Executive Committee (PEC):

UK-wide (one seat)

Scotland (one seat).

England:

East Midlands and Central (one seat)

London (one seat)

South East (one seat).

The PEC has overall responsibility for the control and direction of the policy and affairs of the BDA, and its members are the directors of the Association.

There are 15 members on the PEC. Each will have a share of overall responsibilities, and typically this will require:

- Attendance at all meetings of the PEC – around five a year, but maybe more when business demands
- Attendance at own country council meetings – usually three a year
- Attendance at UK Council meetings – around two a year
- Sit on 1–2 sub committees/issue specific forums
- Attend general meetings of the Association.

It is anticipated that the approximate time commitment for a member of the PEC will be 20 days per year, with an annual remuneration of £15,000.

Term of office

This shall be until December 2022, with the opportunity to stand for a further full three-year term of office at that point.

Induction, support and training

Membership of the PEC carries significant organisational and legal responsibilities. There is an induction programme for those elected, and ongoing training. Members will also have advice and support from the Chief Executive and the wider BDA Team.

Next meetings of the PEC

Meetings of the PEC in 2020 are currently scheduled for:

Wednesday/Thursday 5/6 February (two days)

Wednesday 6 May

Wednesday 15 July

Wednesday 23 September

Wednesday 2 December.

Nomination forms must be submitted online by 17.00 Friday 25 October 2019. A link to the online nomination portal can be found at www.bda.org/elections.

For more information about the elections to the PEC or the role of a PEC member please contact the BDA's Election Manager Stephen Skelton on 0207 563 4141 or email stephen.skelton@bda.org.