

SOCIETIES

The British Society of Paediatric Dentistry



BSPD President, Dr Sarah McKaig

The absence of concern for the dental needs of children in the UK inspired the formation of the UK's first society dedicated to paediatric dentistry in 1952. Despite the advent of the NHS, most dentistry in post-war Britain as well as the teaching of dentistry was adult-focused. At the forefront of the move to give more attention to the oral health of children were three dentists: George Page, Leonard Morey and Peter James. Page and Morey had both gone to the United States after graduating in the UK to undertake higher training and subsequently met through the American Dental Society of London. Peter James came to the fore in the 1950s when epidemiology became important, especially for toothpaste trials. He was involved, with others, in studies of children's dental health and he stressed the need for prevention, including water fluoridation. Leonard Morey, George Page and Peter James met in London and formed the UK's first society dedicated to the study of children's dentistry. They were supported by Max Horsnell, whose name lives on today through the travel bursary he funded and which is awarded annually. This committed group grew into the British Paedodontic Society in 1968 which in turn became the British Society of Paediatric Dentistry (BSPD).

There are around 700 members and membership of the Society is open to everyone interested in improving children's oral health.

The BSPD aims to raise standards in all areas of children's oral health, whether specialist provision in hospital and community clinics, research, teaching or general practice, giving voice to the oral healthcare needs of children and young people.

The chief benefits for members are educational. All members receive the BSPD's prestigious journal which is published jointly with the International Association of Paediatric Dentistry. The Society's branches are active and a popular annual conference is held. Research to develop the evidence base for paediatric dentistry is fostered by a dedicated committee: The Quality Improvement and Research Committee.

The BSPD considers its members to be its greatest achievement, some known around the world for groundbreaking research, and BSPD is very proud of co-owning an international journal. In recent years BSPD has been responsible for some admirable innovations, including the creation of the profession's Safeguarding guidance by Jenny Harris; the formation – in partnership with the Office of the Chief Dental Officer for England – of the Dental Check by One campaign; the launch of Mini Mouth Care Matters; and the creation of the Outstanding Innovation Award. BSPD is very proud to be a specialist society which welcomes all General Dental Council registrants as full members.

BSPD has a very busy agenda in the next few years. It will continue to:

- Address the shortage of specialists in paediatric dentistry
- Use its voice to speak and act on behalf of children and their oral health needs
- Build on the Dental Check by One campaign
- Promote prevention in the philosophy of UK dental practice
- Support the development and dissemination of evidence-based advice on issues relating to the oral health needs of children and young people
- Work towards a specialty which is proudly diverse and inclusive. ■

Honours, awards, appointments

GDC Council members

The GDC has announced the appointment of three new members to its Council: Donald Burden, who holds a combined role of Clinical Director for Dental Services in Queens University Belfast and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) and Director of Queen's University Dental School; Laura Simons, an experienced non-executive director with a background in consumer affairs, campaigning and professional regulation, who joins the Council as a lay member; and Mike Lewis, professor of oral medicine at Cardiff University and consultant in oral medicine at Cardiff University Health Board.

The GDC has also confirmed the re-appointment of three existing Council members: Sheila Kumar, Crispin Passmore and Caroline Logan.

CGDent Ambassadors

The College of General Dentistry has announced the further development of its 'College Ambassadors' scheme with the appointment of two new Ambassadors: Professor Jason Leitch CBE and Professor Jacky Hayden CBE.

More Ambassadors will be appointed in the coming months as the College works towards its historic, formal launch, rescheduled for early 2021, COVID restrictions permitting.

Benevolent Fund trustees

At the BDA Benevolent Fund's 137th – but first virtual – AGM, two new Trustees were elected, both of whom are under 30, unlike the rest of the Board. The new Trustees are Dr Molly Deykin, who is keen to promote mental, physical and financial health for young dentists; and Dr Alexander Gormley, a DCT in the South West who is keen to support the Fund in its work helping the most vulnerable in the profession.