

New director of dentistry for NHS Lanarkshire

Shelley Percival has been appointed the new director of dentistry for NHS Lanarkshire. Following a formal interview process, Dr Percival accepted the role after fulfilling the interim post since 1 January 2022. She will continue to provide leadership on all issues relating to dentistry in NHS Lanarkshire, ensuring high-quality, safe and effective oral care across the area.

Dr Percival said: 'I'm absolutely delighted to accept the position. Where my interim role has given me the opportunity to support colleagues during all the challenges of the pandemic, as we recover and look to the future, I look forward to building on the strong relationships and culture of partnership that exists in Lanarkshire. Our unremitting focus, of course, remains on looking after the dental and oral health of local people.'

As well as promoting the improvement and overall quality of care, Dr Percival will also provide leadership in reducing any oral health inequalities across the area. She will report to Soumen Sengupta, director of health and social care for South Lanarkshire.

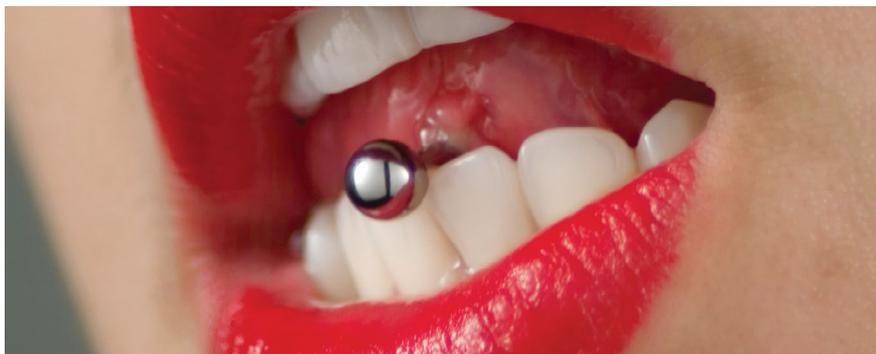
Dr Percival replaces Anne Moore who officially retired on 31 March 2022. Prior to taking up the post of interim director at the turn of the year, Dr Percival was clinical director for general dental services in Lanarkshire in October 2020. She will continue to fulfil a clinical director role alongside her director responsibilities, providing a single professional source of advice regarding all aspects of dentistry.

Dr Percival graduated from Glasgow University in 1997 and worked in practices in Whitburn, Hamilton and Falkirk before setting up Clyde Valley Dental Practice in



2006. She completed a diploma in Forensic Medical Science in 2001 and gained the Membership of the Faculty of General Dental Practitioners in London in 2007. ✦

Tongue and lip piercings may damage teeth and gums



Oral piercings should be removed to save teeth and gums, according to dental professionals displaying an e-poster at EuroPerio10, the world's leading congress in periodontology and implant dentistry organised by the European Federation of Periodontology (EFP), that took place on 15–18 June.

Study author Professor Clemens Walter of University Medicine Greifswald, Germany said: 'Our study found that many people with oral piercings had deep pockets and gaps around their teeth, and receding and bleeding gums. These are all signs of periodontitis, which can lead to tooth loss. People with tongue and lip piercings should remove them to protect their teeth and gums from further damage.'

It is estimated that approximately 5% of young adults have oral piercings with the tongue being the most common site.¹ Women are around four times more likely to have an oral piercing than men.

This systematic review collected the best available evidence on piercings and oral health. The analysis included eight studies with 408 participants who had a total of 236 lip piercings and 236 tongue piercings. Every fifth patient had piercings in more than one oral site. Wearing duration varied from one month to 19 years and most jewellery was metal.

The studies compared teeth and gums next to the piercing with teeth and gums elsewhere in the mouth. Regarding tongue piercings, three in five studies found deeper

pockets around teeth next to the piercing while three in four studies observed wider gaps. All four studies that examined patients for receding gums found this problem in those with tongue piercings while two in three studies found bleeding gums. As for lip piercings, the main finding was receding gums, which was observed in three out of four studies.

Professor Walter said: 'The findings suggest that oral piercings, especially in the tongue, negatively affect the adjacent teeth and gums. In those with tongue piercings, damage was particularly notable around the mandibular incisors, which are important for biting and chewing food. The likelihood of tooth and gum damage appeared to increase with the duration of wearing a lip or tongue piercing.'

'Dentists should inform their patients about the risk of periodontal complications when wearing oral piercings, and people with these piercings should be strongly encouraged to remove them.'

Reference

1. Hennequin-Hoenderdos N L, Slot D E, Van der Weijden G A. The prevalence of oral and peri-oral piercings in young adults: a systematic review. *Int J Dent Hyg* 2012; **10**: 223–228.