



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board

Ysbyty'r Eglwys Newydd
Whitchurch Hospital

Park Road, Whitchurch.
Cardiff, CF14 7XB
Phone 029 2069 3191

Heol Parc, Yr Eglwys Newydd
Caerdydd, CF14 7XB
Ffôn 029 2069 3191

Eich cyf/Your ref:
Ein cyf/Our ref: JW-jb-09-1321
Welsh Health Telephone Network:
Direct Line/Llinell uniongychol: 02920 745682

Jan Williams OBE
Chief Executive

9 September 2011

Ms Christine Chapman AM
Chair – Children and Young Peoples' Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Ms Chapman

Response to the inquiry into children's oral health.

Introduction

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (UHB) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the National Assembly's Children and Young Peoples' Committee inquiry into children's oral health. The UHB Community Dental Service (CDS) is one of the largest in the United Kingdom and provides services to the populations of Cardiff and Vale, Cwm Taf and the Bridgend area of Abertawe Bro Morgannwg. The CDS served as one of the two 'super pilot' areas when the Designed to Smile (D2S) Programme was commissioned in May 2008 and was instrumental in devising the operational plans of the programme, in collaboration with the Welsh Government's National Steering Committee.

1. The take-up of:

a) The supervised toothbrushing scheme for 3-5 year olds

The D2S programme is an invaluable method of ensuring that more children's teeth are exposed to the proven benefits of fluoride, whilst the brushing helps to set up good oral health practices that are, hopefully, maintained for life. The take-up of the toothbrushing programme has been excellent, whether from the perspective of the percentage of schools partaking, the returns of parental consent, or the number of pupils brushing. Of the children eligible to participate in the D2S toothbrushing programme, the percentage of children in the UHB whose parents have consented is 89%. This compares with a Welsh national that average of 94%, and relates to the catchment areas - covering the South Wales Valleys and Inner-city Cardiff, being served. These include some of the most deprived children in Wales and this could account for the lower uptake than the Wales average. Whilst the CDS has excellent relationships with education colleagues, and despite the best efforts of encouragement, some of the schools to participate in the programme chose not to do so, with the consequent negative impact on up take. Teachers gave the following

reasons for non-participation: that tooth brushing is a parental responsibility and that they do not have sufficient staffing levels to maintain the programme in the classroom setting.

It must be noted, however, that from the perspective of a public health campaign, the level of uptake set out below is impressive, especially considering that the programme is being run in our most disadvantaged areas. This level of uptake in any other general public health programme would be considered remarkable.

Pre-school settings:

148/189 participating in toothbrushing (78.3%)

4025/5052 children brushing (79.7%)

Primary schools:

199/249 participating in toothbrushing (79.9%)

17802/27135 pupils brushing (65.6%)

However, of the primary schools that are participating 17802/19429 (91%) of pupils are brushing.

b) The promotional programme for 6-11 year olds;

In the initial stages, in line with the Welsh Government's directive to UHBs, the D2S programme has focused on 3-5 year olds. However the existing fissure sealant programme, first established in 2001, has continued and in the past 12 months the UHB has expanded this programme to incorporate the distribution of dental packs to this older age cohort. These packs include a toothbrush, toothpaste and a key message leaflet. Their distribution is reinforced by dental health education at school. In the areas served by UHB CDS, this programme has been delivered to a total of 20,095 children since September 2010 details as follows;

RCT 2260 children **Merthyr** 1769 children **Cardiff** 9324 children **Vale** 3543 children **Bridgend** 3199 children equating to 74% of eligible children participating.

Fluoride Varnish Programme

In line with guidance from the Office of the Chief Dental Officer, dental nurses have undergone extended duties training and can now apply fluoride varnish in school settings. A programme of competency validation in place.

Pilot programmes have been running and 100 children have had 1 application and 107 have had a 2nd application. The UHB intends to launch the fluoride varnish programme on a wide scale for all suitable children in Sept 2011.

2. Whether the investment has delivered improved health outcomes for the most disadvantaged children and young people;

The Programme has been targeted at disadvantaged children, for example Community First and Flying Start areas. In addition, the UHB has used dental epidemiological data supplied by the Wales Oral Health Information Unit to recruit schools with the worst oral health to the programme. As a result, the programme has targeted those children at greatest risk of tooth decay. It must be remembered

that the Programme has only been running for 3 years and the uptake and exposure has been continually increasing during this time. Although it is too early for any statistical evidence to show that the Programme has had an impact on these children's oral health, all the process evaluations in which the UHB participates are positive and encouraging. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the programme is being well received by parents and their children. In due course the Child Dental Surveys should demonstrate how successful the programme is.

3. Whether the programme is operating consistently across Wales in all areas of need;

As one of the original two super pilots, the UHB was responsible for devising the operational guidance. This guidance has subsequently been rolled out across Wales.

All the D2S teams use resources consistently, with uniform leaflets and branding designed by the Cardiff University AVA department. Central meetings have been held with representatives from all the Welsh D2S teams and the Chief Dental Officer, to review and agree the documentation and procedures.

The Programme has received positive feedback from those schools participating; however not all the schools targeted have embraced the Programme.

D2S has a collaborative holistic approach, and endeavours to work alongside healthy schools. However, there are schools in the Healthy Schools Network that cannot participate as their pupils are not considered to be disadvantaged, or in need. This has and does cause problems, particularly for schools now entering the higher level healthy schools award, NQA, where toothbrushing is encouraged but the UHB is unable to provide support; anecdotal evidence suggests that schools in this position consider it to be reputable.

As part of the wider approach to the dissemination of healthy messages the Community Dietetics Service is supporting schools through the 'Gold Standards Healthy Snack Award Scheme'. This helps schools to achieve accreditation of settings and portfolios.

The UHB considers that higher level links between Education and the Health Social Services and Children Department within WG would be beneficial, in providing schools with appropriate recognition of their participation and, in particular in encouraging the relatively small number of schools yet to sign up to the D2S programme to do so.

4. How effective the expansion of the programme has been, particularly in relation to 0-3 year olds;

Appropriate interventions at this early stage can be very effective for future life chances. Particularly important are:

- high quality childcare and early years education

- good parental health promotion/education

D2S provides a comprehensive health and educational programme for parents and early years services. Training is provided for staff supervising the toothbrushing; parents are invited to oral health promotion and educational sessions and children have the opportunity to brush their teeth daily with fluoride toothpaste. The aim is not only to educate about dental health for today, but to help reduce serious problems in later life.

In line with guidance from WG it will be compulsory for Healthy Pre-Schools Programme to have D2S toothbrushing on the curriculum. This will be established in all areas during the next 6 months.

Access to pre-school prepares young children for main stream school and forms the basis for D2S to get young children brushing their teeth at an early age. It also helps with visiting the dentist, often making the all important first visit less traumatic. Anecdotal evidence from dental officers suggests that very young children who have been exposed to brushing in pre-school are much more amenable to their first clinical dental examination.

5. Whether the programme addresses the needs of all groups of children and young people;

Initially the programme was targeted directly to Community First schools, particularly focusing on preschool and infants. D2S has provided easier access and links to dental care that children may not previously have received, having a positive impact on children's dentistry along the way.

This specific targeting has enabled D2S to address the individual dental needs of the vastly differing areas across the UHB catchment population.

In partnership with the Community Dental Service, the programme also delivers screening within schools utilising the mobile dental service, visiting special and main stream schools.

In addition to the main stream schools, the UHB has expanded the D2S programme to special needs schools within its catchment area.

6. The extent to which the Designed to Smile programme has been integrated into wider local and national initiatives such as the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes and Flying Start;

D2S teams have been working with the following agencies, establishing strong, working partnerships, in a true holistic approach:

- Healthy Schools – D2S is part of the steering group and also part of the accreditation team for the Healthy School awards. D2S is always on the agenda for meetings.

- Flying Start (previously Sure Start) – providing training and resources for the staff and clients.
- Appetite for Life – D2S attendance on the steering groups
- Sustainable pre-school scheme – A member of the D2S team will sit on the interview panel for the new pre school practitioners, also the D2S tooth brushing programme is now compulsory for the pre school settings, where it is available.
- OCN (Agored Cymru) nutrition courses - D2S staff work with the nutrition departments in delivering the dental health module.
- WG initiative - English as a second language - D2S attendance on the steering group.

The Welsh Government Children and Young Partnerships core aim 1 is that every child should have a flying start in life and the best possible basis for their future growth and development. Local authority and health services, voluntary sector and community groups provide a network of services that support families with young children, and D2S forms part of this network.

7. The current and potential implications for paediatric dentistry, including reviewing the strengthened role of the Community Dental Service in children's public health.

The D2S Programme has enabled paediatric dentistry to reach right across Wales at pace, regardless of geographical or social boundaries: More children than ever before are exposed to the medically proven benefits of fluoride on a daily basis. Coupled with the introduction to the vital oral health messages, it is hoped that the programme will lead to the development of lifelong healthy practices and habits.

D2S teams work in close synergy with the CDS, enhancing the channels through which children and young adults can access dentistry. Already, despite only being in place for a few years Dental Officers are noticing that the programme does influence whether children participate in the toothbrush programme or not.

Increased staffing levels, and varying skill-mix have served only to develop the CDS, enabling it to provide a more preventive, needs lead service in the most deprived areas of our responsibility.

Dental Health Support Workers have been recruited. These comprise non dentally qualified staff who have experience of working with young children. They provide vital administrative support for the D2S team. This new cohort of health workers has proven to be a great asset in terms of preparation for school visits and supporting the oral health educators.

The corporate image and branding that the programme brings has helped to support the existing infrastructure, an area that can only get stronger as the years proceed. The two new mobile dental units have helped to improve accessibility to children with no previous history of presenting for dental check ups or treatment.

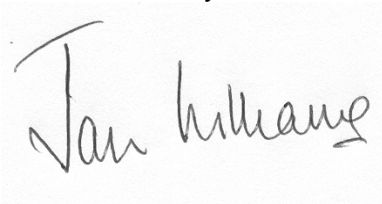
From Sept 2011 the UHB will be conducting a National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) funded clinical trial, in conjunction with Cardiff University. This will involve

assessing the effectiveness of two well known treatment options (fissure sealants or varnish on first permanent molars). Children will be recruited into the trial with positive consent and randomly allocated to receive either sealant or varnish.

Therefore a proportion of children who would normally be recruited into the WG fissure sealant programme will be taking part in the trial. Those children who do not form part of the trial will of course still be eligible for inclusion in the ongoing sealant programme.

I hope that this detailed response will be sufficient for your Committee; however, please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any additional information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jan Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

Jan Williams
Chief Executive

Copies to:

Mike Lewis, Divisional Director, Dental Services

Karen Elcock, Divisional Manager, Dental Services

Paul Hollard, Executive Director of Planning/Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Dr Sharon Hopkins, Executive Director of Public Health

Neil Desmond, LHB / NHS Trusts Corporate Support Manager