

PRESS RELEASE



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PROVIDE CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING FOR ALL DENTAL TEAM, URGES MDDUS.

The recent publication of a new policy document on dental neglect in children highlights the need for all dental staff to have regular training in child protection, warns the Medical and Dental Defence Union of Scotland (MDDUS).

The policy – published by the British Society of Paediatric Dentistry – explains that a detailed assessment must be carried out in the event of suspected neglect.

According to the policy, dental neglect is defined as a “persistent failure to meet a child’s basic oral health needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s oral or general health or development.”

Aubrey Craig, head of the dental division of the UK-wide MDDUS says: “The dental team is uniquely placed to assess children suspected of suffering from dental neglect. The dentist may have treated the whole family, on several occasions, and will have developed a rapport with the individuals concerned.”

Craig points out that children attending over a period of time can be monitored and if suitable advice is being ignored, then an appropriate referral can be made. “Signs of neglect might include persistent poor oral hygiene, inappropriate clothing, poor growth, frequent injuries, development delay or attention seeking behaviour.”

MDDUS urges that dentists should ensure appropriate training for everyone in the team. “Families attending the dentist will be seen by three or four members of staff from the receptionist to the dentist or therapist,” explains Craig.

“If these individuals have the training recommended by the new policy document, then an appropriate referral can be made in relation to the harm or potential harm to the child.”

Ends

For further information contact Colin Calder on 0141 616 2677 or 07850 510881.

Note to editors

MDDUS is a medical defence organisation providing access to professional indemnity and expert medicolegal advice for doctors, dentists and other healthcare professionals throughout the UK. For further information on MDDUS go to www.mddus.com.