



### **NASDAL DCby1 Practice of the Year Award Winners – The Maltings Dental Practice**

*The Maltings Dental Practice in Grantham share their experience of becoming inaugural winners of this important award...*

At the recent BDIA Dental Showcase, CDO for England Sara Hurley, presented us with the NASDAL (National Association of Dental Accountants and Lawyers) Dental Check by One Practice of the Year 2018 award. This new initiative from NASDAL seeks to recognise a practice that has successfully introduced the BSPD Dental Check by One into their practice. The aim of the Dental Check by One campaign, of course, is to increase the number of children who access dental care aged 0-2 years.

The award is important as it illustrates the fact that doing the right thing is the right decision from a business perspective too. Supporting Dental Check by One not only educates patients and children about their oral health but means we move nearer to the significant goal of all children being able to access the dental care they need.

Our practice has supported the Dental Check by One campaign since it was launched and it fits in with the ethos of how we provide dental care. We pride ourselves on our family dentistry and the oral health of children. We are passionate about engaging with children and their parents to encourage good oral hygiene and dietary habits. We feel it is so important to start young and get into a good routine of regular brushing and visits to the dentist. We feel lucky to be in a position where we can help make a difference and help reduce the preventable dental extractions in so many children. Many of our team members have children themselves so are naturally driven in this area.

We have monthly practice meetings to discuss ideas and ways in which we can improve our care and promote good oral health. We recently discussed that many overseas parents, now living in the UK, only bring their child to the dentist when in pain. We believe there's not enough knowledge and promotion in our local area for parents to understand that their child can have free routine dental care on the NHS. By promoting this information in local GP surgeries and nurseries, it should increase the number of children that are seen by the age of one.

One key change our practice has made is when a child fails to attend their appointment; we have sent a letter to explain that the appointment has been failed. Previously the letter stated 'you have

failed the appointment', now it states 'child was not brought to the appointment'. We hope this will prompt the parent to contact to rebook.

Our reception team have regular training on delivering key messages, targeting expectant parents and delivering those vital messages of the importance of bringing your child to the dentist and how to prevent dental issues in the long term. We hand expectant parents starter packs which explain key information, for example teething, diet advice and reducing sugar intake. A child's toothbrush is also given.

Like yours, our waiting area is a busy environment! There are posters promoting Dental Check by One, FAQs and explaining it is normal for your child not to cooperate at their first dental examination; allowing your child to become familiar with dental surroundings regularly can build the child's confidence. Our waiting room is also breastfeeding friendly – we inform patients via signage.

Some of the other ways that we have promoted Dental Check by One include:

- Social media has drawn a huge amount of attention and prompted existing and new parents to contact us to book their child's first dental examination
- Taking part in the Prevention Road Show campaign. This involved speaking with other practices about different topics including Dental Check by One and Making Every Contact Count. Minutes were taken throughout the evening and our practice held a meeting to put forward our thoughts and to discuss if any changes could be made to improve care
- A children's activity week where nurses in our reception area met with families and completed activities with them. These proved very popular with the children and the parents felt very comfortable asking questions to the nurses that they may not have felt so comfortable asking a dentist
- We promote National Smile Month every year and last year we created a photo booth in our reception and children with parents' permission had lots of fun using the dental props to create photo memories
- We regularly attend schools and nurseries to provide vital education on dental health
- Display boards and a TV in our reception area showing Dental Check by One prevention messages
- We have created a card, which can be handed out promoting apps such as Brush DJ. These apps can be downloaded on smart phones, with the intention to make tooth brushing fun and increase the child's tooth brushing habit
- Our online blog is proving to be popular with patients

The proof of the pudding is in the eating - we have welcomed over 50 new children to the practice in the last few months and we believe that our efforts as a practice have contributed to this increasing number.

Winning the NASDAL Practice of the Year award has meant so much to all of the team at the practice – just listen to what three of us have to say:

Louise Butler, Practice Manager: *“It’s fantastic that we’ve won this award and been recognised for our team effort. We look forward to continuing with this initiative and making greater steps in the future.”*

Susie Verow, Oral Health Educator: *“I feel very fortunate to be part of dental practice where we can reach out into the community to make as many people aware of the DCby1; it’s a whole team effort and feel very proud that we won the NASDAL award.”*

Jason Wong, Partner: *“I am a General Dental Practitioner and have always found that the overarching principle that prevention is better than cure fundamental in my career of more than 20 years. “Getting serious about prevention” is also a key feature of the NHS long term plan. We try to achieve this principle in the practice and in particular for children. In recent years I have, as the Chair of the Local Dental Network for NHS England Central Midlands, had the opportunity to further this work with various oral health initiatives trying to improve the oral health of the population in our local area from participation in the Oral Health Alliance Group in Lincoln and serving as the Vice Chair to both the Oral Health Promotion Partnership board in Leicester as well as the Oral Health Alliance Group in Luton. Personally, professionally, as a practice and a network, we have been behind the concept of early attendance at a dentist for prevention advice to be given for some time. Our practice took part proactively in the Prevention Roadshow and our team organised a meeting to bring some of the suggestions back into practice. As a team we will continue to develop this important work over the coming months and years.”*

## **ENDS**

Note to editors:

NASDAL, the National Association of Specialist Dental Accountants and Lawyers, was set up in 1998. It is an association of accountants and lawyers who specialise in acting for and looking after the accounting, tax and legal affairs of dentists. It is the pre-eminent centre of excellence for accounting, tax and legal matters concerning dentists. Its members are required to pass strict admission criteria, and it regulates the performance of its members to ensure high standards of technical knowledge and service.

Nick Ledingham, the Chairman of NASDAL, is available for interview. To organise to speak to him or any other members of NASDAL for more information please contact Chris Baker.

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