

## Lowerbank Dental Practice

### Prevention and Public Health Policy

This practice is committed to delivering better health as outlined in the document 'Delivering Better Oral Health An evidence-based toolkit for prevention'. We use the Ask, Advise, Act approach where appropriate and all patients are given the benefit of advice regarding their general and dental health, not just those thought to be 'at risk'.

Advice is given to patients according to their risk factors and their age. The advice includes the prevention of caries, periodontal disease, oral cancer and erosion, for example:

- The benefits of fluoridated toothpastes and other oral care products and providing patients (and parents/carers of young people) with appropriate oral hygiene instruction
  - The benefits of breastfeeding as opposed to formula feeding in infants. Introducing babies to drinking from a free-flow cup from the age of 6 months. Brushing infants' teeth as soon as they erupt
  - The promotion of healthy diet, with less sugar and fat and more fruit and vegetables. Advice is given in line with the Eatwell Guide and other government recommendations
  - A check on smoking status including smokeless tobacco, offering appropriate advice on quitting to lower the risk of periodontal disease, oral cancer and other problems that arise from smoking
- Information on support services is offered to patients who wish to give up smoking or smokeless tobacco
  - Assessment of alcohol use, based on available tools such as AUDIT-C, to identify alcohol abuse and dependence
- Referring or signposting high-risk drinkers to their GP and local alcohol support services
- The screening of patients for early signs of mouth cancer
- The reduction of dental injuries by encouraging people to wear mouth shields for contact sports
- The prevention of tooth wear by using a recognised system, such as Basic Erosive Wear Examination (BEWE) at the beginning of each course of treatment

Patients are provided with the relevant advice on: tooth brushing, self-care plaque removal, fluoride, diet, alcohol consumption, lifestyle and smoking cessation as found in 'Delivering Better Oral Health' when it is appropriate and in the best interests of the patient. We take an approach to avoid defensive behaviour from patients and allow them to admit they want to make changes and seek help. Therefore, we have a personalised approach to help each patient understand the changes required, whilst respecting their individual preferences, values and level of risk.

The care delivered at this practice encourages the prevention and early detection of ill health and enables the person to make healthy living choices and the latest versions of the BPE (Basic Periodontal Examination) screening tool is used to examine children.

Throughout the course of every patient's life, our aim is always to provide them with the relevant support, care and advice by reviewing and identifying the patient's risk status at the start of and during each course of treatment.

The patient's dental and general health are assessed at check-up appointments. Patients are referred if undiagnosed medical conditions are suspected.

Team members will be kept up-to-date with any changes to this policy arising from with updated guidance or initiatives from local and national health agencies.