

# British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry

By C. Albert Yeung, President-Elect, BASCD



British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry (BASCD) is the UK's professional association for the science, philosophy and practice of promoting the oral health of populations and groups in society. BASCD was founded in 1973 with a specific emphasis on preventing and controlling oral diseases and conditions. BASCD is a multidisciplinary association with members including nutritionists, sociologists, psychologists, health service managers, health intelligence and public health specialists as well as members of the dental team. Maria Morgan became the BASCD President in 2020. She is the first non-clinical public health specialist who was elected as president.

BASCD plays a key role in supporting dental epidemiology in the NHS. It is responsible for the coordination of surveys of child dental health across Great Britain allowing national and local comparisons of oral health. Surveys started in 1985/86 in England and Wales, and then in 1987/88 Scotland began to participate. Northern Ireland also participated from 1993/94. Since 2003 the various country programmes have differed, as a reflection of devolution and local priorities.

BASCD guidance and standards have underpinned school dental surveys of

primary and permanent teeth for over 30 years. More recently surveys in places other than school have been carried out in line with this guidance. The BASCD co-ordination role has been key to ensuring that resulting data across the UK were comparable.

Prudently, after publishing *Choosing better oral health: an oral health plan for England* in 2005, the Department of Health in England commissioned BASCD to produce a prevention toolkit as a guide to delivering the plan. *Delivering better oral health: an evidence-based toolkit for prevention* (DBOH), published in 2007, was the result. The toolkit targeted at all members of the dental team and has been well received at all levels and has influenced toothpaste manufacturers to reformulate their products to more effectively prevent tooth decay. BASCD members have been involved with the regular updates of DBOH with version 4 expected to be published in 2021.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, BASCD has prepared a suite of video resources for the public. The first video, *Looking after you, your family and all your smiles!* provides some helpful pointers for the general public, emphasising how to look after their teeth and mouth during lockdown, which is especially important when access to dentistry is limited.

The second video explains how to access dentistry during lockdown; there were four versions of these, one each for the constituent countries of the UK (with contact numbers for all areas within England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland).

The third video helps to raise awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding and to address some mothers' fears about doing this during the COVID-19 pandemic.

These videos are co-badged with the Faculty of Public Health and are available at [www.youtube.com/channel/UChmY9yZLGBklALoL31kLhUQ](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UChmY9yZLGBklALoL31kLhUQ).

BASCD works with and supports various partners to improve population oral health and reduce health inequalities.

These partners include Cochrane Oral Health Global Alliance, Faculty of Public Health, International Centre of Oral Health Inequalities Research and Policy, National Oral Health Promotion Group and Sustain.

The benefits of becoming a BASCD member include:

- Opportunities to shape the future of oral health promotion: its scope of work through policy development and committee involvement in education, policy and standards
- Being kept up to date with all issues relating to the promotion of population oral health
- Free online access to *Community Dental Health* journal including back issues
- Save money with competitive member-only rates for the BASCD and EADPH conferences
- Networking opportunities with like-minded people at BASCD events, meetings and conferences
- Continue your professional journey with great value CPD available at bi-annual conferences
- Peer networking opportunities through committees and access to online specialist network
- Vote and speak at BASCD Annual General Meetings
- Connect with us on social media – Twitter @BASCD\_uk
- Be part of BASCD council, help shape the future of our association.

The value of the benefits, especially networking with like-minded colleagues and quality CPD events, outweighs the cost of membership. There are also 'multi-buy' deals for joint membership with the European Association for Dental Public Health.

BASCD runs an annual essay competition in memory of a former member of the organisation, Keith Woods. The purpose of this prize is to spark undergraduates' interest and enthusiasm in dental public health. It also organises a number of poster competitions during conferences.

If you are interested in oral health promotion and prevention of oral disease, then come and join BASCD to achieve this goal. More information is available at [www.bascd.org](http://www.bascd.org). ■