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Children's oral health should be focused on prevention and requires a reform in public funding, says Denplan

An evidence session held by the House of Commons Health Committee has heard of the improved, but still highly concerning state of children's teeth in the UK. Experts from NHS England and Public Health England told the Committee that overall, children had better teeth than ever before, but expressed concern that there was disproportionate disease amongst those from deprived backgrounds.

The Committee noted that a review of legislation now meant that parental consent was required before children at school could have a dental examination, and that this had reduced the number of children surveyed, potentially under-representing the amount of tooth decay identified.

Roger Matthews, Chief Dental Officer at Denplan Ltd said: "We submitted evidence to this hearing since we believe that good dental health in childhood is vital, not only for lifelong oral wellbeing, but for good overall health as well. Recent surveys show that one in eight three year olds, and one in four five year olds have tooth decay. Over 60,000 children a year are admitted to hospital to have teeth extracted under anaesthetic, and figures for 2012 and 2013 show this number is not declining.

"Current NHS arrangements make it more difficult for dentists to care for children with the worst dental health, and this is a prime reason to reform the system introduced in 2006. If we cannot prioritise the health of our children, we are funding inadequately and inappropriately.

"Prevention is key, since almost all dental disease is preventable. But this takes time, skill and resource, and the emphasis for public funding should rightly put children at the forefront."

As the leading provider of dental plans, Denplan promotes children's dental health through a preventive and minimal intervention approach to care. Affordable, high-quality dentistry with



regular family visits means that problems can be identified, reducing the risk of needing more extensive treatment.

References

Public Health England/BASCD surveys of five year old (2011) and three year old (2013) children in England, and ONS statistics on hospital admissions 2011/12 and 2012/13

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Notes to Editors:

About Denplan

Denplan Limited is the UK's leading dental payment plan specialist owned by Simplyhealth; with more than 6,500 member dentists nationwide caring for approximately 1.7 million Denplan registered patients. Established in 1986 by two dentists who pioneered the concept of dental payment plans, Denplan has been at the heart of dental care for over 25 years. Today, Denplan has a wide range of dental plans for adults and children, enabling patients to spread the cost of their private dental care through a fixed monthly fee. Denplan supports regular attendance and preventive care, reducing the need for clinical intervention and helping patients to maintain healthy teeth and gums for life. Patient enquiries telephone: 0800 401 402 Dentist enquiries telephone: 0800 328 3223

www.denplan.co.uk

- Denplan Care: all routine and restorative care + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Denplan Essentials: routine care only + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Plans for Children: routine and other agreed care + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Membership Plan: registered with the dentist + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Denplan Emergency: worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover only
- Company Dental Plans: company funded, voluntary and flexible benefit schemes

Denplan also provides a range of professional services for its member dentists and their practice teams, including the Denplan Quality Programme, Denplan Excel Accreditation Programme and Denplan Training. Plus regulatory advice, business and marketing consultancy services and networking opportunities.

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- Simplyhealth became its own brand in 2009 after bringing together HSA, BCWA, LHF, HealthSure, Totally Active, its family of health companies
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- Simplyhealth is a trading name of Simplyhealth Access, which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and Prudential Regulation Authority
- Simplyhealth as it stands today, now covers nearly four million people with health plans (more than any other company) and helps 20,000 companies with their employees' health
- Simplyhealth is committed to making a positive impact on its communities. Each year, it donates over £1 million to health related charities and causes

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