



## PRESS RELEASE

Friday 1 September 2017

### **Brits' dental health in jeopardy as 1 in 20 admit they NEVER visit the dentist<sup>1</sup>**

**Annual Oral Health Survey shows up to three million could be putting their dental health in danger as fear of the dentist and money worries lead to dental avoidance.**

Britain could be reclaiming its reputation as the nation of bad teeth as a new survey from dental payment plan specialists Denplan by Simplyhealth Professionals reveals over one in 20 admit to never visiting the dentist. Even more shockingly, 1% even admit they NEVER brush their teeth, which could represent over 500,000\* of us!

For those who avoided the dental chair and visit the dentist less often than once every two years, 39% said they were too scared of the dentist or pain, and the same number claimed they couldn't afford check-ups.

In a worrying socio-economic trend, over half of UK adults (52%) said they'd cancel a routine dental appointment if they had financial worries, despite check-ups costing as little as £20. Young people aged 18-24 were the age group most likely to cancel.

14% of those that don't regularly visit the dentist said they couldn't access an NHS dentist, while one in five were worried they'd uncover further issues that needed treatment. In contrast, 91% of those with a dental payment plan went to the dentist every six months.

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<sup>1</sup> All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 5,068 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 24th January - 2nd February 2017. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

\* ONS mid 2016 population estimates states there are 51,767,543 UK adults (18+), 1% of 51,767,543 = 517,675



Despite rumours from across the pond that Britain's teeth are some of the worst in the world, according to University College London and Harvard University, Britons dental health is no worse than our American counterparts, in fact, the average person in Britain is missing 6.97 teeth, while in America the average is 7.312.

But these emerging bad habits could spell bad news for future generations, with almost one in 20 (4%) parents of children aged 18 or under saying their child never brushed their teeth and 7% admitting they never took their child to the dentist.<sup>3</sup>

Shockingly, 43% of parents of children with a filling said their child had their first one aged seven younger. Almost a quarter of parents of children aged 18 or under whose child had a filling (23%) said they had been given their first filling at five years or younger.

The findings from Denplan by Simplyhealth Professionals correspond with a report by the Royal College of Surgeons which showed record numbers of under-fives having rotten teeth removed. Findings also revealed that hospital extractions among pre-school children have soared by 24 per cent in just ten years<sup>4</sup>.

Even babies are affected — last year alone, 47 children under the age of one had newly grown milk teeth taken out.

Commenting on the figures, Henry Clover, Director of Dental Policy, Simplyhealth Professionals said “It's clear from these findings that more work needs to be done to properly educate the British public on the importance of good dental health. Seeing your dentist regularly means that any potential dental problems can be spotted early on, reducing the need for invasive or expensive treatment. If you are worried about the cost of dental care, it is always worth talking to your practice to find out if they have options

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/health/news/12054216/Americans-do-not-have-better-teeth-than-the-British-study-concludes.html>

<sup>3</sup> All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 4353 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 25th January - 2nd February 2017. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-4336918/The-rotten-truth-kids-teeth.html>



available, such as a dental payment plan or subscription plan, which can help you budget or spread the cost throughout the year.”

**-ENDS-**

**For more information on the survey results or Denplan by Simplyhealth Professionals please contact Hannah Mepham [hmepham@thisispegasus.co.uk](mailto:hmepham@thisispegasus.co.uk) or Beth Heard [bheard@thisispegasus.co.uk](mailto:bheard@thisispegasus.co.uk) or call 01273 712 000**

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **The survey data**

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#### **For the children’s oral health section:**

Parents of children aged 18 years old and under took part in this survey; and if there was more than one child in the family, we asked parents to answer based on the child whose birthday fell next.

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#### **About Simplyhealth Professionals:**

In February 2017, Denplan rebranded as Simplyhealth Professionals.

#### **Dental**

Simplyhealth Professionals is the UK’s leading dental payment plan specialist with more than 6,500 member dentists nationwide caring for approximately 1.7 million patients registered to a Denplan product.

Simplyhealth Professionals provides the following range of leading Denplan dental payment plans under the Denplan name:

- 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



- Denplan for Children: routine and other agreed care + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Denplan Membership: registered with the dentist + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Denplan Hygiene: A dental payment plan without dental insurance for all types of practice from NHS, mixed and private to support patients commit to a consistent hygiene programme.
- Denplan Emergency Insurance: worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover only

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

Dentist enquiries telephone: 0800 169 9962.

For Patient enquiries telephone: 0800 401 402

For details of all of our products, visit [www.denplan.co.uk](http://www.denplan.co.uk)

### **Vets**

Simplyhealth Professionals is the UK's leading pet health payment plan specialist with more than 1,800 member vets nationwide caring for approximately 600,000 registered pets.

Pet owner enquiries telephone: 0800 169 9958

Vet enquiries telephone: 0800 587 2581. [www.pethealthplans.co.uk](http://www.pethealthplans.co.uk)

### **For more information about Simplyhealth Professionals:**

Kate Maybank  
Simplyhealth Professionals Press Office  
Tel: 01962 829 130  
[katema@denplan.co.uk](mailto:katema@denplan.co.uk)  
[Pressoffice@denplan.co.uk](mailto:Pressoffice@denplan.co.uk)

### **About Simplyhealth**

In the world of healthcare, more than anywhere, experience counts. Since 1872 – long before the existence of the NHS – Simplyhealth has been helping people to make the most of life, by managing their everyday health needs. That's why today we ensure over 3 million people in the UK have access to the health products, services and support that they need, when they need them and at a price they can afford.

We're the kind of people who live by our purpose: we're here to help people make the most of life through better everyday health. We're proud to be the leading provider of everyday health cash plans, dental payment and pet health plans. And whilst we may be 144 years old, we're not afraid to innovate. Whereas once we were known purely for cash plans, we now offer a wide range of products



and services with one thing in common: an unflinching desire to cater for peoples' everyday health needs – now and into the future.

We exist to help people make the most of life through better everyday health. That's our purpose. We use charitable partnerships to also deliver that purpose, going beyond our products and services, but very much aligned to our business strategy. As a result of our success, in 2016 we were able to donate £1.7m to our charitable causes, supporting 23 different charities including Revitalise, Music in Hospitals, Brainwave Centre and Auditory Verbal, touching the lives of thousands of people across the UK.

Our future success and performance will enable us to deliver our ongoing pledge to donate 10% of our profits to charity every year, supporting health-related charities that share a similar outlook to us and a dedication to helping people with everyday health challenges make the most of life.

Simplyhealth is a trading name of Simplyhealth Access, which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority.

**For further information:**

[pr@simplyhealth.co.uk](mailto:pr@simplyhealth.co.uk)

<http://newsroom.simplyhealth.co.uk/>

[@SimplyhealthUK](https://www.instagram.com/SimplyhealthUK)

[Facebook.com/SimplyhealthUK](https://www.facebook.com/SimplyhealthUK)

[pr@simplyhealth.co.uk](mailto:pr@simplyhealth.co.uk)