

NHS England publications **gateway reference: 000318**

Dear Pharmacy Team,

The NHS England Community Pharmacy Oral Health Campaign commences on 13 May 2019, running for one month until 13 June 2019. This coincides with National Smile Month. The community pharmacy campaign is targeted at the parents or carers of children under the age of five. This campaign is part of the up to six campaigns that community pharmacies must participate in as part of the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework and has been agreed with PSNC.

From 29 April to 5 May, Colgate-Palmolive, our commercial partners, will deliver:

- One A3 “Monster teeth” poster, which can be displayed in the public area of the pharmacy for the duration of the campaign
- A range of supporting materials, such as leaflets and brushing charts, which pharmacies may wish to share with patients.

Please find attached an infographic on [Top tips for preventing tooth decay](#) which can be used as an alternative to the Colgate branded poster, and PHE’s [A quick guide to a healthy mouth in children](#). Staff who have completed the Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education’s (CPPE) ‘Children’s Oral Health’ training module (available from <https://www.cppe.ac.uk/gateway/oralhealth>) should recognise the advice relating to children under the age of five in the briefing. Families and carers of children aged under five years may be identified when they attend the pharmacy with the child or collect a prescription for the child, or when they purchase GSL or P products suitable for children under five years old. This opportunity should also be taken when talking to customers about their purchases of things like comforters (dummies), teething products and baby milk/food.

In some areas it may be difficult for parents to secure a dentist’s appointment for their child. The Office of the Chief Dental Officer, England, has worked with Local Dental Networks (LDNs) to share information with Pharmacy Local Professional Networks (LPNs) on dental practices welcoming new child patients. Where available, this **information should be shared with patients who have had difficulty in making an appointment** for their child. In some areas where this is not possible, pharmacies should direct patients to use existing local **dental access helplines** where available or the **NHS website**, www.nhs.uk (formerly NHS Choices). If after contacting several dental practices the patient can't find a dentist accepting NHS patients, they can call NHS England's Customer Contact Centre on 0300 311 2233 or contact their Local Healthwatch (<https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/your-local-healthwatch/list>).

For urgent/emergency dental care or advice, families/carers should call 111.

Next Steps:

- If you are concerned that you have not received campaign materials from Colgate by **7 May 2019** please contact england.communitypharmacy@nhs.net .
- Ask patient-facing staff to **familiarise** themselves with the messages in the “A quick guide to a healthy mouth in Children” briefing (attached) so that they are ready to **communicate** this advice to appropriate patients (usually parents or carers of children aged under five)



- If your LPN has shared a list of local dental practices welcoming child patients during the campaign, or there is a local helpline to help patients find appointments, ensure this is available to the pharmacy staff so they **can share this information** with patients.

Additional information which you may find helpful is overleaf.

If you wish to access **additional information/resources** you may find the following websites helpful:

- The NHS.uk page on children's oral health: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/taking-care-of-childrens-teeth/>
- PHE resources: <https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/69-top-tips-for-teeth/resources>
- Oral Health Foundation National Smile Month information and resources: <https://www.dentalhealth.org/Pages/Category/national-smile-month>

The following **apps** can be recommended to families/carers to help them care for children's teeth:

- Brush DJ (to help time tooth brushing): <http://www.brushdj.com/>
- Tooth SOS (advice for dealing with dental trauma such as a broken tooth): <https://www.iadt-dentaltrauma.org/for-patients.html>

Conversation starter suggestions;

If you have an opportunity to begin a conversation about oral health promotion with families/carers of children aged 5 and under, you may find the following 'conversation starters' helpful:

- 1) Has your baby's first tooth come through? Is your baby teething? Have you taken your baby for their first dental check-up? Have you heard of the Dental Check by One campaign?

Take your baby to the dentist for their first dental check-up when their first tooth comes through, at the latest by their first birthday.

- 2) Have you heard about our national campaign to help keep children's teeth healthy?

We're encouraging families to take their children to the dentist regularly and start children's healthy dental habits early. Leaflets and toothbrushing charts are being distributed to pharmacies and dental practices by Colgate during the campaign – you may wish to offer these to the child's parent/carer. Toothbrushing charts are also available online.

- 3) Has your child got a dentist? Would you like any help with booking your child a dental appointment?

Signpost to NHS practices with availability or to local helpline (where available), or to NHS website (formerly NHS Choices). Dental issues such as tooth decay/rotten teeth can cause a lot of pain for your child and lead to missed days off school and work for you, your dentist will be able to give you full advice on how to prevent this.

- 4) Did you know that NHS dental care is free for children under 18?

Other members of the family may also be eligible for free dental care – information can be found on the NHS website (<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/dental-health/who-is-entitled-to-free-nhs-dental-treatment-in-england/>).

5) Would you like a toothbrushing chart to help your child with toothbrushing? Did you know children should be supervised whilst they're toothbrushing until around the age of 7?

Help your child to brush their teeth twice a day – before bed and on one other occasion. You should supervise your child's toothbrushing until they're around 7 years old. Children under the age of 3 years should be using a smear of adult toothpaste, and those over the age of 3 years only a pea sized amount.

6) Did you know cutting down on sugary food and drink is the best way to prevent tooth decay in your child?

Try and keep sugary food and drinks with meal time only.

7) Is your baby starting to eat solids? Are you weaning your baby? Is your baby bottle feeding?

From the age of six months, bottle-fed babies should be introduced to drinking from a free-flow cup.

Bottle feeding should be discouraged from 12 months old. Only breast or formula milk or cooled, boiled water should be given in bottles. Only milk or water should be drunk between meals and avoid adding sugar to foods or drinks for your baby.

8) Have you heard of the Brush DJ App? It's a fun way of helping children brush their teeth for the recommended 2 minutes. [Show the App \(link above\) to parents and carers.](#)