

LLM by Research for Ian Kerr BDS MSc

An investigation into General Dental Practitioners (GDPs) experiences of obtaining valid consent from patients suffering with debilitating pain before and after the impact of COVID 19 related restrictions to care

Participant Information Sheet

Study Title

An investigation into General Dental Practitioners' (GDPs) experiences of obtaining valid consent from patients suffering with debilitating pain before and after the impact of COVID 19 related restrictions to care

Invitation

You are invited to take part in this research project which forms part of my LLM by Research which I am undertaking at the Kent Law School, University of Kent.

You are invited to take part but do not have to if you do not wish to; there are no disadvantages to you if choose not to participate.

What is the purpose of the Study?

The study aims to look at how confident GDPs feel when obtaining valid consent from adult patients suffering with acute dental pain. The questionnaire looks at the impact that

the restrictions placed in response to COVID-19 has had on the delivery of acute pain management and how GPs have coped with this challenge. It will assess the impact, if any, of various factors that are outlined in the survey.

Why have you been invited to take part?

You are a member of the online dental forum Dentists for Dentists that is run via Facebook. As membership of this forum is restricted to dentists it is being used as a way to access as many GPs in the UK as possible.

Do I have to take part?

While your help would be greatly appreciated and would assist in furthering our knowledge of how pain requiring urgent care is currently being managed, participation is completely voluntary. You are perfectly entitled not to take the survey, should you wish. You have the right to withdraw from the survey at any time until submission of the completed questionnaire. Due to the anonymous nature of the survey, withdrawal from the survey is impossible once the questionnaire has been submitted by the participant.

I am happy to discuss any aspect of this study and questionnaire with you, and if you are unsure of anything, please do contact me before completing the questionnaire.

Incentives

There are no incentives available for taking part; your participation is entirely voluntary.

Will my participation be confidential?

The questionnaire will remain anonymous. No personal information is collected.

What are the risks and benefits of taking part?

There are no foreseeable risks involved in taking part in this study. It is anticipated that

completing the questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes. While there is no direct benefit to each individual who completes the questionnaire, it is hoped that the knowledge gained from the research will help dentists identify ways to improve outcomes, for both dentist and patient, when adults attend for emergency appointments.

How is the project funded?

The project is entirely self-funded. There are no sponsors or contributors.

What will happen to the data?

The survey data will be used as part of my LLM by Research and may, if suitable, be used as part of a publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

Can you withdraw from this study if you change your mind?

The questionnaire is entirely anonymous, so it will not be possible to identify any individual response. Any completed questionnaires will remain part of the study once they have been submitted.

What should you do if you have a concern regarding this study?

If any potential participant has any concern or complaint relating to the content of the questionnaire or the approach of the research, then they should contact the supervisor Prof Sally Sheldon S.Sheldon@kent.ac.uk

Principal researcher email: ik262@kent.ac.uk

How will your anonymous responses be stored?

During the data analysis phase of the research all anonymous survey responses and data files will be stored securely on my password protected laptop and backup storage using double authentication system approved by University of Kent.

The final data file will be stored in the University of Kent Data Centre is an onsite secure controlled All data stored at the University of Kent is under Information Compliance - Data Protection Code of Practice:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/infocompliance/downloads/data_protection_CoP.pdf.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

Consent (please complete this questionnaire only once)

CONSENT: I confirm that I have read and understood the purposes of this research and have had the opportunity to consider the information and my involvement : I understand that my involvement is voluntary, and I consent to participate in this study for research purposes * *Required*

[+ More info](#)

Section 1 Practitioner Background

I currently practice dentistry in the UK as a GDP in a primary care setting (NHS or Mixed or Private practice)

* *Required*

- Yes
- No

Which year did you qualify? (Primary Dental Degree) *Optional*

- 1970-1979
- 1980-1989
- 1990-1999
- 2000-2009
- 2010-2020

Geographically, which part of the UK is your primary practice based in?

- England
- Scotland
- Wales
- Northern Ireland

Which country did you qualify as a dentist in? *Optional*

- UK

Non-UK

Do you have any additional university backed post-graduate dental qualifications
Optional

Yes

No

For adult patients only, approximately what percentage of your practice income relates to NHS *Optional*

1-24% NHS

25-49% NHS

50-74% NHS

75-99% NHS

100% NHS (No Private)

100% Private (No NHS)

Section 2: please read the following clinical scenario and answer the few short questions that follow

Jim is a 56 year old new patient with no relevant medical history seeking urgent care for his constant, severe toothache. Jim thinks the pain is coming from his lower right jaw. Painkillers help a bit but the pain kept him up all night. Hot drinks make the pain much worse.

On examination the lower right first molar has deep decay and shows slight periapical change radiographically but is in a restorable condition. The tooth forms part of the only functioning molar pair on that side and he has limited chewing function on the left. There are no significant probing depths, swelling or lymphadenopathy evident.

Jim is clearly distressed by the level of pain that he is in and when questioned on what he wants to do with the tooth Jim says “I don’t care what you do, just get me out of pain”.

Please answer the questions below that relate to how you might treat Jim as a patient in need of urgent care.

Since June 2020, how long would you expect to allocate to this urgent care visit?

Optional

- Less than 20 minutes
- 20-30 minutes
- 30-45 minutes
- Over 45 minutes

Would the appointment routinely be offered as an AGP slot or non AGP?

- AGP
- Non AGP

If you were unable to provide treatment as an AGP at this appointment which of the following treatment options would you be most likely to offer Jim for his pain? *Optional*

- Continue with painkillers and come back another day
- Antibiotics
- Refer to a center where AGPs can be delivered
- Extraction
- Not applicable, always offer AGP

If you did not feel able to offer Jim all appropriate options for his pain relief would you discuss this fact as part of the consent process? *Optional*

- Yes
- No

How would you rate your chances of obtaining valid and appropriately informed consent for treatment in this case?

Optional

- No likelihood
- Highly unlikely
- Highly likely
- Certain

In this scenario what risks would you consider to be materially relevant to Jim?



Section 3 Understanding of Montgomery

Are you aware of the ruling of Montgomery v Lanarkshire Health Authority(2015)?

Optional

- Yes
- No

To what extent do you understand the changes that this ruling has brought about to how we approach healthcare decisions with our patients? *Optional*

- Not at all
- A little
- A good understanding
- Clear and substantial

In one or two lines please summarise what you understand the case of Montgomery v Lanarkshire means in terms of providing dental care.

When discussing treatment choices for pain relief (extraction V endodontics) what would you identify to be the main material risksthat you most commonly discuss with your patients?

To what extent, if at all, have you changed your daily practice when providing urgent care to adult patients in severe pain to reflect the changes brought about by the Montgomery ruling? *Optional*

- Not at all
- Minor or slight changes
- Substantial changes
- Total change to our daily practice

Given the additional challenges to delivering dental care post June 2020 do you feel that you now pay more, less or the same level of attention to the impact of the Montgomery ruling when discussing treatment options with patients? *Optional*

- More
- Less
- The same

Final section: Practice strategy for managing acute dental pain as an emergency appointment before and after June 2020

Since June 2020 when dealing with patients requiring urgent care for severe pain do you carry out a remote triage consult (either by phone or video links such as Zoom) prior to the face to face appointment? *Optional*

- Never
- Seldom
- Most of the time
- Always

Prior to the lock down of March 2020 when dealing with patients requiring urgent care for severe pain did you carry out a remote triage consult (either by phone or video links such as Zoom) prior to the face to face appointment? *Optional*

- Never
- Seldom
- Most of the time
- Always

When seeing adult patients in severe pain which treatment discussion are you most likely to have with the patient? *Optional*

- Comprehensive discussion of all reasonable options
- Immediate pain relief only
- Only treatments that I feel confident delivering
- Only treatments that are available at my practice

When treating patients in severe pain how often do you obtain a signed consent form prior to treatment? *Optional*

- Never
- Seldom
- Most of the time
- Always

In the period following the return to work *after* the closure of dental practices in March-June 2020 to what extent, if at all, have you found the restrictions imposed on treatment have reduced your ability to provide optimal care for patients suffering with severe dental pain? *Optional*

- Not at all
- Minimally
- Significantly
- Totally changed all aspects

If your treatment options have been reduced because of the imposed restrictions, do you inform your patients of this and how is this reflected in your consent process? (Please give examples)

Submit

That's it, the questionnaire is over. If you are here at the end of working through all the questions, thank you so much: please click "Finish" and you are done!

If you have been redirected here right from the start it is either because you clicked "No" to the consent question or to the question asking if you are working as a GDP in the UK. Sadly a "No" to either question means that you cannot take part in the questionnaire, sorry. If this answer was clicked in error then please just go back to the beginning and go again.

Final page

Thank you very much for taking the time to answer this survey. The findings from the survey will be used in my LLM MA dissertation and subsequent publications

Kind regards

Ian

Key for selection options

1 - CONSENT: I confirm that I have read and understood the purposes of this research and have had the opportunity to consider the information and my involvement : I understand that my involvement is voluntary, and I consent to participate in this study for research purposes

Yes

No
