

Inside This Issue

- BSG Winter Conference 2026
- Update from past BSG Research Grant Winner
- Highlights from recent events
- Meet the Committee
- Webinars
- BSG Spring Meeting 2026 recap
- Calling Early-Career Professionals and DCPs
- New Clinical Guidelines to Support Oral Health Care for Older Adults
- Social media

Please inform the Membership Secretary if you change your email or postal address.

membership@gerodontology.com

Please send your contributions for future newsletters via the contact form on the website:

www.gerodontology.com

BSG Newsletter

Q3 2026



BSG Winter Conference – London, The Wellcome Collection

‘Oral Health in Later Life: What Matters Most’

Save the date: Thursday 3rd Dec 2026

CPD Points: 6

Speakers’ line-up includes:

Dr Martien Kelleher (Consultant in Restorative Dentistry)
Prof. Janet Clarkson (Professor of Clinical Effectiveness)
Dr Sarah Kaddour (Consultant in Dental Public Health)
Dr Emily Sherwin (Consultant in Special Care Dentistry)

Registration and abstract submission for poster competition will open soon. We look forward to seeing you there. <https://www.gerodontology.com/courses-and-events/>

Free DCP places at the Winter Conference

Apply for a complimentary place at the BSG Winter Conference! Applicants must have BSG DCP membership in place by the closing date. Oral Health Promotion Leads who are BSG members are also eligible.

To apply, email contact@gerodontology.com by **23 October 2026**, including:

- Your name, employing organisation, GDC number (if applicable) and dietary requirements.
- A supporting statement of **150–200 words** outlining your involvement in dental care and oral health for older people, and why you would like a complimentary place.

Applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis, with places allocated according to UK region and supporting statement. Successful applicants will be notified on **28 October 2026**.

BSG Newsletter Q3 2026

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Update from past BSG Research Grant Winner

This year BSG-RCSed research grant is now closed to application. Thank you to those who have put in an application and we will be in touch with applicants in October.

In the meantime, let's hear from our past grant recipient Dr Lydia Barker-Chapman:

"Having received this generous grant whilst in my second year of specialty training in SCD in the North East and North Cumbria deanery, I have had the opportunity to further explore my interest in dental education.

Thanks to the support of the British Society of Gerodontology, I have made progress with a research project exploring dental students' perceived barriers and facilitators to careers in Special Care Dentistry and Gerodontology. Specifically, these funds have directly supported transcription of interviews, and will be put towards presenting outcomes at the BSG Winter Meeting 2026. Currently we are able to code the data quickly and easily thanks to the external transcription, which brings us one step closer to exploring the data and quotes thoroughly. Thus far overarching themes indicate that dental students feel they would benefit from increased exposure and experience of Special Care Dentistry including role modelling. They are largely unaware when they are treating patients with additional needs. I am looking forward to the next stages of thematic analysis and write up along with the support of project supervisor Dr Rebecca Wassall and colleague Emma Elliott. The project aims to contribute to changes in SCD and Gerodontology education, helping to develop students' experience, knowledge and ultimately increase interest our speciality as a career. "

Lydia will also be providing an update presentation at our winter conference.

Highlights from recent events: IADH Conference 2026

It was a privilege for some of our committee members (Dr Becky Wassall, Dr Gerry McKenna, Dr Yvonne Rooney and Dr Mili Doshi) to share their expertise as invited speakers at the International Association for Disability and Oral Health (IADH) Congress which took place in Dublin from 19-22 August 2026. Committee member, Dr Xin Yeo presented a case report poster on complex decision making for an older patient at the Conference. Their presentations spanned dental education, ageing, nutrition, palliative care, inclusion health and special care dentistry, reflecting the breadth of knowledge and experience within our membership.

International meetings such as iADH provide an invaluable opportunity to collaborate with colleagues from around the world, exchange ideas, share innovation and learn from different approaches to improving oral health for people with disabilities, complex needs and older adults. thought around priorities for prevention, digital innovation and how we approach resource allocation going forward. We need to ensure oral health is part of wider prevention and embedded in communities, improving oral health will support the shift from hospital to community care.

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Meet the Committee - Trainee Representative, Dr Laura Smith

Q: You have an impressive background as an Elite International Multi-Sport Athlete. What first got you into competitive sport, and what did you love most about it?

Elite sport seems like such a long time ago now! I raced at that level during university, although I quickly realised that life as a dentist takes up considerably more time than life as a dental student! I still race and occasionally have a few crazy dreams about lining up on a Duathlon World Championships start line again, but for now I'm focusing on some more personal goals that may, or may not, help me get there.

My parents were both enthusiastic athletes and sport was simply part of our family life growing up. Then, in 2015, I met my husband, who is a professional triathlete. He really helped me navigate the world of elite sport and supported me through my journey as an athlete.

The thing I love most about competitive sport, is the people. I've made some of the most amazing friends, people who are equally crazy and dedicated, and who understand a world where hard work and determination really can pay off.

Q: What inspired you to pursue Special Care Dentistry, and was there a particular experience that made you realise it was the right path for you?

I had an amazing opportunity as a teenager to work with Mencap, helping to deliver an outdoor activity programme for children and adults with additional needs. It was my first real introduction to working with people experiencing social and health inequalities, and it had a lasting impact on me.

When I started dental school, I quickly became interested in Special Care Dentistry and began to think that maybe I could build a career in this area. I'm very fortunate that I've been able to turn that ambition into reality, and it's a privilege to work in a field that I first discovered such a long time ago.

Q: You recently presented at a sports dentistry conference. What was your presentation about, and what did you enjoy most about stepping outside special care dentistry and sharing your work with a different audience?

I recently presented at the UK Sports Dentistry Association Conference, which had a spotlight theme on 'Para-sport and Oral Health'. I have a particularly special connection with para-sport. My husband currently works as a guide for Dave Ellis, a visually impaired triathlete. Together they have achieved incredible successes, including becoming Paralympic, Commonwealth and World Champions. Through my husband, I've met so many incredible athletes, who have become friends for life.



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BSG Newsletter Q3 2026

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My presentation focused on the intersection between Special Care Dentistry and oral health in para-sport. I explored the similarities between the patient groups, shared real-life stories, and considered how disability-informed approaches can provide more accessible and individualised dental care for para-athletes. I hope this is an area that I can continue to contribute to.

Q: You've successfully balanced university, competitive sport and now your professional career. What's your secret to keeping all those plates spinning?

For me, it comes down to having a great support network. It's impossible to do everything alone. Surrounding yourself with people who champion and support one another makes such a difference, and I believe that with the right people around you, anything is possible.

I also think you have to enjoy what you do. Special Care Dentistry never really feels like work because I genuinely love it. The same applies to endurance sport. Running and cycling are how I switch off after a stressful day. I love being outdoors, connecting with nature, and pushing my physical limits.

Q: Finally, if you could give one piece of advice to a dental trainee who is interested in Special Care Dentistry or getting more involved with BSG, what would it be?

Don't wait for opportunities to arise, make your own. You won't go far wrong with showing enthusiasm and a willingness to get involved. We're a friendly group and are always happy to chat, whether you're interested in Special Care Dentistry, Gerodontology, or simply want to find out more about what we do.

BSG has so many exciting opportunities for all. Look out for upcoming conferences, committee vacancies, poster and oral presentation competitions, and research opportunities. For more information I would head to our website and socials, which have all the latest news.

Webinars

We're pleased to share this webinar organised by the OCDO, titled **"Oral Health in an Ageing World- Strategic and Clinical Direction"** which was successfully delivered by two of our committee members, Dr Rakhee Patel and Dr Rebecca Wassall on the 10th of September 2026 from 6:00-7:30pm.

Recording will be available to those who registered: <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/8820e666-de77-45a4-97f0-cfd9ecda6b5c@37c354b2-85b0-47f5-b222-07b48d774ee3?source=email>

BSG Newsletter Q3 2026

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Aims of the Society

- Improve, preserve and protect the oral health of older people.
- Encourage research, publication and dissemination of information.
- Encourage and develop undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and training of the dental team.
- Promote links with other organisations, professional bodies, carers and the general public.
- Provide an advisory body to which questions concerning oral health for older people can be referred.

Social Media

Follow the BSG @gerodontology on Instagram and LinkedIn for up-to-date news and information.

<https://www.instagram.com/gerodontology/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/british-society-of-gerodontology-improving-the-oral-health-of-the-older-population-150985374/>

Recap: BSG Spring Meeting 2026

Our Spring Meeting in Exeter brought together colleagues from across dentistry and healthcare to explore oral cancer care in older adults, with a strong focus on providing compassionate, person-centred care from diagnosis through to rehabilitation and, where appropriate, palliative care.

A particular highlight was hearing perspectives from a range of specialties alongside the invaluable patient voice, reminding us that maintaining dignity, function, comfort and quality of life should remain central to everything we do.

Many thanks to our president Dr Camilla Boynton, the speakers, prize finalists, delegates and the BSG team for contributing to such an engaging and thought-provoking meeting.

The prize winner for the inaugural Janet Griffiths Memorial Oral Presentation Prize was awarded to Dr Kate Mortiboy for her presentation titled *"Making the Special Care Dentistry Department at Bristol Dental Hospital more Dementia Friendly"*.

Conference summary in BDJ: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41415-026-0064-2>



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Calling Early-Career Professionals and DCPs

Free Membership and Exclusive Discounts for Early-Career Dentists

Since September 2024, the British Society of Gerodontology (BSG) has offered **free membership** to all final-year dental students, Foundation Dentists, and Dental Core Trainees.

Membership provides access to a range of valuable **oral health resources, professional guidance, research grants, and prizes**. Members also benefit from a **10% discount on registration for the BSG Winter and Spring Conferences**.

This is a great opportunity for early-career dental professionals to develop their knowledge, engage with the field of gerodontology, and access valuable educational and professional opportunities.

A New Committee Opportunity: Dental Core Trainee (DCT) Representative

We are delighted to announce an exciting new opportunity for a Dental Core Trainee (DCT) to join the British Society of Gerodontology (BSG) Committee as our DCT Representative.

One of BSG's ambitions is to encourage more early-career dentists to become involved in the work of our Society and support them in becoming just as passionate about improving the oral health and care of older people as we are.

What's involved?

The successful applicant will:

- Attend at least one BSG conference each year.
- Attend two BSG Committee meetings annually, either virtually or in person.
- Represent the views and interests of Dental Core Trainees within the Society.
- Help shape how BSG engages with and supports younger members.

How to apply

Applicants must be BSG members. If you are interested in applying, please complete the application form online at www.gerodontology.com.

The successful applicant will also need to attend the Winter Conference, where new

BSG Newsletter Q3 2026

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committee members will be formally confirmed at the AGM following the meeting.

For any questions, please contact us at contact@gerodontology.com.

New Clinical Guidelines to Support Oral Health Care for Older Adults

BSG is excited to announce the publication of the new Clinical Guidelines to support oral healthcare for older adults, from the Faculty of Dental Surgery, Royal College of Surgeons of England.

By 2036, the number of people aged 75 and over in the UK is projected to increase by 25%. As more people keep their natural teeth into older age, dental teams need to be ready to adapt care as health and circumstances change.

We are delighted to see these important clinical guidelines published, supporting clinicians and the wider dental teams plan ahead, prevent problems and provide high-quality, person-centred oral healthcare throughout later life.

Good oral health supports healthy ageing. Prevention, personalised care and early intervention can help patients stay comfortable, independent and connected to the things that matter most.

Read the new guidelines and get practical recommendations on prevention, assessment, treatment planning, referral and end-of-life care:

https://www.rcseng.ac.uk/dental-faculties/fds/publications-guidelines/clinical-guidelines/supporting-oral-health-care-for-older-adults/?fbclid=PA21jcAUQFrDwZG9mAmV4dG4DYWVtAjExAHNyDGMGYXBwX2IkDzU2NzA2NzM0MzM1MjQyNwABp4nMsLpo--dp8lDAs3Qx1D-MIM-kXc3-QlZpClkAwRDQ7OpMzfjeihmFccjL_aem_miw7C-Of-5nbZZeCB2KSug

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