The dental environment

Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to participate it is important to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information and contact us if you would like more information.

Who will conduct the research?

The research will be carried out by Ellen O’Selmo from the BDA’s Research Team and other members of the Research Team.

What is the aim of the research?

The aim of the research is to explore the experiences of associates and how these relate to their working environment. The work will help inform future policy and strategy for general dental practice. We are looking to:

- Gain an understanding of associates’ professional autonomy
- Examine if, and how, clinical freedom has been eroded
- Understand more about the associate experience working within a corporate both positive and negative and contrast this with the feelings of associates working for non-corporates
- Learn about associates’ feelings about working for a corporate, both for those that work within one and those that don’t
- Investigate if previous practice ownership influences associates’ attitudes

Why am I being asked?

You have been asked because you are a dental associate currently working in the UK.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

You have the option of participating in an online focus group with other associates or being interviewed. Only other associates and the research team will be present at the focus group and interviews will be 1:1 with a member of the research team.

Focus groups will be facilitated by the BDA research team and consist of 8 – 10 participants. They will last approximately one hour normally at lunchtime or outside normal working hours. Interviews will be over the telephone and conducted using Skype for business. With your consent, focus groups and interviews will be recorded and transcribed.

If you decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign and return a consent form.

What are any possible disadvantages or risks of taking part?

There will be a demand on your time and this may inconvenience you. It is possible that sensitive issues may be raised in the course of the interview or focus group. A debrief sheet will be provided to all participants at the end of the focus group or interview giving details of support sources.
What are any possible advantages or benefits of taking part?

We hope you will find the experience of taking part interesting and useful as many people value the opportunity to talk about their experiences. You will have the opportunity to receive a report of the study findings if you wish to.

What happens to the data collected?

Data from all participants will be combined and analysed independently by the research team. The results will be used as the basis of a report for the BDA to inform policy decisions. Parts of the study may also be submitted for publication.

What about confidentiality and data protection?

All information you provide will be treated in confidence. Information generated during a focus group or interview will be fully anonymised and combined with that of other associates who agree to participate. No individual associate will be identifiable at any stage during the focus group by other participants or in discussions, publication or presentation of the findings. Data collected will be stored securely in a manner consistent with the Data Protection Act.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

If after consenting to take part you change your mind about participating, you can withdraw from the study at any time (including during or after the focus group or interview itself) before the data is analysed. Any data collected from you would not be included in the study.

Will I be paid for participating in the research?

No compensation will be paid.

Where will the research be conducted?

Focus groups and interviews will be conducted remotely. A computer with a good internet connection will be needed to participate in the focus groups.

What should I do now?

You should take as much time as you need to consider whether to take part. If you wish to take part you should complete an expression of interest form from the project’s bda.org/dentalenvironment and the research team will forward a consent form for you to sign. The expression of interest form asks you to provide demographic information to allow us to balance study participants with regards to features such as gender, work sector, length of service and NHS caseload. Dates and times for the focus groups and interviews are yet to be decided. If you do not wish to participate you do not need to do anything.

I have a question that is not answered:

Contact information for the project is below.

Thank you for taking the time to read this form, if you would like to participate or to know more about the project than please contact

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