



Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

April 2020

Dear Chancellor

Support for self-employed workers in the dentistry industry during the Covid-19 crisis

Further to my letter of a week ago, which set out the British Dental Association's concerns that many dentists could be overlooked by your announcement on support for the self-employed during the Covid-19 crisis, we have undertaken an urgent survey of our self-employed membership.

Given the severity of the situation, I am taking the earliest opportunity to share this data with you. We have heard from over 6,000 associate dentists on their income levels. Three quarters of them will be ineligible for support under your scheme.

Nearly half of respondents stated that they earn above the government threshold of £50,000 but less than £75,000: less than that of a Member of Parliament. While some will get limited support from the NHS, those working in private practice will receive nothing. Furthermore, over 10% of our respondents told us they were operating as limited companies, which again are seeing no support from Government.

Clearly the results have confirmed our fears: with routine care now suspended indefinitely, self-employed dentists, who are far from being in the realm of the 'super rich', face an unprecedented battle to stay afloat.

These highly-trained professionals safeguard the oral health of our nation in their day jobs, but have families to support and bills to pay like anyone else. They are understandably outraged at being left behind. Without the safety net of the £2,500 per month offered to other self-employed workers, many will face significant hardship and will be lost to the industry for good.

Therefore I urge you to amend your support package to either raise or remove the earnings threshold, so that dentists – and indeed also our healthcare colleagues working as locum doctors, pharmacists, and optometrists – are not unfairly penalised. Unless you are able to do this, I fear that the service will be decimated by the time that the pandemic is over.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin Woodrow', written in a cursive style.

Martin Woodrow
Chief Executive
British Dental Association

cc: Jo Churchill MP, Department for Health and Social Care