

BASCD 2022 ABSTRACT 17**Qualitative Evaluation of the BASCD Free Sugars Position Statement***Polglass, L.,^{1*} Morgan, M.²**¹NHS England, UK; ²Independent Scholar, Cardiff, UK***Background:**

The British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry (BASCD) have recognised the harm caused by sugar and the link between high sugar consumption, high rates of tooth decay and social deprivation. BASCD's position statement on free sugars was finalised in 2016. Whilst we await government publication of the most recent sugar reduction report, it is now timely to evaluate the statement to make recommendations for how to update, improve and implement activity.

Objectives:

To assess the profile and visibility of the position statement via a qualitative survey of key stakeholders. To consider its overall impact by determining whether recommendations have been implemented and collaborative action has resulted.

Methods:

Eight semi-structured interviews were transcribed and coded. Interviewees and stakeholders represented varying professional roles, including BASCD members, non-members, dental public health trainees, public health specialists, academics and national consultants. Codes were triangulated and an inductive approach to thematic content analysis was used to generate themes and complete qualitative analysis.

Results:

Four main themes emanated from the transcripts, including statement visibility, knowledge, impact and recommendations. A total of nine sub-themes and 20 codes were generated. Whilst the visibility and knowledge of the statement was poor; interviewees were supportive of its content and applicability to dental and wider public health. Overwhelmingly, they considered it required a higher profile for impact.

Conclusion:

Whilst the statement was positive, useful, and well-respected it was not visible. This has informed content and dissemination of the second edition to reflect current evidence and increase visibility. A communication strategy is being developed as part of a re-launch campaign during Sugar Awareness Week 2022, to help BASCD membership facilitate and improve oral health in their regions.

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