

I do not believe that allowing Dental Therapists to practice on adults has any merit.

Firstly, there is currently a huge unmet need for urgent work for children and allowing therapists to treat adults will misdirect them away from what is and always has been their primary purpose which is to treat children. There is currently an inability to fill all the dental therapist positions in the Childrens Dental Service and this will only worsen if Therapists can be picked up by general dental practices to treat adults.

Secondly, Therapists are currently not taught adequately to diagnose and provide informed consent for the range of treatment that adults might require so this would require a large modification to the teaching programme and a retraining programme for all current Therapists. The risk is that an under trained Therapist will either miss or inappropriately treat or not offer appropriate treatment for adult conditions that they do not fully understand.

Thirdly, Therapists are not adequately trained, and probably will not be adequately resourced in any private practice setting to provide satisfactory clinical treatment of adults except in a very second rate manner.

I believe that fully trained dentists should be providing the treatment for adults over 18 years of age.

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