

Development of two research-informed online learning modules for social care workers and dental teams on drug use and oral health

Cathy Shields¹, Stuart Bradwel¹, Christopher Mackie², Thushani Wijesiri¹, Doha Abhualhija¹ and Niall Mc Goldrick¹

1. School of Dentistry, University of Dundee; 2. Dundee Dental Hospital and Research School. C. Shields is funded by NES, on the SDEO Project.

Introduction

People who use drugs experience poorer oral health than the background population, impacting general health and mental health.

A Drugs Task Force was commissioned by Scottish Government to identify areas of need to address drug related harm in Scotland. Oral Health was identified as part of action at primary care level.

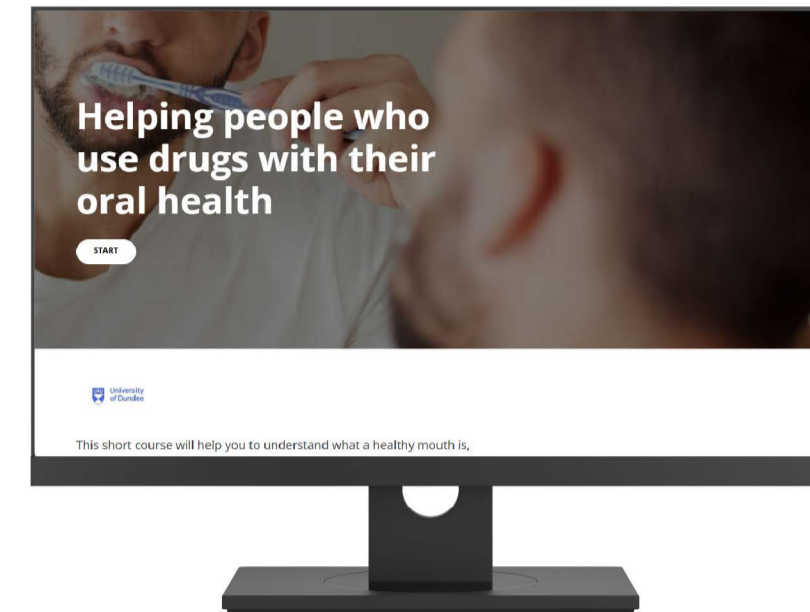
Following a period of focused research with people with lived experience of drugs, and health and social care staff to better understand educational needs, two online education modules were developed. The modules aim to enhance the knowledge and skills of the workforce with a view to improving the oral health of people who use drugs. This poster describes the development of the modules. The research that informed them will be reported fully elsewhere.

Methods

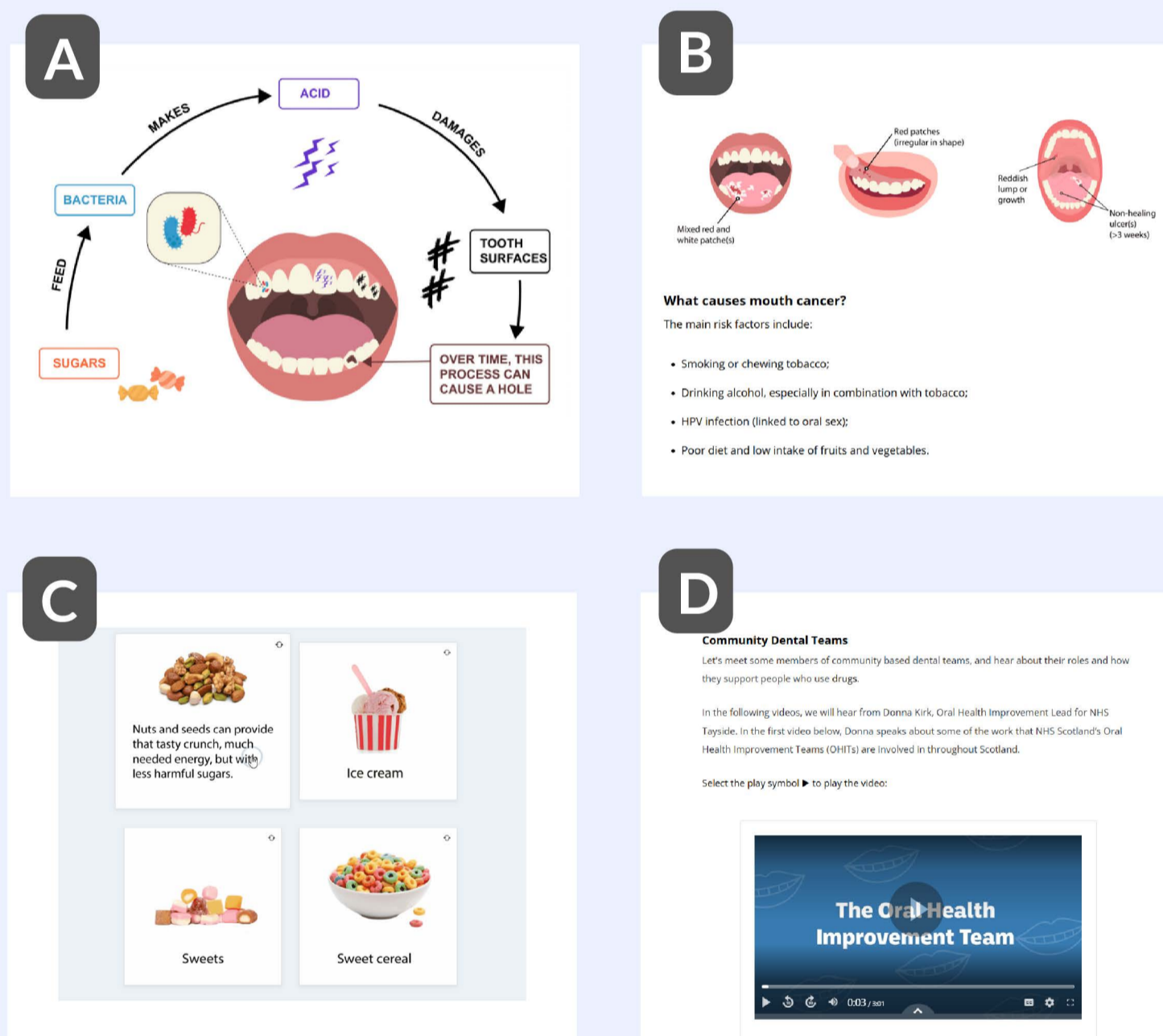
A diverse team (a Consultant in Dental Public Health, a Dental Core Trainee, a Research Fellow and a Learning Technologist) worked together to produce a storyboard for the content, mapped from the findings of the research project. The modules were developed using an iterative design process. An advisory group of 15 people (specialists in dental public health, oral health improvement and substance use) provided periodic feedback. One of the modules is aimed at social care and third sector workers (SSSC continued professional learning). The second module is for dental teams, with CPD available.

Results/Discussion

Key content in the social care/third sector workers' module includes a basic introduction to 'the unhealthy mouth' using schematics and diagrams. Learners are introduced to dental anxiety (common among people who use drugs), and how best to signpost to dental services. Key content in the dental team resource includes how to address stigma. Video interviews introduce dental staff to the role of local addictions teams. The modules are hosted on NES Turas Learn.

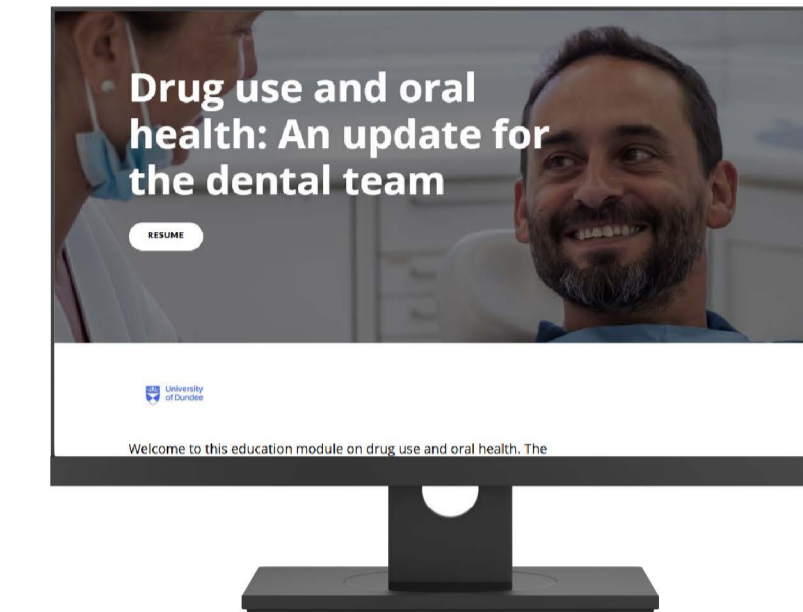


Module for Social Care Workers

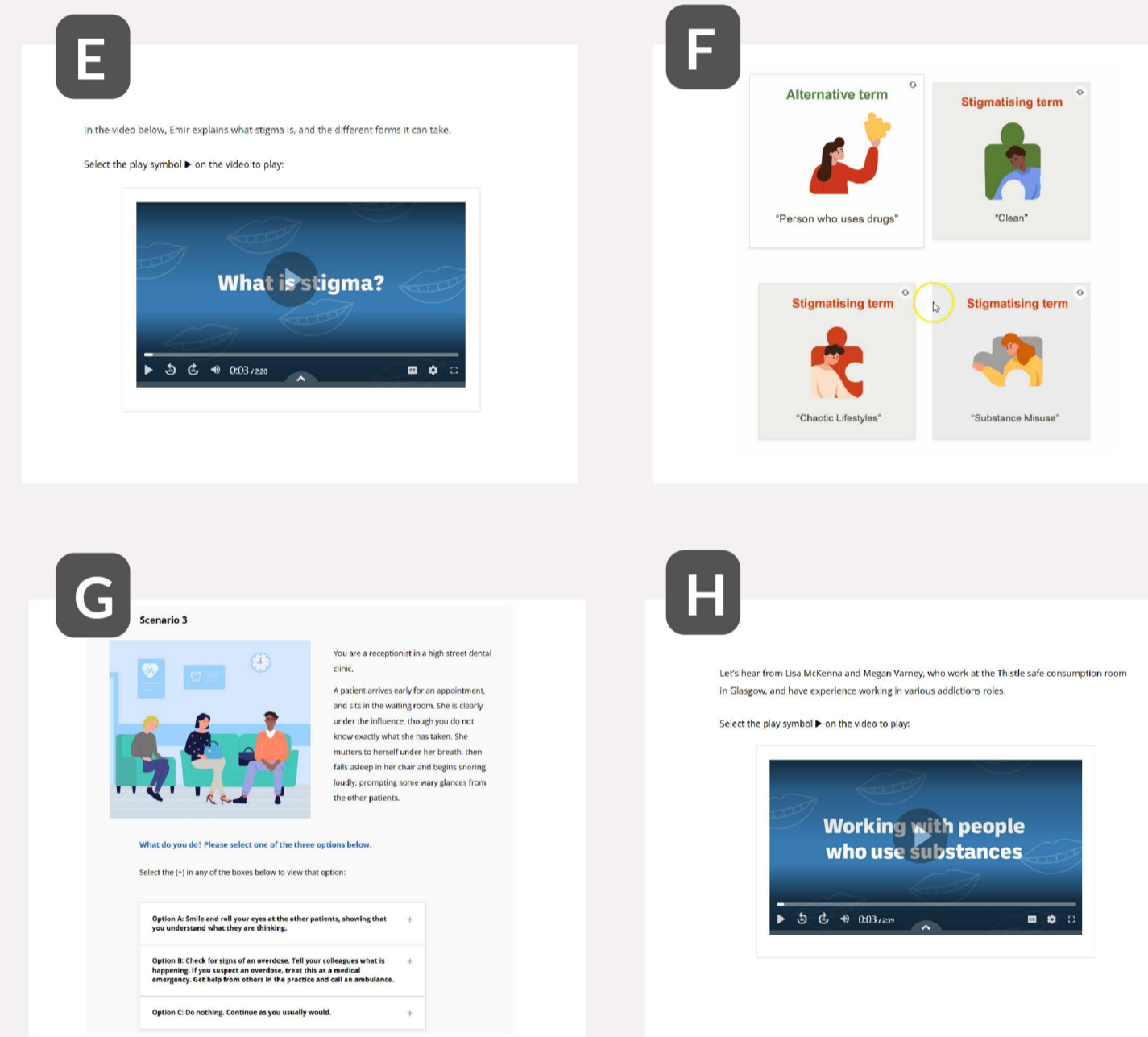


Example screenshots from the Social Care/Third Sector Module ('Helping People who use Drugs with their Oral Health')

- A:** Simple diagrams were adapted to illustrate dental decay.
- B:** The team worked together to produce simplified depictions of mouth cancer.
- C:** Flip card interactions suggested tooth-friendly alternatives to sweet snacks.
- D:** Video interviews introduced learners to dental teams.



Module for Dental Teams

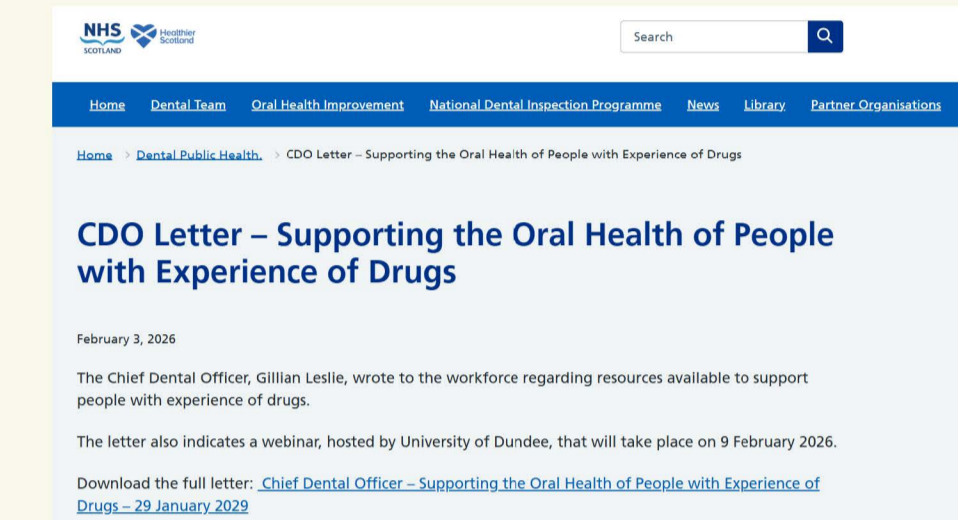


Example screenshots from the Dental Module ('Drug use and Oral Health: an Update for the Dental Team')

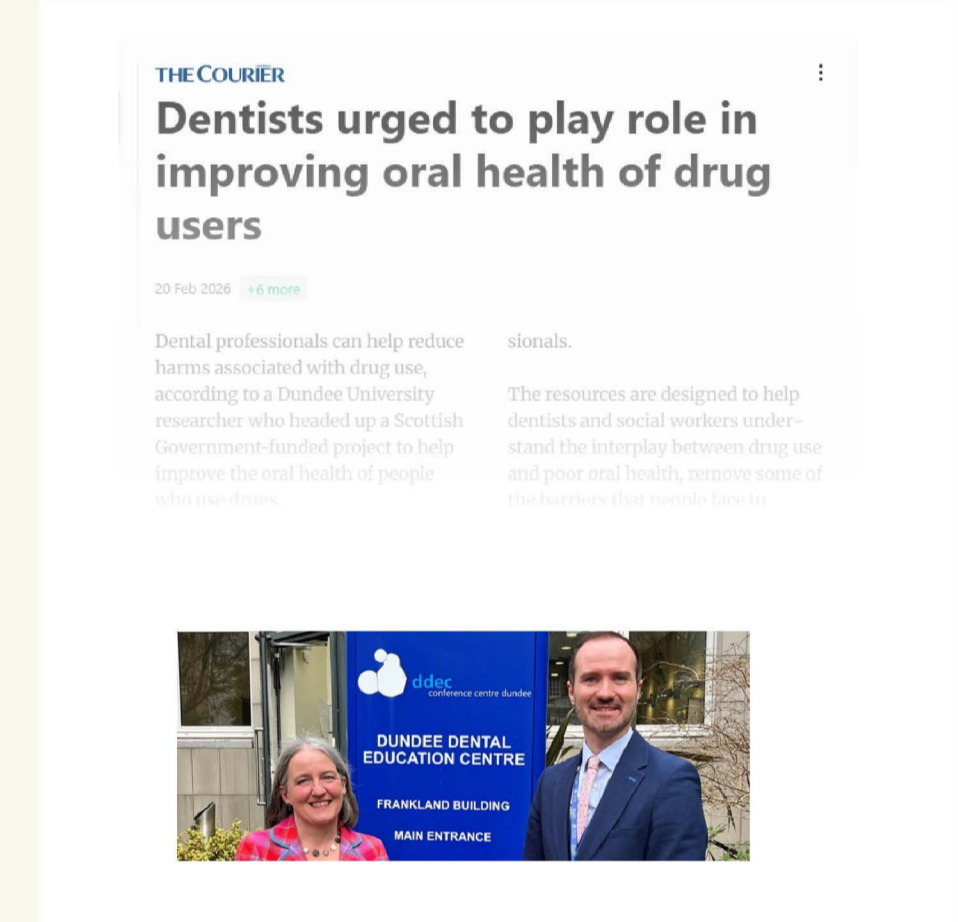
- E:** Video interviews introduced stigma/stigmatising language and behaviours and their potential impacts.
- F:** Flip card interactions suggested less stigmatising terms.
- G:** Interactive scenarios allowed learners to practise what they had learnt.
- H:** Dental teams were introduced to addictions teams through video interviews.

Project impact

Scotland's Chief Dental Officer has issued a letter to all dental teams in Scotland to consider the training:



Drugs and Alcohol Policy Minister, Maree Todd, visited The University of Dundee to discuss the modules:



The modules are mentioned in the new Scottish Alcohol and Drugs Strategic Plan:

