

DENTAL TRIBUNE

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News in Brief

Bottled water decay link

According to a recent report, government health officials and dentists have raised awareness that bottled water might be causing tooth decay complications. In the report they have suggested that bottled water does not contain a sufficient amount of fluoride, resulting in children's teeth being unprotected. The report even suggests that bottles water "seems it is doing more harm than good". As a result, government health officials and dentists have suggested that parents give their children tap water that contains fluoride.

Extra 1m people see dentist

An extra 1.12 million people have access to an NHS dentist since May 2010, according to new figures released by the NHS Information Centre. This follows a funding boost of an extra £28m and a call for dentists and PCTs to work more closely together to improve services for patients locally. Welcoming the figures, Secretary of State Andrew Lansley said: "I am delighted that an extra one million people are now seeing dentists through the NHS." To improve quality of care the Government is testing elements needed to develop a new dental contract, designed to increase access further and enable dentists to focus more on preventative care.

Founder receives honour

The Faculty of General Dental Practice (FGDP), part of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, has awarded LR Orthodontics and The Dentistry Business founder Dr Lester Ellman an honorary fellowship in recognition of his contributions to the dental profession. Dr Ellman accepted the fellowship at a ceremony on 8th May, at the Royal College of Surgeons, alongside those practitioners who were being awarded diplomas. The FGDP was founded in 1992, and provides CPD and training. The LR appliance from Oralign Ltd has revolutionised the procedure for straightening anterior teeth, enabling patients to wear the appliance for as little as 14 hours a day, including at night. The Dentistry Business has been innovative in creating a University accredited Certificate in Dental Practice Management as well as advising dentists on the running of their practices.

www.dental-tribune.co.uk

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Oral cancer CPD addition

Oral Cancer: Improving Early Detection becomes recommended CPD

The General Dental Council (GDC) has confirmed that Oral Cancer: Improving Early Detection is to be included as a 'recommended' topic in its Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme.

At its meeting held on Thursday 17 May members agreed to include the topic until new CPD rules and associated guidance come into force following the current CPD review.

The GDC introduced compulsory CPD for dentists in 2002 and for Dental Care Professionals (DCPs) in 2008.

Whilst the GDC has no current powers to introduce mandatory CPD topics, it has identified some 'core' topics that dental professionals should cover as part of their verifiable CPD. They are; Medical Emergencies, Disinfection and Decontamination and Radiography and Radiation Protection (or Materials and Equipment for Dental Technicians).

The GDC also recommends some subjects that can be completed as verifiable or non-verifiable CPD. They are Legal and Ethical Issues, Complaints Handling and, now, Oral Cancer: Improving Early Detection.

Commenting on the decision, Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter, said: "I am delighted to see this topic recommended for inclusion in the GDC's Continuing Professional Development scheme.

Dental professionals have and should always be promoted as the primary contact if patients are in any doubt. By recommending this topic is included in CPD, it will hopefully lead to a greater understanding of what is required in detecting mouth cancer early, and subsequently reducing mortality rates.

"I believe it is the Foundation's role to promote the huge benefits of early detection through campaigns such as Mouth Cancer Action Month. With early detection it is possible to transform a patient's survival chances from as low as 50 per cent to approaching 90 per cent. Although more cases of mouth cancer are being diagnosed each and every year, early detection is playing a vital role in ensuring mortality rates are not increasing at

the same rate.

"Discussing the main risk factors – smoking, drinking alcohol to excess, poor diet and the Human Papilloma Vi-

'Dental professionals have and should always be promoted as the primary contact if patients are in any doubt'

rus, transmitted via oral sex – with patients and making them aware of how important regular check-ups are, will only serve to increase the chances of early mouth cancer

detection."

CPD is a legal requirement of registration with the GDC and failure to meet the 250 hour requirement for dentists or 150 hour requirement for DCPs in a five year cycle could result in registrants being removed from the register and unable to practise. Registrants can check their cycle dates on the GDC website.

The GDC is currently reviewing its CPD requirements and throughout 2012 work will continue to develop a future CPD model, extensive stakeholder engagement and public consultation. All the details will be available on the GDC's website www.gdc-uk.org

Any new CPD requirements will not be introduced before 2013. [\[M\]](#)



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Economic downturn blamed for bruxism

According to recent reports, dentists have been warning that there has been an increase in the number of patients suffering with bruxism, or teeth grinding, since the start of the economic downturn.

Two contributing factors to teeth grinding are stress and anxiety, and many dentists feel that the current eco-

nommic situation is the reason behind the surge in patients in recent years suffering with the condition.

According to reports, tooth grinding affects between 8-20 per cent of the population; however, many experts believe it may be much more prevalent than this.

Dublin-based dentist Dr

Michael Crowe said that teeth-grinding usually occurs at night and can go unnoticed.

"Symptoms will include things like soreness or stiffness of the jaw, headaches, or even people becoming more aware of wear on their teeth," he said in the report.

"So there certainly seems to be a significant increase



Dentists have seen an increase in the number of patients suffering from bruxism

in the prevalence of this and as stress and anxiety are directly related to this, we can reasonably assume that in the current (economic) climate from the last number of years, this must have had some contribution to this phenomenon." ■

GDC "failing to monitor standards breaches"

According to Bridge the Gap, claimant dental negligence solicitors, adequate records are not being kept by the UK's dental regulator making it ineffective at protecting patients.

The Dental Law Partnership has reported that in the last five years the firm has encountered an increasing number of legal claims in which the dentists have no liability cover and/or completely fail to co-operate with the claims.

Chris Dean, Managing Director at DLP, said: "These dentists deprive patients of the protection of a remedy in law when dental treatment goes wrong. Frequently good solid legal claims involving these risk-creating dentists fail simply because of the lack of liability cover or the dentists' lack of co-operation with the legal process."

According to the statement, in March 2012 the Dental Law Partnership wrote to the dental regulator, the General Dental Council, requesting details under the FOI Act of the extent of the problem for the last seven years, and was very surprised to be told by the Dental Council that: "The GDC do not categorise hearing determinations by either type of complaint or which standards have been breached. There are no records to search therefore which accurately provide this information."

According to Bridge the Gap, Dental Council figures show that the problem is getting worse. Chris Dean said: "For the first four months of 2012 the figures show that 55 per cent of all concluded dentist conduct hearings involved dentists who created risk for their dental patients by not having liability cover or not co-operating with the formal

processes."

He added: "The rise in the number of dentists who put their patients at risk is bringing the dental profession into disrepute."

The General Dental Council admitted in March 2012 that it had no idea how its own registered dentists have breached their professional standards in the last seven years.

Chris Dean said: "How can the GDC be regarded as an authoritative voice in the monitoring and determination of the quality of dental care in the UK? It is failing in its primary function – that of protecting dental patients."

The law firm has responded to the regulator's failings by creating an awareness campaign calling for changes in the law. ■

BDA Chair's OBE Palace visit

The Chair of the British Dental Association (BDA) Executive Board, Dr Susie Sanderson (pictured), was recently presented with the Officer of the Order of the British Empire. The award, which was given as part of the 2012 New Year Honours, was conferred for her services to dentistry.

Dr Sanderson was the first female dentist to be elected to the role and will stand down later this year having served the maximum six-year term. She combines her BDA duties with working as a general dental practitioner in Yorkshire.

A long and distinguished career in dental politics has seen Dr Sanderson serve the

profession at both local and national levels. She is a previous Chair of Sheffield Local Dental Committee and in 2004 was elected Chair of the Conference of Local Dental Committees. She represents the Association on numerous outside bodies. A major interest is workforce issues and she sits on the Board of Medical Education England, where she is contributing to a major review of dental staff in the UK that is expected to be published later this year.

She also works on behalf of the dental profession internationally, on both the European and global stages, playing key roles at the Council of European Dentists and the FDI-World Dental Federation. ■



Help save water

According to new research conducted by Save Water Save Money and the British Dental Health Foundation for National Smile Month, turning off the tap when cleaning your teeth could save more than 12 litres of water per person, according to new research.

The research has revealed that nearly two thirds (64 per cent) of seven - 10-year-olds admitted to leaving the tap running while brushing their teeth and has shown that in homes using a water-saving aid, only six per cent of seven - 10-year-olds left the tap running, saving over 4,250 litres of water in the process.

The Foundation and Save Water Save Money are encour-

aging people to think about saving water as well as saving their teeth during the annual campaign, National Smile Month.

Chief Executive of the Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter, said: "Many people believe after brushing their teeth they should rinse their mouth with water, when in fact it is better for oral health to spit the toothpaste out. This ensures that the fluoride found in most toothpastes will remain on the teeth and therefore continue to remain effective."

Tim Robertson, Director of Save Water Save Money, said: "Linking one of National Smile Month's key oral health messages with the 'turn off the tap'

campaign makes it an action everyone can relate to."

Taking place from 20 May to 20 June, National Smile Month is the UK's largest oral health campaign.

Save Water Save Money is working in conjunction with the UK's Water Companies to encourage water efficiency by raising awareness of the high levels of water wasted in the bathroom. Some participating Water Companies are offering their customers free or discounted Toothy Timers, a two minute teeth timer with a funky crocodile attachment, in support of National Smile Month. ■

For further information on National Smile Month, head to www.smilemonth.org

Editorial comment

As we move into a world that is ever more online and viral it is interesting to see the power that the individual can now have.

I am referring to the recent news story regarding a teeth whitening company which was reportedly highlighted by Prime Minister David Cameron as a shining example of the kind of entrepreneurship that can save Britain's economy.

This story has had dentists furiously taking to the 'airwaves' via social media and online forums to express their disgust at not only the illegality of the business, but also the PM seemingly condoning said illegal activity!

This has also given rise to some dentists using their social media presence to ask questions

of this company about their validity and raise awareness of the standpoint of dentists with regards to tooth whitening. And this approach seems to be working!

The company in question is now aggressively trying to block any kind of discussion about their legality, even going to the lengths of blocking Twitter handles of dentists (and dental editors!) who comment or question on the situation.

There are unsubstantiated reports too of dental professionals writing on the company's Facebook page, but these are not available at the moment.

It will be interesting to see if this type of action will help make a difference, and if so can this be almost more effective than reporting to the GDC for prosecution? Let me know what you think.

Do you have an opinion or something to say on any Dental Tribune UK article? Or would you like to write your own opinion for our guest comment page?

If so don't hesitate to write to: The Editor, Dental Tribune UK Ltd, 4th Floor, Treasure House, 19-21 Hatton Garden, London, EC1 8BA

Or email: lisa@dentaltribuneuk.com

Brushing the wrong way

According to a recent report, almost all Swedes brush their teeth, yet only one in ten does it in a way that effectively prevents tooth decay. Researchers at the Sahlgrenska Academy, University of Gothenburg, are eager to teach Swedes how to brush their teeth more effectively.

Most Swedes regularly brush their teeth with fluoride toothpaste. But only few know the best brushing technique, how the toothpaste should be used and how fluoride prevents tooth decay.

In two separate studies, Pia Gabre and her colleagues at the Sahlgrenska Academy, University of Gothenburg, studied the tooth brushing habits of 2,015 Swedes aged 15-16, 31-35, 60-65 and 76-80 – how often and for how long, how often fluoride toothpaste is used, how much toothpaste is put on the toothbrush and how much water is used during and after the toothbrushing.

The results show that only ten per cent of the population use toothpaste in the most effective way.

Swedes could improve their oral health considerably by learning how to maximise the effect of fluoride toothpaste, according to Gabre.

Nevertheless, the study shows that 80 per cent are generally happy with how they take care of their teeth.

The researchers conclude that Swedes' knowledge about tooth brushing must be improved and that the provided advice must be made simpler, clearer and more easy to use. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22372508

Approximately 6,000 people in the UK annually are diagnosed with oral cancer - with an estimated 2,000 deaths every year

(Source: British Dental Health Foundation, www.mouthcancer.org)



Oral Cancer

prevention · examination · referral

Oral Cancer – prevention, examination, referral has been designed to support all health professionals by updating their knowledge, highlighting the importance of oral cancer screening, and providing practical tools for communicating with patients and colleagues

The programme comprises four topics:

- 1: The facts - Providing a background into the incidence, causes and development of oral cancer
- 2: Team Approach - Looking at all aspects of communication both within the team and with patients
- 3: Screening Examination - Practical advice on improving the opportunistic screening procedure in practice
- 4: Case Studies - Providing first hand experiences of examining, making referrals and living with oral cancer



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'Shop a salon', says dentist

A dentist has issued a rallying call to other dental professionals to stand up against illegal tooth whitening. Anthony Kilcoyne, a dentist from Howarth, West Yorkshire, made the following comments:

During Smile Month the public are being warned by Dental Professionals to beware of illegal tooth whiteners claiming to be specialists but who put public health and well-being at risk just to make profits by not following all the safety systems that dentists do.

Many of these companies say it's only cosmetic, but they risk

spreading diseases like Hepatitis and TB between customers or damaging teeth and gums irreversibly, by not having the knowledge or skills that dental teams do.

Don't ruin your Smile or your Health by risking these with people who are promoting their services for illegal and potentially dangerous tooth whitening techniques - the GDC, a public protection body, has already secured convictions in the courts, but Salons and shopping Malls are simply over-run with these illegal whiteners, that they now pose a significant threat to Public Health generally.

Please 'Dob in an Illegal Whiteners' by contacting some or all of the following:

• illegalpractice@gdc-uk.org

• <http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/>

• <http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/index.htm>

• <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/waste/32180.aspx>

• <http://www.theyworkforyou.com/mp/>

References

• The GDC has successfully prosecuted a director of Smile Style Clinics in the Westminster Magistrates Court March 2011 for the illegal practice of dentistry: <http://www.dentistry.co.uk/news/3845--Teeth-whitening-Teeth-Whitening-UK-Tooth-whitening-Tooth-whitening-GDC-wins-first-ever-qasosil>

• Ann Keen Secretary of State for Health in July 2007 confirmed that government supports the GDC position that Tooth Whitening is the Practice of Dentistry: 25 July 2007 : Column 1208W [R] [152011] <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/p...3w0006.htm>



Dentist calls for stop on 'salon' whitening treatments

liament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmhansrd/cm070725/text/70725w0033.htm

• The House of Commons has heard Ministers endorse EU legislation which says ONLY Dentists should perform Tooth Whitening as a public safety measure: See Hansard 23 Apr 2012: Column 700W [R] [104606]<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/p...3w0006.htm>

Keeping Britain smiling campaign

Colgate are running a nationwide Keeping Britain Smiling exhibition aimed at families, encouraging them to step into the unique world of their mouths, exploring what's behind their smile like never before.

This free, fun and interactive exhibition will both entertain and educate whilst promoting the importance of a healthy mouth. As a dental professional promoting good oral health, Colgate would like to extend an invitation to you and your team to attend one of the national venues, to see the Keeping Britain Smiling exhibition for yourself and share the unique experience with your patients.

Launching at The O2 in London, the Colgate Keeping Britain Smiling Exhibition will travel to six locations throughout the UK. This free exhibition features a number of exhibits designed to engage and entertain.

The exhibition will tour the UK and can be found at the

following venues:

• 7th May – 27th May: The O2 Arena, London

• 2nd June – 5th June: Hyde Park, London

• 30th June – 8th July: WestQuay, Southampton

• 15th July – 2nd September: Magna, Sheffield

• 12th September – 8th October: Glasgow Science Museum, Glasgow

• 12th October – 21st October: Westfield Shopping Centre, Stratford, London

For further information, please visit <http://www.facebook.com/ColgateKeepingBritainSmiling>



Receptionist's roof fall puts dental firm in court

The operator of a Sheffield dental practice has been fined for safety failings after a receptionist fell more than three metres through a roof light while spending her lunch break on the flat roof of the surgery.

During a two-week trial, Sheffield Crown Court heard the woman sat on the domed roof light, not realising how fragile it was. The plastic of the roof light gave way and she fell to the floor, injuring her back, shoulder, knee and neck and was hospitalised.

The jury heard that at least five other workers had used the roof, and were at risk of falling from the roof edge or through the roof lights.

The prosecution against the operator of the Sheffield practice was brought after a detailed investigation into the incident, on 25 March 2009, by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The court heard the flat roof of the surgery, based in Blyde Road, was easily reached using a door on the first floor of the main building. Although the door was locked, the key was left hanging nearby.

Some four years earlier, in a risk assessment by its own health and safety consultant, the practice had been warned the roof lights were fragile and that no protection was in place to prevent falls from the open roof edges.

The owner had also failed to act on advice to remove the keys to the roof access door and to post 'no entry' signs. The dental firm was found guilty of breaching the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and was fined £18,500 with costs of £71,652.79. HSE Inspector Mark Welsh said after the hearing: "Falls from height are the commonest cause of fatal injuries in the workplace and are also responsible for a large percentage of the most serious occupational injuries."

"While many falls take place in manufacturing and construction, the risks can be present in the most unlikely work environments and employers should assess the risks and then take the steps necessary to implement the controls needed to safeguard their employees."

"You don't have to fall from a great height to lose your life. It's wrong that workers like the one in this case suffer serious preventable injuries because simple steps have not been taken to manage obvious workplace risks."



New team to lead Peninsula

A top team of professionals has recently been announced to lead the new Plymouth University Peninsula Schools of Medicine and Dentistry.

The team includes world-leading clinicians in anaesthesia, neuroscience, haematology and molecular pharmacology, as well as renowned medical and dental educators.

Professor Rob Sneyd, who leads the new Plymouth University Peninsula Schools of Medicine and Dentistry, is a practising clinician in anaesthesia at Plymouth Hos-

pitals NHS Trust in Derriford, has been announced as the Dean of the Plymouth University Peninsula Schools of Medicine and Dentistry, supported by renowned consultant neurologist Professor John Zajicek as Associate Dean for Research; Professor David Bristow as Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning; and Professor Adrian Copplestone as Associate Dean of Student Affairs.

Professor Christopher Tredwin has been appointed as Head of the School of Dentistry and will build on the successful legacy of Professor Liz Kay, Foundation Dean and

Professor of Dental Public Health. Professor Tredwin is looking forward to further refinement and development of the School including establishing postgraduate dental courses and working to develop its research profile as a world leading dental school with outstanding facilities, a novel integrated curriculum and a firm foundation in primary care.

Professor C Oliver Hanemann, a nationally and internationally recognised clinical academic in neuroscience, has been named as Director of the new Institute for Translational and Stratified Medi-

cine and Mr Terry Vallance in his position as Head of Administration, will play a strategic role in the delivery of the School's clinical education and research missions, and ensure that its professional services support those aims.

The team have all been recruited from within the established and nationally renowned Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry and will now take forward plans to develop the structure of the new schools, including the recruitment of medical and dental educators in addition to scientists, clinicians and professional staff.

Professor Wendy Purcell, Vice-Chancellor of Plymouth University,

said: "These exceptional appointments demonstrate our commitment to building on PCMD's legacy as an innovative, patient centred and student focused medical and dental school, with a strong emphasis on research informed teaching."

"These appointments are also an important first step in taking forward our £25 million investment in life-changing 'bench to bedside' medical and dental research, focusing on developing new treatments for a range of conditions from neurodegeneration to cancer."

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FGDP(UK) publishes new antimicrobial prescribing standards

The Faculty of General Dental Practice (UK) launched its new standards book, *Antimicrobial Prescribing for General Dental Practitioners*, at the British Dental Conference and Exhibition last month.



Speaking at the launch, Dean of the FGDP(UK) Russ Ladwa (pictured) said: "This is a very timely book. I was at a talk this morning on the non-surgical treatment of periodontal disease, where the speaker talked about the over-prescription and misuse of antimicrobials. As a profession we need to ensure that antimicrobials are only prescribed when necessary and in the right dosage."

As well as being an essential reference tool, Mr Ladwa also said that the book provided practitioners with a useful opportunity to review how they work:

"As a practitioner for over 50 years I found through reading this book at least three changes I need to make when prescribing."

Antimicrobial Prescribing for General Dental Practitioners is an important standards book from the FGDP(UK), designed to help general dental practitioners with prescribing antimicrobial agents. This book expands on and updates guidance

provided in the previous book (*Adult Antimicrobial Prescribing in General Dental Practice*) including for the first time, dosage recommendations for children.

The authors have reviewed all of the available data and guidance, and consulted widely with professional bodies and specialist groups to provide a consensus on best clinical practice. The guidance gives clear, simple and practical advice on when to prescribe, what to prescribe, for how long and in what dose.

Editor Nikolaus Palmer said: "This book was produced to com-

plement the BNF and provide general dental practitioners with an 'in surgery' easy to read evidence based guide on the management of dental infections. The authors hope that the advice provided in the document will promote appropriate antimicrobial prescribing in primary care and improve the standards of patient care."

FGDP(UK) standards are viewed by many bodies including regulators and indemnifiers as the definitive guides to good practice in dentistry. This 2012 edition will prove to be an invaluable asset to any dentist's library. [D](#)

Help to follow healthy diet

Keeping track of what people eat and helping them choose healthier foods could be made easier thanks to a UK-wide consultation recently launched by Health Secretary Andrew Lansley.

UK health ministers want to see all food manufacturers and retailers use the same system to show – on the front of packs – how much fat, salt and sugar, and how many calories are in their products.

Around 80 per cent of food products sold in the UK already have some form of front-of-pack labelling. But different retailers and manufacturers use different ways of labelling which can be confusing for consumers.

Some use labels showing Guidelines Daily Amount (%GDA); some use traffic light colour coding that highlights high fat sugar and salt content; and some use both. Research shows that a consistent presentation, combining information, used across all products, would make it easier for consumers to compare the nutritional information provided on the food they buy.

If the biggest seven supermarkets used the same labelling for their own brand foods, it would cover around 50 per cent of the food sold in the UK and encourage others to adopt the scheme.

Health Secretary Andrew Lansley said: "Being overweight and having an unhealthy diet can lead to serious illnesses such as cancer and type 2 diabetes. We must do everything we can to help people make healthier choices."

"Offering a single nutrition labelling system makes common sense, it would help us all to make healthier choices and keep track of what we eat. Making even small changes to our diet can have a major impact on our health. Cutting our average salt intake by 1.6 grams a day would prevent over 10,000 premature deaths a year.

"Initiatives like the Responsibility Deal are already showing what can be achieved if we work in partnership with industry. For example, customers who buy 70 per cent of fast food and takeaways sold on the high street can see from the menu how many



Health ministers want a standard system for food packaging

calories are in their meals and half the high street has committed to cutting salt in household staples."

New EU regulations on food labelling were introduced at the end of last year that requires manufacturers and retailers to make many changes to their food labels. While providing front of pack information is voluntary under the regulation, every company that does so has to provide information about calories alone, or calories plus the amount of fats, saturated, sugars and salt.

The UK has always led the way in providing consumers will more information. Consulting now should help industry to identify a common scheme, which will bring benefits to consumers. [D](#)

GDC prosecutes former registrant

A Surrey-based dentist has been successfully prosecuted by the General Dental Council (GDC) and ordered to pay £2000 in costs for the illegal practice of dentistry.

On Friday 11 May 2012 Mr Richard Spencer, who formerly worked Aberfoyle Dental Surgery, Epsom Road, Epsom, Surrey pleaded guilty at Redhill Magistrates' Court to unlawfully holding himself out as being prepared to practise dentistry while not registered, contrary to Section 58 (1) of the Dentists Act 1984. He also pleaded guilty to unlawfully using the title of dental surgeon on registration forms at the above named premises, contrary to Section 59 of the Dentists Act 1984.

Mr Spencer has not been registered with the GDC since 2007.

All dentists, dental nurses, dental technicians, clinical dental technicians, dental hygienists, dental therapists and orthodontic therapists must be registered with the GDC to work in the UK.

Mr Spencer received a conditional discharge of 12 months on both offences and was ordered to pay £2000 towards GDC costs.

Chief Executive of the GDC Evlynn Gilvarry said: "We are committed to taking action against people who practise dentistry illegally, whether they've been removed from our register or never gained the qualifications to register in the first place. I hope this prosecution sends a clear message to others who may be tempted to practise unlawfully. They are a risk to the people they treat and we will do everything we can to ensure public safety." [D](#)



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Online access will 'make life easier'

Using information and technology to put people in greater control of their health and care is at the heart of the Government's strategy: The power of information.

More data about NHS and social care services is being published to support the public

in making meaningful choices based on things like success rates for treatment and infection control.

The Information Strategy for health and care also opens up information to consumer groups and IT specialists outside the NHS so they can produce tailored websites and apps for different patients. By providing NHS and care information to creative experts the government expects to see new products and services being offered to patients. Further key elements of 'The power of information' will make using the NHS easier for patients by providing

online access. Online services will include:

- Repeat prescriptions will be available online, speeding them up and increasing convenience for the millions of patients who need them
- Test results will be made available online, ending the wait for a letter in the post
- Patients' medical records will be available securely to them online so they can be viewed and referred to easily by patients and shared with anyone they choose to
- In future it will be possible

to contact GP surgeries by email, ending the hassle of calling switchboards and trying to find the right person to speak to

The momentum for these changes will be locally-led and include working closely with the voluntary sector to support the needs of those who might not be able to use the web, or have a smartphone or a computer. The Royal College of GPs has agreed to work in partnership with patient groups and other professional organisations to lead work on supporting people to access services and their records electronically. From 2015 the NHS Commissioning Board

will be asked to work with the RCGP to promote this work. As the case studies in the print and online versions amply demonstrate, successful innovation is being driven at a local level, led by nurses and doctors who see how technology can improve care.

All patients will be able to give immediate feedback, in ways that are convenient to them, at any encounter they have with a health or care service. This will drive improvements in quality, as well as making services more responsive to the people using them. [\[1\]](#)

The success premium of the perfect smile

More than half of Brits believe that the quality of their teeth has a major impact on their career or romantic life; yet according to healthcare group Bupa, only half of them visit the dentist regularly.

Their findings showed that:

- Three in five people (63 per cent) believe having bad teeth can prevent someone from finding a partner
- More than half (52 per cent) believe having nice teeth can help someone get a better job
- Almost half (46 per cent) be-

lieve having nice teeth can help a person to make more friends

However, only half of the people polled (55 per cent) attend a regular dental examination and one in seven (14 per cent) has not visited a dentist in the last four years – with four per cent having never visited at all.

Despite the trend for American-style perfectly straight, sparkling white teeth, a British smile was voted the most popular in the poll – with Kate Middleton's natural smile trouncing the competition and being voted the nation's favourite.

Not only does the nation

think having a nice smile is important, it seems that we'd do an awful lot to get one:

- One in seven (14 per cent) would give up having sex for a whole year if it meant they could get perfect teeth
- One in five (22 per cent) would forgo booze for a year if they could have a spectacular smile

Brian Franks, Clinical Director, Dentistry, Bupa Health and Wellbeing said: "Being happy with your teeth can have a big impact on your confidence and this can affect your work and relationships. So it's surprising that so many people don't go for

regular dental examinations. Even people who are currently happy with their teeth should pay attention to their dental health, as problems can happen at any time and get worse if not treated.

"For example, gum disease is very common, affecting more than half of adults. If left untreated for a long time it can lead to tooth loss. But the good news is that in its early stage it is completely reversible. So it's vital to visit your dentist regularly so they can spot any potential problems early and help prevent them getting worse."

More than one in three people

said that the expense is the main reason for not visiting the dentist regularly. Although three in ten people have landed themselves in debt or had to make sacrifices in order to cover unexpected dental bills, only one in ten people has dental insurance. [\[2\]](#)



Being happy with your teeth can impact a person's confidence

Tooth Bus travels across UK

A mobile dental unit, called the Tooth Bus, has started offering free NHS dental examinations to anyone who has not seen an NHS dentist in the last two years.

The Tooth Bus has been commissioned to run for a year, travelling across Hampshire, Berkshire, Oxfordshire and the Isle of Wight. The Tooth Bus will be in different locations across the

counties over the course of the year, finishing in May 2013.

The aims of the service are:

- To provide a free dental check-up to patients who have not seen an NHS dentist in the previous 24 months
- To signpost patients for on-going dental care to local practices with capacity to see new NHS patients

- To provide oral health education and advice to the community

The Tooth Bus, which launched on Tuesday 14th May, is currently at West Quay Retail Park in Southampton.

Appointments can be made in advance by calling 0844 880 5551 or book now, however there is the capacity for people to turn up on the day.

The service will run from Monday - Saturday 9am till 4.50pm. [\[3\]](#)

For more information visit www.toothbus.co.uk <http://www.toothbus.co.uk/news/tooth-bus-launches.html>



Tooth bus offers free NHS dental treatments

Charity lecture-athon to raise funds

Not only have confirmed specialist speakers been organised for the event, but participants taking part in this charity fundraiser will also gain six hours of verifiable CPD.

The cost of the lecture-athon is £50 per delegate and all proceeds will go to Children in Need. The lecture-athon, is taking place on Friday 20th July 2012 9:30am

to 4:50pm. [\[4\]](#)

To book tickets or to make a donation, visit www.facebook.com/CharityLectureAthon?sk=app_172604052767988

"If you are interested in presenting/speaking at the lecture day, contact Farah at farahaga@gmail.com, Farah J Aga on Facebook or @drfaga on Twitter:



Actor campaigns for early oral cancer detection

Actor and producer Michael Douglas has donated his time to help create a television public service announcement (PSA) on behalf of the Oral Cancer Foundation (OCF), a non-profit organisation dedicated to helping those affected by the disease.

The PSA will support the Foundation's efforts to educate the public about the need for annual screenings to catch oral cancers in their early, most survivable stages. The public service announcement will begin airing in June, and will continue to air nationwide through summer and autumn.

There are two distinct

pathways by which most people come to oral cancer. One is through the use of tobacco and alcohol, and the other is through exposure to the HPV-16 virus (human papilloma virus version 16), a newly identified etiology, and the same virus which is responsible for the vast majority of cervical cancers in women.

While oral cancer has historically been linked to tobacco and alcohol use, this is not simply a smoker's disease any longer. New data shows that the fastest-growing segment of newly diagnosed cases is now young, non-smokers.

Most startling, is the fact that

while many other cancers have been in decline in recent years, the occurrence of oral / oropharyngeal cancers has increased each of the last six years, and peer reviewed published data shows that the numbers of HPV-related oral cancers will surpass cervical cancers in the near future.

Caught early, oral cancer can be treatable, but many people do not know they have it until it has already turned into a killer.

Michael Douglas first sought medical help in 2010 after experiencing a sore throat that persisted for a protracted period of time. After

several visits to doctors, a tumour on the base of his tongue was discovered. With further analysis, it was determined that Mr Douglas had stage IV squamous cell carcinoma oral cancer. He immediately began both radiation and chemotherapy treatments.

After a long and difficult battle, Michael is now cancer free and in good health. He continues to have regular check-ups to monitor his remission.

"The Foundation is indebted to Michael Douglas for partnering with us in the battle against oral cancer," said OCF Founder and Executive Director Brian Hill, who is a survivor of the same cancer Mr Douglas had. "Michael is a highly visible, well known actor, and a consummate professional.

"Those qualities, when coupled with his personal cancer experience, yield a respected voice to this fight. His willingness right from the beginning of his journey, to openly talk about his difficult personal experience with oral cancer on TV and in print, has certainly created awareness in the public of a cancer too few have even heard of." ■

Source: *Oral Cancer Foundation*



BDTA surveys trends in dental technology

The British Dental Trade Association (BDTA) recently commissioned its annual 'Adoption of New Technology' survey amongst members of the dental profession to gain the latest insight from dentists on their attitudes towards new dental technologies and training courses and providers.

Based on 225 completed surveys the results revealed some interesting insight on at-

titudes to and usage of technology products in dental practices, including the finding that more dentists surveyed in December 2011 had purchased intra oral cameras (47 per cent vs 41 per cent 2009/10) and intra oral digital sensors (37 per cent vs 41 per cent 2009/10). This trend looks set to continue as these are the products that dentists indicated they most intend to purchase in 2012 (13 per cent intra oral digital sensors and 11

per cent intra oral cameras).

Amongst other key findings, the research also revealed that almost three quarters (74 per cent) have practice management software installed. Just over two thirds of which (67 per cent) have had the software for over 12 months. Appointment making and patient record management are the activities for which most other computers within the surgery are used (85

per cent appointment making and 81 per cent record management). Overall use of chairside computers appears to have fallen, the only increase has been for image processing / storing (from 59 per cent in 2009/10 to 65 per cent 2010/11).

The BDTA would like to thank all those who took the time to participate in the research. A £2.50 contribution to Bridge2Aid has been made by

the BDTA for every survey completed. A further donation of £250 was made to the National Mountain Rescue for England and Wales, on behalf of Carrie Poole, of Penistone Dental Practice, whose completed survey was chosen at random. ■

The full survey results are available to BDTA members at <http://www.bdta.org.uk/bdta-area.html>

Who's most afraid of the dentist?

According to a recent report, research suggests that women in their late forties are most afraid of the dentist. On-going research from the University of Sydney suggests that this could be because this age group are more likely to have experi-

enced trauma, abuse or oro-facial trauma and are also more likely to be depressed, anxious or stressed.

"Dental anxiety is very real and complex and it should never be downplayed," study researcher Dr Avanti Karve, of

the University of Sydney Faculty of Dentistry, in a report.

According to Karve, people who fear the dentist wait approximately 17 days before they make an appointment to see the dentist, even when they are in severe pain; compara-

tively, the rest of the population waits just three days.

According to a recent study by researchers from the Sahlgrenska Academy at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, about five per cent of people have a severe dental fear. In the

study the researchers discovered five strategies that people use to get over their fear of the dentist; their findings are published in the journal *Acta Odontologica Scandinavica*. <http://bit.ly/MzyOmE> ■

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It's an ill wind that blows

Richard Lishman discusses the impact of the UK as it slips back into double recession

It is easy to be carried along on the tide of doom and gloom that has accompanied the news that the UK economy has slid, as many expected it would, into a double dip recession.

And the negative growth in our economy is running in parallel to a failed austerity plan in Holland, the recent electoral uncertainty in France, enormous Spanish unemployment and continued strife in Greece and Portugal.

Rosy outlook

Personally I think the outlook is quite rosy. If that sounds unexpected, or worse, it is important to remember that many business sectors exist in their own micro economies, and that these aren't necessarily related that closely to the broader, national or international pictures.

True, some dentists have had a very difficult time over the last 18 to 24 months. But many more haven't, and you do have to question whether this recession affects dentists in the same way it does for instance, engineers, retailers or builders.

I would argue that, relatively speaking, the well-paid dental profession has been cushioned from the worst of the downturn so far. That is not to say that no dentists have suffered at the hands of the wider economy; but, broadly speaking, dentists are income-rich rather than cash-rich, though the lucky ones can be both. This means they can be well placed to take advantage of change in other sectors.

Great opportunity

For dentists who are at the stage of their career when they plan to grow their operations, perhaps establishing or expanding a new practice or increasing their property

portfolio, now is a time of great opportunity. Not only are property prices low, but so are interest rates. This means that saving money in, say, a bank account makes less sense than spending it on what will, eventually, be an appreciating asset such as a property, or investing in that expensive piece of equipment that could further increase

your income.


While the next couple of years might still be very challenging, a lot of people in the dentistry sector stand to emerge having established themselves on a very good footing. The ability to move fast, taking advantage of a buyers market in property while interest rates are low, is

a key strategic benefit.

Timing

Admittedly, those at the other end of their dental careers might be bemoaning their own timing. Delaying plans to sell up or retire might become a more appealing option than it was, and that is never a pleasant decision to make. But taking a close look

at some other business sectors can quickly bring home how much worse things could be.

The moral of the story is buy now, it's the January sales! 

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