DENTAL TRIBUNE

The World's Dental Newspaper · United Kingdom Edition

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News in Brief

Recession prevents check-ups

People have stopped visiting the dentist for regular check-ups due to the recession, according to a new survey. The survey, conducted by the British Dental Health Foundation as part of National Smile Month, highlighted a number of reasons as to why people do not have regular check-ups. Half of people in the survey blamed it on money troubles above dental phobias and not having an NHS dentist. Chief executive of the Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter said: "This really highlights how the recession has impacted people over the last few years. Members of the public have had to sacrifice good oral healthcare to get by financially, and that is not right. People need to have access to a dentist." The survey found that 11 per cent do not have regular check-ups because they do not have an NHS dentist.

Sonicare for Kids

During National Smile Month, £1 for every Sonicare for Kids sold is being donated to the British Dental Health Foundation to support the campaign. This year the BDHF is urging parents to help their children realise the importance of learning a good oral health routine at a young age so they can keep their mouths healthy for life. The Sonicare for toothbrush has been specifically designed to help kids build healthy brushing habits for life. The Smile Month promotion was launched at the BDA Conference in Liverpool on 20 May and as a result of sales of Sonicare For Kids during the show a cheque for £217 was presented to Dr Nigel Carter – however this was only the start and Philips aims to send a further cheque to the BDHF after the closing date as a result of sales they achieve during the month.

Walk for cancer

1000 places are up for grabs in the 5th annual FREE Mouth Cancer Foundation 10K Awareness Walk, which is launched today. The walk is designed to increase awareness of mouth cancer, celebrate survivorship and remember lost dear ones while having a fun day out with family and friends. The Mouth Cancer Foundation organises the event which takes place at 13:00 on Saturday 18th September 2010, in Kensington Gardens, London and this year they are challenging 1000 people to walk the 15,000 steps it takes to complete a 10K course in order to raise much needed funds and awareness to combat mouth cancer. To take part in the FREE Mouth Cancer Foundation 10K Awareness Walk visit www.mouthcancerwalk.org

News

Ortho on TV
Orthodontic charity filmed by BBC in Africa

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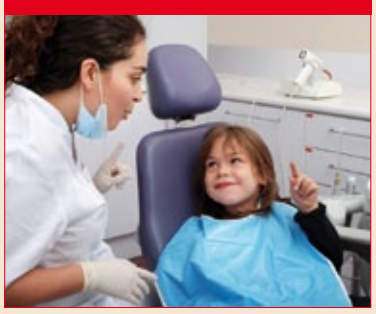
Feature



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Are you up to speed with the new regulations?

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USP ABC
It's time to find your practice's USP, says Dr Solanki

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Special feature

Milestone
A look behind the scenes of UCL Eastman CPD's latest facilities

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Scientists warn dental x-rays increase cancer risk

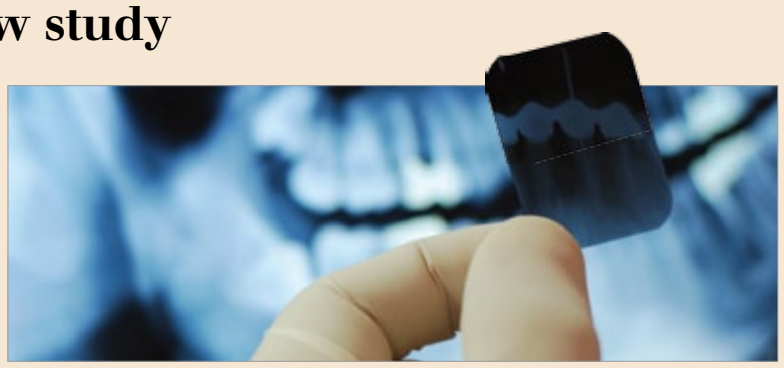
Dental x-rays can increase the risk of thyroid cancer, according to scientists in a new study

A research team from Brighton and Cambridge and Kuwait studied 313 thyroid cancer patients in Kuwait where the numbers of thyroid cancer are relatively high compared with Britain.

The researchers asked the cancer patients and a similar number of healthy volunteers how many dental x-rays they had had. After factoring in hospital x-rays, they found that men and women who had had up to four dental x-rays were more than twice as likely to have developed the disease than those who had never had any. Between five and nine x-rays and their risk rose more than four-fold.

However, the researchers warned that the results of their study 'should be treated with caution' because the data was based on self-reporting by the participants as comprehensive historical dental x-ray records were not available from the clinics. The researchers are now calling for further investigation as currently guidelines state that low-dose radiation exposure through dental radiography is safe.

Dr Anjum Memon, senior lecturer and consultant in public health medicine at Brighton and Sussex Medical School, who led the study, said: "The public health and clinical implications of these findings are particularly relevant in the light of increases in the incidence of thyroid cancer in many countries over the past 30 years. It is important that our study is repeated with information from dental records including frequency of x-rays, age and dose at exposure.



Dental radiography use may have to be reconsidered

"If the results are confirmed then the use of x-rays as a necessary part of evaluation for new patients, and routine periodic dental radiography (at six-12 months interval), particularly for children and adolescents, will need to be reconsidered, as will a greater use of lead collar protection."

He added: "Our study highlights the concern that like chest (or other upper-body) x-rays, dental x-rays should be prescribed when the patient has a specific clinical need, and not as part of routine check-up or when registering with a dentist.

The notion that low-dose radiation exposure through dental radiography is absolutely safe needs to be investigated further, as although the individual risk, particularly with modern equipment is likely to be very low, the proportion of the population exposed is high.'

Dr Memon claimed the findings were consistent with previous reports of increased risk of thyroid cancer in dentists, dental assistants and x-ray workers, suggesting multiple low-dose exposures in adults may be important.

Professor Damien Walmsley, Scientific Adviser to the BDA, called it an 'interesting study' but said: "As the authors acknowledge, this is an area that requires further research.

"That work should be based on larger studies of subjects for whom better historical dental x-ray records are available if firmer conclusions are to be drawn from it.

"Dentists here consider the necessity of x-raying patients on a case-by-case basis, employing defined risk-benefit assessment criteria to make their decisions and ensure that unnecessary x-rays are not taken. Dentists are fully trained in radiography and undergo regular training to ensure their skills remain up to date."

The incidence rates of thyroid cancer have doubled from 1.4 per 100,000 in 1975 to 2.9 per 100,000 in 2006 in the UK. The team has linked this to more and more patients having dental x-rays.

However, the researchers say that many other factors can also be causing the increase in thyroid cancer cases. The sensitive diagnostic techniques cannot solely be blamed. To confirm the exact effect of such techniques on cancer, further research is required. The study was published in the medical journal *Acta Oncologica*. DT

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Dentist charged with £1m fraud

A dentist has been suspended after she was charged with stealing £1m from the NHS.

Dr Joyce Trail, who has run a dental practice in Handsworth for the last 12 years, has been accused of submitting up to 5,000 bogus patient invoices between 2006 and 2009 and has been suspended from her practice in the West Midlands.

She is charged with one count of obtaining a false money transfer by deception and three counts of fraud. Dr Trail has denied any wrongdoing.

In 2008, she opened the city's first medical spa next door to her practice, offering everything from Botox to 'smile makeovers'.

She was suspended following a lengthy investigation by the NHS Counter Fraud Team and West Midlands Police, which led to her arrest. DT

Events staged for NSM

Dental surgeries, schools and even zoos have been taking part in this year's National Smile Month.

The campaign, which is run by the British Dental Health Foundation, has the slogan 'Teeth4Life', highlighting the importance of looking after teeth and maintaining them for life.

Dr Nigel Carter, chief executive of the Foundation, said: "A good oral healthcare routine can help guard against all sorts of oral and general health conditions from bad breath and decay to gum disease, which has been linked to a number of more serious health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and strokes.

"By promoting good oral healthcare in a fun and imaginative way we hope to persuade more people of the importance of taking care of their teeth."

Even zoos have been taking part. Animals at Dudley Zoo receiving check ups as part of National Smile Month included reindeer, tapir, babirusa, alpaca and chimps, lemurs, orangutans and crocodiles.

In Leicester, Smile Essential put on a series of events including special treats for children with free giveaways and balloons while all adults were invited to enter its fundraising prize draw to win a home tooth whitening package worth £399 for £1.

Patients were also given the opportunity to sample some of the latest oral health products completely free of charge. Outside of the practice, the team hosted events at local schools to help promote the importance of healthy teeth and healthy eating.

Practice principal, Lina Kotecha said: "We were delighted to get involved in National Smile Month and to give a little bit back to the residents of Leicester. Good oral health is very important and we are always looking for ways to help improve the dental health of our patients."

In Devon, hygienist Corinne McElligott from the Spicer Road Dental Practice, has been visiting schools with her cuddly puppet, Roo the Kangaroo. She uses Roo to teach children how to look after their teeth.

Ms McElligott organised brushathons at two schools and had 300 children brushing their teeth for two minutes.

She said: "It's all about getting young children to participate and introduce them to dentistry in a friendly way. The brushathons were a great chance for the children to have fun with brushing while learning some important lessons. Hopefully it will get them talking about their teeth."

Another original event took place in Manchester, where Tipton Training Dental School created a competition on Facebook to find the best smile.

Similarly, a London clinic has been running a competition with a prize of a makeover for the winner's teeth. Contestants had to send in a picture of their smile to make the judges laugh.

Odiham Dental Care in Hook in Hampshire offered a 'New for Old' trade in on your toothbrush.

Patients were asked to take along their old toothbush to the surgery and pick up a brand new Oral-B CrossAction toothbrush or receive 25 per cent off a new Oral-B Professional Care 550 electric toothbrush. Alongside this they also held a 'Name the Celebrity Smile Competition', The surgery is offering a brand new IPod Nano for the first correct entry to be drawn after the closing date on 16 June.

Meanwhile over in Redditch, YMCA and Sure Start Children's Centres have been getting involved. Staff have been showing youngsters how to clean their teeth properly and have put on fun activities to emphasise the importance of good oral hygiene.

Anne Parker, children's support worker at Maple Trees Children's Centre said: "The children have really enjoyed learning how to use a toothbrush properly as they have practised on a set of large teeth. We have also had a larger range of healthy snacks at break times to introduce the children to more foods which are less harmful to their teeth."

In Bolton, Cahill Dental Care had a stand at Bolton's Market Hall offering people free dental advice.

As well as offering the people of Bolton an opportunity to discuss dental procedures such as implants and invisalign, there was also a competition to win a free course of tooth whitening. DT

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Editorial comment

Indecent exposure

There has been a few talking points in dentistry this week, with the new research into the risk of thyroid cancer from dental radiographs and the profession being high in the headlines for different reasons.

The research into radiographs, although published with a caveat that more research was needed to fully validate the results, for me opens up an interesting conundrum for dental professionals. The technology used in radiographic equipment has brought down the exposure dose dramatically, and with an increased need for recording a patient's condition in case of litigation, it's no wonder that the use of radiographs is on the rise. Then when research such as this surfaces, questions are asked about the use or overuse of radiographs! Does the phrase 'rock and a hard place' sound familiar?

Dentistry seems to be hitting the news again recently, with fraud charges totalling £1m levelled at a dentist and a dental technician before the GDC for harassing one of his employees with invites to swinger parties. There have been some good news too, with lots of positive National Smile Month messages finding their way into local and national press. Nice to see that oral health has a plus side in non-dental media! Now all we need is a link between dentistry and England winning the World Cup this year... DT

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:
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Or email:
lisa@dentaltribuneuk.com

Dental nurse scholarship established

The British Dental Association Education has set up the Ann Felton Scholarship for dental nurses.

The dental nurse who is awarded this prize will be given a free place on the British Dental Association (BDA) Education's online Oral Health Education (OHE) course and free entry to the exam, worth £755, which leads to the NEBDN Certificate in OHE.

This scholarship has been developed in recognition of the outstanding contribution made by Ann Felton to the dental profession and to careers of dental nurses across the county.

In order to be eligible for this prize, any dental nurse applying needs to explain, using a maximum of 250 words, how they would use the OHE Scholarship to advance their career.

A spokeswoman for the BDA said: "Perhaps you would like to gain confidence and develop a greater understanding of a wide range of oral health conditions and diseases. Maybe you aspire to set up a preventive dental unit in your practice. Or perhaps you harbour ambitions to become a practice manager or a leader in the field of oral health education. Take this opportunity to take one step further towards achieving your goals. BDA Education would be delighted to hear from you if you are interested in applying for the Ann Felton Scholarship. We will be looking for a proven commitment to oral health education as well as an indication that you have the potential and the ability to progress in your chosen career."

To apply, complete the downloadable application form on the BDA website and send it to BDA Education, 64 Wimpole Street, London, W1G 8YS by 30 June 2010. DT

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1 Loesche WJ. Dental Caries: A Treatable Infection. Springfield, Illinois: Charles Thomas; 1982:64-66. 2 Amornchat C, Kraivaphan P, Triratana T. Mahidol Dent J. 2004;24:103-111. 3 Kruger IJ, Murphy CM, Sullivan RJ. Demonstration of the sustained effect of Colgate Total by confocal microscopy. Poster presented at: American Association for Dental Research; March 7-10, 2001; Chicago, IL. Abstract 1031.

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Orthodontic charity filmed by BBC in Africa

BBC presenter Ben Fogle has been out in Africa following the work of the orthodontic charity, Facing Africa.

The television programme *Make Me a New Face: Hope for Africa's Hidden Children* was shown on BBC Two.

In 2008, Ben Fogle caught a flesh-eating disease called Leishmaniasis which, if untreated, would have destroyed his face.

In the TV programme, Ben investigates a sickness that's far worse but virtually unheard of - Noma, which eats away the faces of thousands of Africa's poorest children.

Up to 90 per cent of Noma victims die, while survivors are left terribly disfigured.

Every year, British charity Facing Africa sends top cosmetic surgeons to Africa to treat those who are affected.

Consultant orthodontist, Allan Thom, who is a past president of the British Orthodontic Society, helped set up the organisation.

The TV crew filmed three children whose lives have been blighted by this disease - teenager Rashid, who is forced to hide his face in public; Asnake, aged 11, whose misshapen mouth makes him dribble constantly; and 10-year-old Mestikma, abandoned by her family because of her deformity.

These children join other Noma victims in Addis Ababa for the radical transformative surgery.

Mr Thom was part of the advance team carrying out full medical, dental and social assessments, putting the patients on a high protein feeding regime and a deworming programme as well as clerking, photographing and assessing the degree of loss of jaw movement.

A spokeswoman for the charity said: "It was considered essential to establish a healthy dental environment for surgery and extractions were performed where as necessary as well as plaque removal and oral hygiene.

"Each patient was given their own hygiene pack and tooth brushing was supervised daily. Some had never seen a toothbrush and were used to using, on occasions, a soft twig."

Two weeks later the surgical team arrived and they took over the operating theatres of one of the main hospitals in Addis Abba. The surgical team were international with surgeons, anaesthetists and nurses from the UK, France, Holland and Norway.

The team carried out more than 50 facial reconstructions.

Anklosed jaws were released, facial defects repaired, tumours removed and cleft palates repaired.

For more information on the work of Facing Africa, visit www.facingafrica.org. DT

Treating gum disease can help diabetics

Treating serious gum disease in people with diabetes mellitus can help to reduce high blood sugar levels, according to a new study.

The study carried out by an inter-university research team including the UCL Eastman Dental Institute and Peninsula Dental School, looked at previous research into the link between diabetes and serious gum disease.

The results showed that there is a small but potentially highly important benefit to treating periodontal disease in diabetic patients.

However, further research needs to be conducted in order to fully establish the link between the two conditions.

Currently, it is thought that dental inflammation, caused by bacteria infecting the mouth, results in chemical changes that reduce the overall effectiveness of insulin, thus leading to raised blood sugar levels.

Dental treatment to reduce oral inflammation may therefore help to lower blood sugar levels. This means a decrease in the overall risk of contracting serious health complications associated with the condition, including heart disease and eye problems.

Prof Ian Needleman from the UCL Eastman Dental Institute called the research 'particularly timely' because 'periodontal disease now affects at least 40 per cent of the UK population, and for people with diabetes the disease levels will be significantly higher'.

He added: "Furthermore, levels of diabetes in the UK are rising rapidly and with higher prevalence amongst disadvantaged groups, periodontal health is an important priority both for prevention and treatment. Periodontal disease is also very treatable.

"Whilst the most important aspect of insulin control in diabetes management is the use of drugs and diet, maintaining good dental health is something patients and healthcare professionals should also recognise, particularly because it is so easy to treat."

The findings, which have been published as part of the international *'Cochrane Collaboration'*, highlight the need for doctors and dentists to work together in the treatment of diabetes. DT

£3k for illegal practice

A magistrate's court has fined a man £3,000 for practising dentistry illegally.

Robin Baldwin was found guilty at King's Lynn Magistrates Court of practising dentistry illegally.

He was found guilty of being prepared to practice dentistry at Greyfriars Surgery, 5 Tower Place, King's Lynn, Norfolk.

He was also found guilty of unlawfully using the title of dental surgeon on a business card.

Mr Baldwin was fined £3,000 and ordered to pay £3,195.40 towards the General Dental Council (GDC's) costs.

The GDC has now successfully prosecuted six cases of illegal practice in the last three months.

This includes Neville Forman of Beechwood Barn, North Moor Lane, Lincoln, who pleaded guilty to the offence of holding himself out as being prepared to practise dentistry – in that he was prepared to give treatment in connection with the fitting, inserting and fixing of dentures.

Mr Forman was conditionally discharged for six months and ordered to pay £700 in costs.

In a separate case, Mr Anthony Woodland, of West Quay, Bridgwater, Somerset, pleaded guilty at Bridgwater Magistrates Court on 28 May to the offence of holding himself out as being prepared to practise dentistry.

In addition he also pleaded guilty to unlawfully using a specified title, namely that of 'dental technician'. Mr Woodland was fined £100 for each offence. DT

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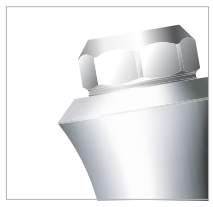

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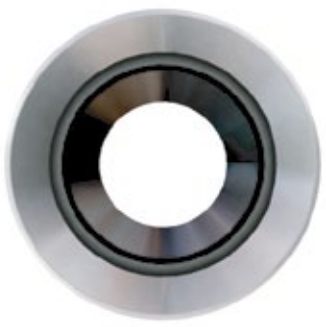

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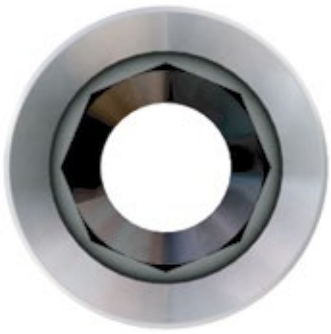

Abutment System

GDPUK round-up

The GDPUK online community has been dominated by political topics says Tony Jacobs

The General Election, the formation of a new government and all the speeches and appointments that followed this has lately kept the GDPUK forum bubbling away. Colleagues discussed the prospectuses of the contesting parties, they argued over who they would vote for and why, and when the prospect of a hung Parliament loomed, they talked about who should join to form a government and the effect of the new policies on dentistry.

Early after the election, two major speeches could be extrapolated to make dentists and dentistry feel more positive about the future. Nick Clegg announced new ideas to tear up many of the laws brought in by Labour, and asked for people to tell him which ones should go. The new Home Secretary, Theresa May, spoke to the Police Federation and said that her predecessors had tied the Police up in red tape and undermined their professional responsibility. Now things would be different. She was not going to tell them how to do their job, any more than she would tell a surgeon how to perform an operation or an engineer how to build a bridge.

Feelings continue to run very high regarding the imposition of HTM 0105 and people cooperate to protest about it. Groups coalesce to write letters to their MPs, to the new health ministers, to Norman Lamb (formerly Lib-Dem shadow Health Secretary, well briefed and sympathetic towards dentistry, and now chief political adviser to Nick Clegg). If the politicians are to be taken at their word, and the words they use are to be believed (am I naïve?), then there could be a better future for UK dentistry, with less interference from Government-based edicts and agencies.

I would also ask though, does dentistry need a further layer of costly regulation in the form of the Care Quality Commission?

I urge those reading this to write to their MP and Nick Clegg, plus Norman Lamb, and encourage their practice colleagues to do so, as well as LDCs and BDA sections, to mobilise the UK dentistry to remind the new Government what we need them to change – HTM 0105 and the CQC.

As well as political topics, GDPUK forum writers and readers have been discussing aspects of practice management, ideas from the US of having a large, multi-surgery practice with one dentist "running" from room to room and treating many patients with less downtime. The plight of snooker star Alex Higgins, who lost his teeth following radiotherapy for throat cancer and had friends helping to raise funds for him to have implant based dental restorations was also debated.

One colleague raised the issue of a patient with addiction to Lucozade! What would you do? Another had a patient (who had been previously interested in tooth whitening) appearing with grey teeth. This was not from tetracycline. One writer suggested that she might have had treatment in a beauty salon using chlorine dioxide, which can apparently have this side effect. Treatment options to help this lady were not discussed. Visit www.gdpuk.com. DT

About the author

Tony Jacobs, 52 is a GDP in the suburbs of Manchester, in practice with partner Steve Lazarus at 406Dental (www.406dental.com). He has had roles in his LDC, local BDA and with the annual conference of LDCs, and is a local dental adviser for Dental Protection. Nowadays, he concentrates on GDPUK, the web group for UK dentists to discuss their profession online, www.gdpuk.com.

Brush teeth to ward off heart attacks

People who don't brush their teeth twice a day are more likely to suffer from heart disease, according to a recent study.

The study published in the *British Medical Journal* found that people who never or rarely brush their teeth are 70 per cent more likely to suffer from heart disease than those who brush their teeth twice a day. The study looked at the habits of 11,000 adults and found those with poor oral hygiene had a higher risk of getting heart disease, compared with those who brushed twice a day.

The study backs up previous research linking gum disease with heart disease.

It is known that inflammation in the body, including in the mouth and gums, has an important role in the build up of clogged arteries, which can lead to a heart attack.

However, this is the first time that researchers have examined the frequency of teeth brushing to see whether it has an impact on the risk of developing heart disease.

In the study, six out of 10 people said they visited the dentist every six months and seven out 10 reported brushing their teeth twice a day.

During the eight-year study there were 555 'cardiovascular events' such as heart attacks, 170 of which were fatal. Those with poor oral hygiene also tested positive in blood samples for proteins which are suggestive of inflammation.

Study leader Prof Richard Watt, from University College London, said: "Our results confirmed and further strengthened the suggested association between oral hygiene and the risk of cardiovascular disease. Furthermore, inflammatory markers were significantly associated with a very simple measure of poor oral health behaviour.

"Future experimental studies will be needed to confirm whether the observed association between oral health behaviour and cardiovascular disease is in fact causal or merely a risk marker." DT

Honorary doctorate

The vice dean of the King's College London Dental Institute has been awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Athens.

Prof Stephen Challacombe was given the award for his contributions to oral medicine and dental research.

During his tenure with Guy's Hospital Medical and Dental Schools, United Medical and Dental Schools (UMDS) and then the Dental Institute of King's College London, Prof Challacombe has maintained his research into mucosal immunity and clinical activity.

Prof Challacombe said: "I am very humbled that my work, and that of my colleagues who have made such important contributions to the field, has been recognised by the University of Athens in this way. It really is a great honour both for myself and the Dental Institute."

In addition to his publications on both clinical (oral medicine) and basic (mucosal immunology) research, he has published a number of books including three in Greek with Yannis Kayavis of the University of Thessaloniki.

His work has been recognised by his election to the presidencies of the British Society for Dental Research, the British Society for Oral Medicine, the European Association of Oral Medicine and the International Association of Dental Research and by election to the prestigious Academy of Medical Sciences. DT

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Webinar 1:	**So you want your own practice – how to do it:** **The Dentistry Business**
Speaker:	Lester Ellman and Sim Goldblum
Date:	15th June 2010
Webinar 2:	**Planning for the future: (visioning):** **The Dentistry Business**
Speaker:	Lester Ellman and Sim Goldblum
Date:	7th July 2010
Webinar 3:	**Endodontics Part 1:** **Dentsply**
Speaker:	Carol Tait
Date:	5th August 2010

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From next year, practice owners and managers need to know how to meet the requirements of Care Quality Commission, NHS Key Performance Indicators, survival and growth in a changing economic climate and much more.

CONFIRMED SPEAKERS

SEEMA SHARMA

CEO, Dentabyte.co.uk

Dentabyte is rolling out approved management courses for tomorrow's practice managers to keep pace with the changing job description coming their way in 2011.

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Is your practice manager up with the new vetting and barring regulations?

Asks Seema Sharma

Are you aware that...

• Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) takes decisions on who should be barred from working with children or vulnerable adults?

• Existing lists were replaced, in October 2009 by two new barred lists (one for working with children; for working with vulnerable adults)?

• From October 12th 2009 the NHS came under the scheme?

Do you...

• Follow national safeguarding guidance within your own activities and in your dealings with other organisations?

• Undertake all appropriate employment checks?

• Require CRB checks from all new recruits before they start?

• Ensure that all team members are aware of the local referral procedures via training and induction?

Have you...

• Ensured that all team members know what to do if they suspect abuse or neglect?

• Made local contact names and details available for the team (including temporary staff and locums)?

• Made local referral procedures available for the team (including temporary staff and locums)?

Regulated activities can only be undertaken by an ISA -registered person

Whilst a dental team does not have to diagnose child abuse or neglect, we are in a position where we may witness signs of child abuse or neglect, and we have a responsibility to find out about and follow local procedures for child protection, so we can share concerns appropriately.

Legislative Framework

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 provides the legislative framework for the new Vetting and Barring Scheme and envisages the creation of three ISA (Independent Safeguarding Authority) lists – ISA registered individuals, people barred from working with children and those barred (or also barred) from working with vulnerable adults.

Individual responsibility - It is up to an individual to register. An unregistered person has either not registered, or is on an ISA Barred List. Registration will be phased in over five years:

• **Year 1 (July 2010) –** new workforce entrants, job movers

• **Year 2 –** those who have never had a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check before

• **Year 3 –** those with CRB checks over three years old

• **Year 4 –** those with more recent CRB checks

• **Year 5 –** the remainder of those who have had a CRB disclosure and those who work in controlled activity

Employer responsibilities - From July 2010, ISA registration status of NEW paid or volunteer applicants must be checked. The service is free and you will be updated on changes to the person's registration. This does not obviate the requirement for a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check.

There will also be a new offence – punishable by a fine – for employers who fail to inform the ISA about an employee posing a threat to children or vulnerable adults. The GDC has a similar obligation.

Regulated activities (clinical team members in direct contact with patients) can only be undertaken by an ISA -registered person. It is illegal to engage an unregistered person and can result in imprisonment or a fine of up to £5,000.

Controlled activities are those undertaken by support staff eg receptionists, cleaners. It is still mandatory to check the ISA status of an applicant, but barred people can be engaged provided certain safeguards are in place.

Train your team

Child protection is a key element of the induction programme for new members of staff. All team members are required to undertake documented training to recognise signs of neglect or physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and know how to access and liaise with local protection services.

Within the practice, safeguarding includes listening to vulnerable patients, providing information, ensuring a safe chaperoned environment and having other relevant policies and procedures in place eg complaints. Although it is uncommon to see patients with signs of child abuse, where it is suspected and there is no satisfactory explanation, the team should be able to act quickly and responsibly.

Your local PCT should be able to provide information on the local protection team and pathway, and possibly even organise training for NHS practices. DT

About the author

Seema Sharma qualified as a dentist but gave up clinical work after 10 years in practice to go into full time practice management. Today she runs three practices, including one which is one of 30 national Steele Pilots. Seema established Dentabyte Ltd to provide affordable 'real-world' practice management programmes to help practice managers and practice owners keep pace with the changing clinical and commercial environment facing them today.

Visit www.Dentabyte.co.uk to register for updates on practice management or email Seema at seema.sharma@dentabyte.co.uk to find out more.

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