UK’s first professional dental network expands further

By DTI
BIRMINGHAM, UK. One of the highlights of this year’s Dentistry Show in Birmingham was undoubtedly the after-party organised by Dental Circle. Over 250 of the UK’s finest in dentistry took to the Genting Hotel near the National Exhibition Centre for a night of fun, celebration and professional networking. The event was an all-out success for the young network, according to founder and CEO Dr Dev Patel, so much so that it plans to hold an even bigger one next year.

The Next Generation Conference, with sessions specifically that ran concurrently throughout the show in May, was also sold out completely. There, young dentists had the opportunity to obtain valuable insights into a variety of subjects, including starting to place implants and how to manage tooth wear, by well-known national experts, like Dr Dev Patel, Dr Tif Qureshi and Ashley Latter.

Patel said that membership for the Dental Circle platform, which was founded in 2014, has received a significant boost over the last 15 months. According to him, over 7,000 dental professionals are currently registered on the site, which facilitates communication and networking within their specific field or area through a convenient members map. On the site, a personal profile page allows each member to add his or her interests and achievements and upload images of his or her clinical cases and share them with the rest of the Dental Circle community. Furthermore, members can join special interest groups led by mentors to explore or deepen their knowledge of various aspects of the profession.

Significant updates were recently introduced with a new job section, among other sections, that is aimed at helping dentists to find work more easily in an increasingly challenging marketplace.

“Today’s dental market is a tough environment owing to many graduates entering an already saturated marketplace. Many have to travel to different locations at the beginning of their career,” Patel said. “Our job section was designed to help them stand out and find full-time quality employment. It is currently one of the most interactive job search engines on the market.”

In addition to its website, Dental Circle remains highly active in hands-on education. Among four courses to be held within the year, a one-day course titled “How to Grow your Dental Practice” is scheduled for October in London. Other well-known market competitors, such as Henry Schein Medical, Dentally Sirena and Nobel Biocare, have come on board to support these events, which are planned to be extended next year. There are also plans, Patel said, to increase the number of networking events like the one at the Dentistry Show.

Furthermore, he now intends to approach dental schools and universities in order to allow students to join the network. At present, only dentists who are registered with the General Dental Council are able to sign up.

“We want to make sure that all members of the profession will be able to join our website,” Patel emphasised.

More information about Dental Circle and its registration on the site is available at www.dentalcircle.com. There, visitors can also find information about the network’s educational offering.

CURAPROX Black Is White—Chew it!

By Curaden
KRIENS, Switzerland: Health begins in the mouth—and not just health: freshness and beauty start with an open, confident smile. That’s what CURAPROX, the oral hygiene brand from Swiss company Curaden, stands for. Brand-new for the UK market is its Black Is White activated charcoal chewing gum. Black, subtly citrusy and minty, this effective whitening product boasts five amazing ingredients.

Containing activated carbon for a gentle whitening effect, there’s no carbon for a gentle whitening. Black Is White chewing gum is a wonderful product that promotes beauty and oral health, according to Ueli Breitschmid, CEO of Curaden. This gum also symbolises the CURAPROX mission of offering design-oriented and highly effective products that make a difference. “As part of our successful Black Is White line, including the Black Is White toothpaste, Hydrosonic Black Is White sonic toothbrush and Black Is White manual toothbrush, we are now offering something unusual and exclusive.”

Glucose oxidase promotes a healthy balance of bacteria in the mouth. This completely natural enzyme turns glucose into hydrogen peroxide and simultaneously activates the salivary lactoperoxidase system. The result: no bad bacteria and no possibility of dental caries, gingivitis or periodontitis.

And the chewing gum wouldn’t be complete without xylo- litol. This special sweetener is extracted from trees and has an anti-bacterial effect. Saliva-stimulating, xylo- litol remineralises the dental enamel and is clinically proven to reliably prevent dental caries.

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Buy Black Is White chewing gum at www.curaprox.co.uk.

Dental Circle founders Dev Patel (left) and Amit Patel (right) with London-dentist Nihiti Sethi.

Caries detection tech close to launch

By DTI
EDINBURGH, UK: A novel system developed in Scotland for immediate measuring of demineralisation of teeth could soon make its way abroad, as the developer CALCIVIS has recently announced the completion of a premarket approval study that is intended to make the promising technology available to US dentists in addition to clinicians in the UK.

The study was conducted among 111 patients in several dental practices in Edinburgh over the past six months, and the first read-out of data will be available over the next few weeks. If successful, premarket approval by the US Food and Drug Administration for the technology is expected in the second half of 2017. According to CALCIVIS CEO Adam Christie, the US regulatory body has already been consulted on the study design and statistical approach as part of the regulatory pre-submissions process.

“Gaining US approval is critical for us to maximise the commercial potential of the CALCIVIS imaging system which we believe will transform the management of enamel demineralisation associated with caries and erosion and support the wider adoption of preventive dentistry,” he said.

The system, which has received over £8 million in funding from the EU and the Scottish Investment Bank, among other institutions, has already gained approval by European regulators and is due to be launched in the UK later this year. Originally developed by researchers at the University of Dundee, the CALCIVIS imaging device allows the real-time detection and visualisation of calcium ions released by demineralising carious lesions in routine dental practice. In order to achieve this, it makes use of bioluminescence with a special solution containing a photoprotein applied to the tooth surface. Photographic mapping with CALCIVIS then provides clinicians with accurate information about the location of active caries or other problems, like acid erosion, in patients.

In addition to helping to detect those conditions in advance, the system is intended to work as a communication tool between patient and dentist, and the system’s principal investigator and orthodontist at Downie, Harper and Shanks Dental Practice in Edinburgh, Dr Neil Shanks, explained. “It will also provide a clear explanation and justification of preventive management approaches to patients, helping to ensure their compliance,” he said.
What would Dr Mo Lar do? Part 4

How to legally reduce one’s tax bill

By Richard Lishman, UK

Over the course of this series, the dentists group will explore ways to tackle a number of personal and professional challenges by providing advice and guidance to fictional character Dr Mo Lar. In this article, the fourth in the series, we look at how he could legally reduce his tax bill.

Lar operates as a sole trader. In other words, he is classed as the exclusive owner of his own business and is entitled to keep all profits after tax and National Insurance. What he takes home will depend on which Income Tax bracket he falls into. Now that he has some experience as an associate, his earnings will be in the region of between £60,000 and £100,000, which means he falls into the Higher Rate Threshold (HRT). Once he starts earning above £100,000, however, his Personal Allowance – the level at which Income Tax begins to be paid – will be reduced by £1 for every £2 of income above this limit. For the tax year 2017/18, the Personal Allowance is £11,500. As for National Insurance, Lar falls into the Class 4 category, which means he is required to pay 9 per cent on profits between £8,060 and £43,000. As from April 2018, this will rise to 10 per cent and again to 11 per cent in 2019. Anything above £43,000 will be taxed at 2 per cent.

One way in which Lar can pay less tax and save money is to make sure he claims all of his tax-deductible expenses, such as subscriptions and technical journals, lab costs and hygienists fees, course costs, payments to charity, equipment, uniforms and accountancy and management consultancy fees. As a sole trader, Lar is also eligible to claim a percentage of the running costs of a car as long as he keeps detailed mileage records. It is important to note, however, that travel between home and the surgery is not classed as a business journey.

If Lar plays it smart with his tax payments, he could minimise his tax even further. Because he is self-employed he is able to select when his accounting year ends. Choosing a date early in the tax year would give him more time to prepare his accounts and longer to pay the amount of tax due. If in the event it looked like Lar would be earning less than the year before, he could apply to reduce any payments on account due to HMRC – in other words, any advance payments towards his tax bill. For the best results it is always best to utilise the services of a specialist dental accountant.

There are a number of savings that can be made outside of work too. At this stage in his life, Lar is not married and has no children, which means if he wanted to make some extra cash he could rent a room in his property. The Rent a Room relief would mean he could receive up to £7,500 in rent each year from a lodger, completely tax-free. When he does decide to marry, he could consider transferring his investment assets to his spouse, if they are in a lower tax bracket.

In the meantime, the best option for Lar would be to mitigate tax through maximising his pension and Independent Savings Account (ISA) Annual Allowances (AA). For the tax year 2017/18, the pension AA is £40,000, so to get...
the most from his money with no tax implications. Lar should think about investing some of his earnings into his pension pot. If in the event he were to exceed this amount, he would be taxed on the excess at his highest marginal rate.

If his salary is increased and he starts earning above £50,000 he would be subject to the Tapered Annual Allowance. At £210,000, for instance, Lar’s AA would be reduced to just £10,000. As such, it is worth considering how he could leverage his money to his advantage, especially as he plans on purchasing his own practice in the future.

In regard to Lar’s ISA, he should ensure that he makes full use of the AA, which is £20,000 for 2017/18. With the added benefit of no income tax on the interest or dividends and all profits from ISA investments are exempt from Capital Gains Tax, this is a great way to legally reduce a tax bill.

The risks of appointing a practice employee as registered manager

By Ben Williams, UK

For many, deciding who is going to be the Care Quality Commission (CQC) registered manager for their practice is another layer of red tape and often practice owners delegate this role to the practice manager, who is an employee in the majority of cases. Appointing the practice manager is an option many practices choose given that the role of CQC registered manager is to manage the regulated activity on behalf of the practice owner in the case in which the practice owner is not going to be in charge of the day-to-day regulated activities himself or herself.

The registered manager has legal responsibilities in relation to that position. Indeed, he or she shares the legal responsibility for meeting the requirements of the relevant regulations and legislation with the practice owner as the regulated provider. As such, the role of a registered manager goes hand in hand with managing the practice. However, what happens when the employee registered manager hands in his or her employment termination notice, or is found guilty of gross misconduct and has his or her employment terminated overnight?

Under CQC regulations, if a registered manager is going to be absent for 28 days or more, there is an obligation for the practice owner to give notification. This should be the first step taken when it becomes apparent that the registered manager has left or will be leaving. From there, it is a matter of applying to CQC to appoint a new registered manager as soon as possible, whether it be the practice owner, another employee or the new practice manager. At the same time, the outgoing registered manager should cooperate in cancelling his or her registered manager registration.

If the end of the employment was not amicable, however, this is something that may prove easier said than done. If the employee refuses to cancel his or her registration, it is vital that all reasonable steps should be taken to rectify the situation. It is in nobody’s interest to have an absent registered manager, not least the patients. In any event, the practice could be left without a registered manager carrying out his or her obligations in the interim ten to 12 weeks while the application to appoint a new manager is being processed by CQC. This is not to say that employees should never be appointed as registered managers, but considerations must be given to situations in which they may no longer be employees.

How can these issues be overcome? The actual process cannot be avoided, but making the transition of registered managers smooth without disruption is achievable. When appointing a new employee as the practice’s CQC registered manager, some important factors have to be considered, such as having a ten- to 12-week contractual notice period in place to provide the practice owner with a time frame in which to deal with the CQC application to change the registered manager—and negate the need to alert CQC to an absent registered manager. Specific provisions should be included in the contract of employment that oblige the employee to do all things necessary and sign all such documents that allow for the change of registered manager during his or her notice period or/and upon the termination of employment. If an existing employee has been appointed as the registered manager, practice owners should issue an updated employment contract and job description that place these obligations on the employee.

As the discussion shows, it is not difficult to fall foul of the CQC regulations. However, by carefully drafting all employment contracts for registered managers, and having guidance through the process, disruption to the practice can be avoided.

While there are a number of ways in which mitigation can be achieved, the process can be extremely complex and confusing. As such, it is always best to employ the help of specialist accountants and Independent Financial Advisers such as those at the dentists group. Dentists like Lar may have to invest in help from the experts, but it will save him money in the long run.

Next issue: Dr Mo Lar gets married and starts a family.

Richard Lishman is the Managing Director of monoquidist, a firm of specialist independent financial advisers who help dentists across the UK manage their money and achieve their financial and lifestyle goals.

Ben Williams is a trainee solicitor at Goodman Grant in Liverpool. He works as part of the dental team on a variety of matters, including dental due diligence, CQC registration, drafting associate agreements and employment contracts, and carrying out administrative duties for the team.