Dental surgeries should think pink, UK designers say

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LONDON, UK: When refurbishing their premises, dentists who want relaxed patients should think about how their customers want to feel when they visit the dentist. According to a design team from London, a mid to light pink helps to relax the muscles and is an ideal colour for a dental surgery.

Feelings experienced when entering a new environment can in part be attributed to colour. Colour is light that travels in waves from the sun and the energy from light is absorbed through the eyes. It stimulates the pituitary and pineal glands, which in turn control some of the body’s systems, including hormonal changes. Research suggests that pink is a calming colour and so is regularly used in rooms where a tranquil effect is desired, for example, in hospitals, rehabilitation centres and even prisons.

However, according to commercial interior designers at Lima Europe, dental practices should avoid cerise and hot pinks, as these could add to an increased heart rate, respiration and brainwave activity. “Light colours such as white and cream or pale pastel shades evoke feelings of freshness and tend to have a calming, relaxing nature, especially lighter greens and warm yellows,” Aliz Ördög, a designer at Lima Europe, told Dental Tribune Online.

“In rooms appears brash, can increase one’s heart rate and could possibly be even more alarming to some patients, as it has obvious connotations of blood. Orange is also stimulating rather than calming so unless used as an accent colour to evoke a fun element of the brand these colours would be best avoided for dental surgeries, as they would most likely make the majority of patients feel uneasy or giddy,” Aliz Ördög, a designer at Lima Europe, told Dental Tribune Online.

“Black would be a difficult colour to work with for practical reasons, as patients feel uneasy or giddy. Orange is also stimulating rather than calming so unless used as an accent colour to evoke a fun element of the brand these colours would be best avoided for dental surgeries, as they would most likely make the majority of patients feel uneasy or giddy, told Ördög.

According to Ördög, dentists are tending to move away from just the practical to more of the aesthetic. As design and style filter into all areas of life today, the environment in which they work cannot reflect this. Also, because colour plays an important part of our overall experience when visiting a building or room, it can influence mood and our physical experience to some extent. The use of colour to improve clients’ experience, helping to make them feel at ease, is being given increasing attention because it can be viewed as an aspect of customer service.

When it comes to workclothes, dentists should stick with white and not experiment with different colours. “White coats are universally known and accepted as garments worn by medical professionals or experts. They also represent cleanliness and are synonymous with hygiene. It is probably not appropriate to change this, as the credibility of the dentist may be compromised,” Ördög told Dental Tribune Online. “However, in theory it would be great fun to see dentists in pale pink or sunshine yellow coats—perhaps this would help calm or cheer up patients and lighten the mood of children or those who really fear visits to the dentist.”

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