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Yet awareness of these important overall health links is low. Two-thirds remain unaware of the four in five knew nothing of the links to strokes or diabetes, while 94% of respondents had no clue of potential risks posed to pregnant women.

“The public could be put at risk by poor dental hygiene habits yet awareness of these risks is very low”, added executive Dr Carter.

“Gum disease in particular has been linked to serious health issues. It affects most people at some point in their lives, so there is no excuse for ignoring good dental hygiene.

“People should take care of their gums by brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth with floss or an interdental brush, cutting down on how often they take sugary snacks and drinks and visiting the dentist regularly.”

The Foundation’s National Dental Helpline is available with expert advice for the public advice on 0845 063 1188.

National Smile Month promotes good oral healthcare under the tagline ‘Look After Yourself, Brush for Health’ and is supported by Oral B, Wrigley’s ORBIT Complete sugarfree gum and Tesco Dental Insurance.

For further information and expert interviews please contact pr@dentistry.org.uk

Websites: www.dentalhealth.org.uk www.nationalsmilemonth.org

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The show will incorporate:

■ 3-day multi-track conference with accreditation
■ Hands-on workshops and live surgery link-ups
■ State-of-the-art exhibition showcasing the latest dental equipment, technology and pharmaceuticals

With limited space available, the best time to book your exhibition stand is NOW!
Photo competition asks what makes dentists smile

Dentists can enter a photographic competition and win a free trip to a FDI World Dental Congress.

Enter the FDI World Dental Federation and Wrigley Oral Healthcare Programmes' (WOHP) photographic competition for your chance to win a trip to the FDI World Dental Congress in Singapore this year or to the one in Brazil in 2010.

Submit photos that capture what makes you smile and for each entry received, WOHP will donate $25 US, up to $25,000 US in total, to the FDI’s Dental Development Fund, which supports oral health education and projects worldwide.

This year’s contest, open until 8 July 2009, will recognise six regional winners, one each from Europe, Africa, Asia Pacific & Oceania, Latin America, the Middle East and North America. Each winner will receive a gift voucher for $1,000 US (or equivalent in pound sterling or euros) to spend on the latest photographic equipment, plus a year’s subscription to the International Dental Journal and a year’s supply of Wrigley’s sugarfree gum.

From the six regional winners, a grand prize winner will be awarded a VIP all-expenses paid trip to their choice of either the 2009 FDI Annual World Dental Congress in Singapore (2-5 September 2009) or the 2010 FDI Annual World Dental Congress in Brazil (2-5 September 2010).

The trip includes round trip airfare for one person to Singapore or Brazil, four nights in a four-star hotel, complimentary Congress registration and $500 US spending money. In addition, the winner will have the choice to upgrade their ticket to business class or to bring a companion to the Congress.

Members of the dental profession and students who are registered at dental and/or hygiene schools and who are over the age of 18 are invited to enter and upload up to five digital photographs that make them smile at www.PhotoAward.org.

The photos do not need to be images from their dental practice but can include funny family or reflective photos that bring a smile to their face.

Virtual dental school a world’s first

A US dental school is opening the doors of the first-ever 3D virtual dental education facility.

The University of Maryland Dental School has introduced the virtual school which is based on the 3D modelling software, ‘second life’. Students will be able to ‘experience’ aspects of dentistry, ranging from lessons in dental hygiene practices to infection control and anatomy.

They can control a second life figure of themselves – an ‘avatar’ – via a mouse and keyboard or through voice-controlled headsets. The virtual dental school option will be available to first-year students in the autumn.

Carroll-Ann Trotman, associate dean for Academic Affairs, says: ‘What we are doing is developing a 3D virtual world that we can use to engage in global outreach, teaching and perhaps collaboration. So far, it has been reasonably well received by both students and faculty. This is another tool – one of several instructional tools that faculty can have to work with. Each faculty member will approach this with their own ideas.’

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