The British Dental Association in Northern Ireland has received a public apology after a government body released inaccurate figures inflating the incomes of NHS dental practices.

The figures were given to the Belfast Telegraph by the Business Services Organisation following a freedom of information request.

The British Dental Association (BDA) claimed that the figures reported by the Belfast Telegraph in December were wrong in six out of 20 cases, and overstated dental practice turnovers on the health service by up to 73 per cent.

Claudette Christie, BDA director for Northern Ireland, said: “This has caused personal distress directly to a number of hardworking dentists and to the wider profession. To have those relationships swept away by the failure of a government agency to quality assure its figures is devastating.”

Hello and welcome to the first issue of 2010! I hope everyone has been enjoying the glorious wintery weather, with picture postcard scenes, snow days letting children go sledging in the park, and next to no work coming your way as people struggle to get out of their front doors! (see, you thought all that snow had gone to my head then?)

Still, it is a new year and in time honoured tradition our congratulations go to those mentioned in the New Year’s Honours List; especially those connected with the dental profession.

You will notice in the issues to come that I will be talking a great deal about Bridge2Aid and its work in the village of Bukumbi in Tanzania. This is because Dental Tribune, and particularly myself now have a vested interest in the work as I will be travelling out there in April with colleagues from Schülke and Henry Schein to help build a community centre at the Bukumbi Care Centre. This vital project is the perfect opportunity for us non-clinical folk to help Bridge2Aid’s work.

Anyone who wishes to donate funds to this worthy cause is welcome to do so at www.justgiving.com/bukumbibound my dedicated fundraising page for this trip. A special thanks already goes to Smile-on and Practice Plan who have supported me, and I hope DT readers will get behind me as well. Just think what £1 from every reader could do to the lives of ordinary Tanzanians!

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The British Dental Association (BDA) claimed that the figures reported by the Belfast Telegraph in December were wrong in six out of 20 cases, and overstated dental practice turnovers on the health service by up to 75 per cent.

The Belfast Telegraph reported that three practices in Northern Ireland received more than £1m last year from the Department of Health.

The BDA said that releasing this incorrect information damaged the reputation of these dentists and their practices.

Claudette Christie, BDA director for Northern Ireland, said: “This has caused personal distress directly to a number of hardworking dentists and to the wider profession.”

She added: “Dentists across Northern Ireland are at the heart of their communities, working hard to care for their patients. They devote their professional lives to building relationships with their patients that enable them to provide the best possible standards of care for each individual. To have those relationships swept away by the failure of a government agency to quality assure its figures is devastating.”
Smile-on reaches the big 1-0

E ducation and training provider, Smile-on, has been creating, as January 2010 saw the company enter its 10th year.

Smile-on provides education and training solutions that are flexible and inspirational for everyone in the dental profession.

A spokeswoman for Smile-on said: “The company’s key values of partnership, imagination, innovation, creativity and potential have helped evolve the products from simple training courses into the multi-media learning platforms of today and helped Smile-on become the source for cutting edge software and training resources.”

After the success of last year’s Clinical Innovation Conference, Smile-on will be offering dental professionals yet another outstanding conference for 2010 - May 7-8 at the Royal College of Physicians in Regent’s Park, London.

Delegates will be able to gain an insight into new technologies, materials and ground-breaking techniques in dentistry.

International speakers will be delivering inspirational speeches alongside exhibitors offering the latest dental technologies from all over the globe.

Smile-on has announced that this year they will be working in conjunction with the Anglo-Asian Odontological Group (AOG) and will be sponsored by the Dental Directory.

For more information call 020 7400 8989 or email info@smile-on.com or to become a CIC sponsor visit www.clinicalinnovations.co.uk.

Help at last for dental entrepreneurs

D ental entrepreneurs can now turn their dental inventions into a business opportunity with the support of the first dental business incubator company.

Dental companies spend millions on the research and development of new products, with Nohel & Tiscare, one of the biggest spenders in the dental industry spending about 4-5 per cent of its annual turnover on research and development.

However there are thousands of ideas developed by individual dentists that will never be implemented because their inventors lack the funds or expertise to market their ideas or are downsized by shrinking research and development budgets in difficult economic times.

These individuals can now turn to Dentculator, the first dentistry incubating network.

The programme helps entrepreneurial companies through support resources and services, such as legal help, funding prototypes and finding distribution channels.

Dentculator was founded last year in America from a loose network of renowned dental specialists around the globe and so far the programme has evaluated 48 submissions and it aims to support as many as 80 over the course of the next five years.

Dentculator is a virtual entity, which means that its members meet by phone, e-mail or through webinars.

Once an idea is submitted through one of the committees, it undergoes a four-week screening process to evaluate its marketing potential.

Special emphasis is placed on the ability to re-design a product for emerging markets such as Asia or Latin America.

“By testing each submission for its applicability to emerging market countries, we have the opportunity to offer the products and techniques associated with outstanding oral health care to a broader audience than the typical markets of Western Europe, Japan or the United States,” said a Dentculator representative.

The network provides its members with compensation taken in equity in the ownership of the idea, once the idea has been approved for funding.

The process typically takes up to three months to be completed.

Once Dentculator becomes an equity partner and develops and protects the idea, discussions are initiated with the directors of acquisition or research and development departments of global dental companies.

A recent study found that incubating programmes which support start-up companies to develop new products enabled nearly 90 per cent to stay in business for the long-term.

Dentculator sees itself as a complement to traditional research and development and as an alternative source for funding, development and access to market resources.

“We are under no circumstances in the business of replacing research and development budgets. We are the nursery which can give a small seed of an idea, grows it and then brings it to market,” the representative said.

Gruelling’ bike ride for charity

T he director of the Dental Clinic will be taking part in a ‘gruelling’ 874-mile cycle ride to raise vital funds for a children’s charity.

The Dental Clinic and Optical Express will be sponsoring Dominic O’Hooley in his bid to cycle from John O’Groats to Land’s End to raise funds for the Wooden Spoon charity.

With a group of thirty riders, O’Hooley aims to complete the 874-mile journey in just eight days, starting on the 21st and ending on 28 August.

It normally takes cyclists ten to fourteen days to complete, and walkers two to three months.

The Wooden Spoon challenge, titled ‘End 2 End’ has been held annually since 2000.

Dr O’Hooley said: “Wooden Spoon is a well established charity, and really a cause close to my heart. I’m keen on trying to help child poverty and I feel that because they have such a history of successful and well-organised charity events I feel I can be confident in them!”

Wooden Spoon, founded in 1983, is a children’s charity supporting disadvantaged children and youth across the UK and Ireland. Wooden Spoon has raised of today, and helped Smile-on inception, and benefited more than half a million young people.

The Dental Clinic is one of the largest private provider of dental services in the UK, offering services ranging from general dentistry to teeth whitening and cosmetic dentistry.

British Dental Conference

T he respected clinical expert, Dr Avijit Banerjee, is to join the panel of speakers at the 2010 British Dental Conference and Exhibition.

The conference and exhibition will be held 20-22 May 2010 at the Liverpool Arena and Convention Centre (ACC).

Dr Banerjee, senior lecturer and honorary consultant in restorative dentistry at King’s College London (KCL) Dental Institute at Guy’s Hospital will be delivering an extensive clinical research into caries management entitled Revolutions in caries management – minimal invasive dentistry in practice.

The presentation includes:

• The methods for monitoring patients with a high risk of developing caries
• Understanding the pathology of caries
• How to bond to caries - affected dentine and the therapeutic effects

Dr Banerjee has carried out extensive clinical research into caries, caries removal techniques, microbiology and microscopic imaging of dental caries. He won 2009 Kings College London Teacher of the Year Award.

A spokeswoman for the conference said: “His passion for translating scientific research into clinical practice will ensure that his guidance will feature the latest clinical findings, delivered in a manner relevant to today’s GDPs.”

For more information on the conference and exhibition, register on www.bda.org/conference or call 0870 166 6625.

‘Gruelling’ bike ride for charity

The Dental Clinic is one of the biggest spenders in the dental industry spending about 4-5 per cent of its annual turnover on research and development.
Transitions: Dental Protection launches event for Scottish dentists

Dental Protection is pleased to announce a brand new event called Transitions which will be staged in Scotland this April.

The full-day event is scheduled for Saturday April 17 in Cumbernauld near Glasgow. The programme is suitable for dentists at all stages of their career and will provide keynote lectures on the recommended CPD topics, complaint handling and ethics.

The programme will feature three renowned speakers, Hugh Harvie, Kevin Lewis and James Foster who will explore complaints and ethical dilemmas based on actual cases drawn from Dental Protection’s extensive archive.

The day will also include an interactive workshop session, which will demonstrate problems which any dentist might encounter at some time in their career, and will examine the issues which could effect the way in which dentist handles the situation. Sessions on law and ethics and complaint handling will explore the role of communication skills in effective complaint handling.

Describing the event, Hugh Harvie, Head of Dental Services Scotland said: “DPL is pleased to launch an exciting new event for the benefit of our members in Scotland. The programme will address the recommended CPD needs of all dentists, and will serve as a useful introduction, or a reminder, to dentists regardless of what stage they may have reached in their career.”

Tickets for the event cost £75 (£50 for VDPs and DPL Xtra members) and will provide 5.5 hours verifiable CPD.

Delegates are advised to register their interest in the DPL programme early to avoid disappointment.

BDA nominated as Business Superbrand

The British Dental Association has been shortlisted as one of this year’s Business Superbrands.

An independent panel of experts from The Centre for Brand Analysis, along with 1,500 individual business professionals, examined thousands of applications, before selecting only 500 ‘Superbrands’.

In order to qualify as a Business Superbrand, an organisation has to have established the finest reputation in its field, and offer customers significant emotional and/or tangible advantages over its competitors.

The brand has to display that it represents quality products and services, can deliver a consistent and reliable customer service and be distinctly unique within its market.

A spokeswoman for the BDA said: “Being nominated as a Business Superbrand is testament to the determined efforts made by the BDA team to ensure that it continues to offer members advice, support and improve the nation’s oral health.”