Price rise

The government is to increase the cost for simple and intermediate dental treatment but complex treatment will be frozen at the existing rate. Health secretary Alan Johnson revealed the changes to the cost of some dental treatments. The charge for intermediate treatments, such as fillings or extractions, will rise from £44.60 to £45.60. The cost of simple treatments involving examinations, advice, X-rays or a scale and polish will go up from £16.20 to £16.50. The charge for intermediate treatments, such as fillings or extractions, will rise from £44.60 to £45.60. However the maximum charge for ‘complex’ NHS dental treatments, such as the fitting of crowns, bridges or dentures, will be frozen at the existing rate of £198.

Star levels

Denplan has won the Best Companies’ Three Star Accreditation for employee engagement for the fourth year running. The star rating accreditation scheme is run by Best Companies, the organisation behind the Sunday Times list of 100 Best Companies to Work For. Steve Gates, managing director of Denplan, called the award a ‘real testament to the organisation behind the Denplan practice plan’.

Price rise

The process to fluoridate the water supplies of 3.7m Queensland residents began late last year and was introduced by state premier Anna Bligh – great-great-great-granddaughter of William Bligh, the captain of HMS Bounty during the famous mutiny in 1780 – shortly after she took office.

Around 70 per cent of Australians already receive fluoridated water, and Ms Bligh claimed there was no evidence of any side effects and, in the face of opposition, introduced it in her state.

Anti-fluoride campaigners in the UK would like to see a similar commitment to accept personal responsibility from health chiefs here, or senior politicians who have backed fluoridation, like Health Secretary Alan Johnson or even Gordon Brown.

Doug Cross, from UK Councils Against Fluoridation, said: ‘Would Mr Brown, or the chief dental officer like to approach a bank and take out a loan to cover themselves for this? Maybe they would like to offer us their assurances that, like mercury vapour from tooth fillings, fluoride is indeed safe, and they will put their own houses and personal wealth on the line as surely for the practice that they are trying to force on the British public?’

Meanwhile in Suffolk, health chiefs are waiting for the results of a tooth decay survey before it decides whether to use fluoridation to combat tooth caries.

NHS Suffolk’s consultant in dental public health, Richard Ward, said the trust would not make any decision until it got the results from a large survey of tooth decay in five-year-olds in the county.