Oral health set to improve as more smokers quit

More smokers are stubbing out and kicking the habit. [Image 25x50 to 346x450]

The oral health of the nation looks set to improve as more smokers kick the habit.

Almost 250,000 people in England stopped smoking between 1 April and 31 December 2009, a rise of 10 per cent compared to the same period in 2008 according to the results of a new national survey.

Results from the NHS Stop Smoking Services survey also showed that more than another 375,000 of the country’s smokers have decided to kick the habit for good and set a quit date.

Chief executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter, has welcomed the results but insists that more needs to be done to educate people on the hazards of smoking.

Dr Carter said: “Most people are aware that smoking is bad for our health. It can cause many different medical problems and in some cases fatal diseases. However, many people do not realise the damage that smoking does to their mouth, gums and teeth: ‘Smoking can lead to tooth staining, gum disease and tooth loss.

“When people think of the dangers of smoking they instantaneously think of lung and throat cancer, but many are still unaware that it is one of the main causes of mouth cancer too.”

He added: “Mouth cancer can appear in different forms and can affect all parts of the mouth, tongue and lips. It can appear as a painless mouth ulcer that does not heal normally. A white or red patch in the mouth can also develop into a cancer. It is important to visit your dentist if you notice any of these areas do not heal within three weeks.”

Tobacco remains the leading cause of mouth cancer in the UK, with cigarette, cigar and pipe smoking the main forms of use. However, the traditional ethnic habits of chewing tobacco, betel quid, gutka and paan are particularly dangerous.

Mouth cancer has become one of the UK’s fastest growing cancers, diagnosing more than 5,000 people every year.

Without early diagnosis chances of survival can plummet down to 50 per cent.

The Foundation encourages members of the public with any concerns about their oral health to contact the National Dental Helpline on 0845 063 1188.

Scottish NHS boards make ‘good progress’

NHS boards in Scotland are meeting the national standards to provide out-of-hours emergency dental services, according to a new report.

NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (NHS QIS) reviewed individual NHS boards and found that all boards had the correct measures in place to treat patients with dental problems outside normal working hours.

NHS File showed evidence of so-called ‘optimised’ services, meaning they showed exceptional performance.

The boards were assessed against three key standards: accessibility and availability at first point of contact; safe and effective care; audit, monitoring and reporting.

Jan Warner, director of patient safety and performance assessment for NHS QIS, said: “Good dental care is critical to our quality of life.”

She added: “It is clear that NHS boards have put a lot of work into establishing emergency services and these are now in place across Scotland.”

While public health minister Shona Robison said: “It is excellent news that this service has made such good progress.”

The oral health of the population of Scotland is generally poor, with 55 per cent of adults and 17 per cent of children not registered with a dentist. However, members of the public who have an emergency dental problem can access out-of-hours emergency dental care. This service is provided by NHS 24 in partnership with NHS boards on 0845 242424.

‘Unfairly dismissed’ after affair

A dentist receptionist was ‘unfairly dismissed’ from her job, after she began an affair with a married colleague, a tribunal in Reading found.

Tanya Henderson, 21, began having a secret affair with her married colleague, Alamain Salim, at Riverside Dental Practice in Caversham, Berkshire.

Salim did not see his wife very often because she lived abroad.

However, when his wife moved to the UK, Mr Salim allegedly told Ms Henderson that he wanted to rebuild his marriage and wanted their affair to stop.

Ms Henderson claims that when her colleagues suspected the two were having an affair, she became the victim of practical jokes.

She claimed that a colleague uploaded pornography onto her computer and when it appeared, the practice owner Changiz Fahami told Ms Henderson she was too young to be looking at the images and gave her a slap on the head.

Mr Fahami claims the affair caused a lot of problems at the surgery and said he told Mr Salim that either he or Ms Henderson must leave the practice.

Ms Henderson finally left her job last February following a row with the practice manager, Fay Allingham.

The tribunal decided that Ms Henderson had been unfairly dismissed. She has agreed a private settlement with Riverside Dental Practice.
Editorial comment

Karibuni Tanzania

A big hello from Tanzania! (or as my new Swahili goes ‘Karibuni Tanzania’)

As I write this, it has been our first full day in Mwanza, the city where we are based for the next two weeks on our trip to the Bukumbi Care Centre to renovate a community centre in the village there.

Today has been a day of complete contrast, where we began the day at one of the nicer hotels in the area to have an orientation meeting, and then got a taste of the poorer side of life for resident Tanzanians. In the meeting, we discussed the history of the centre, which has been in existence since the seventies, but has seen a resurgence since Bridge2Aid began to build relationships there.

The orientation meeting really served to fire our already high enthusiasm, and you can feel in the group that we just want to get going in our project here. This was not lessened by the afternoon’s visit to Bukumbi, where we got to see just what we will be doing in the next two weeks (we will be extremely busy!), it also gave us a chance to see firsthand the life the people of Bukumbi lead, and practise our swiftly learnt Swahili with the locals! Our arrival sparked much excitement amongst the children, who were fighting over who got to hold hands with a particular team member.

The visit really hit home how little this community had, which in turn was much more than many other communities here. Walking around and meeting people who were genuinely pleased to see us and were grateful for what we had come out to do was very moving, and a little saddening too, but it’ll take more than this comment to explain that...

BDA Conference

A general dental practitioner from Lichtenstein will be exploring the limits of material and techniques at this year’s British Dental Conference.

Gary Unterbrink, who has more than 15 years’ experience in research and product development, will be arguing that there are quite often striking conflicts between practitioners’ clinical experiences and the conclusions of evidence-based dentistry, and that there are many areas of dentistry where additional knowledge is still required.

Dr Unterbrink headlines two sessions on the first day of the 2010 British Dental Conference and Exhibition, which takes place at Liverpool’s Arena and Convention Centre between 20-22 May.

The first, Direct composites – exploring the limits of materials and techniques, will help attendees develop their knowledge of the ideal preparations for composite restorations, the selection of adhesives and composites and application techniques that combine efficiency, function and aesthetics.

His second session, Effective indirect adhesive restorations, will consider diagnosis and treatment planning, the critical role of preparation technique for success with instant adhesive restorations and the co-ordination of practice and laboratory factors.

For more information on the 2010 British Dental Conference and Exhibition, or to register, visit www.bda.org/conference or call 0870 166 6625.

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Britain will host International Symposium

Britain will be hosting the International Symposium on Dental Hygiene this year. The forthcoming international dental industry conference will take place in Glasgow in July.

The 18th International Symposium on Dental Hygiene is entitled ‘Oral Health - New Concepts for the New Millennium: New technology for preventing and treating oral diseases, including alternative treatments’.

A spokesperson for the International Federation of Dental Hygienists said: ‘This symposium is likely to witness the greatest ever gathering of oral health professionals from around the world. It’s not surprising, therefore, that the Scientific Programme is packed with eminent speakers and topics of equal gravitas.’

Professor Jeremy Bagg, head of School, University of Glasgow, Glasgow Dental Hospital and School will be making the keynote address ‘Challenge and change in infectious diseases: a global issue’.

Periodontitis will be explored by Prof Francis Hughes, a recognised expert in all aspects of periodontal disease and regeneration working at the Institute of Dentistry (School of Medicine and Dentistry), Queen Mary University London.

Tracey Lenneman will address the subject ‘The dental hygienist in the new millennium’.

Ms Lenneman has been a practicing clinical periodontal dental hygienist since 1986, and has experienced many facets of dental hygiene in the USA and in Europe.

Warren Greshes, an internationally acclaimed speaker, author and broadcaster, will be discussing broader issues under the title ‘Adding value to the dental practice’.

A renowned expert in the area of aesthetic dental care will be chairing a presentation at this year’s International Symposium on Dental Hygiene entitled ‘Expert advice for non-invasive aesthetic treatment’.

Aimed at general dental practitioners and young dentists, the lecture has been designed to give clinicians a practical treatment approach that allows for the predictable enhancement of the smile.

Dr Irfan Ahmad will be introducing Dinos Konstantaras, a general dental practitioner at The Dental Implant Clinic in Thessaloniki, Greece, as the speaker for the session.

His presentation, ‘Customised aesthetic treatment using minimal or non-invasive feldspathic porcelain veneers’, will explore the rationale behind the use of such veneers as an alternative to composite resins.

“We regularly send things out by post – such as Annual Retention Fee information, Annual Practising Certificates and the Gazette. If these haven’t been arriving, it’s worth making sure we have the right contact details. The registered address can be of a home, a practice or even a Post Office Box number as long as it is somewhere we can get in touch, but remember, the address you give will be published on our website.”

Dental professionals can check their details are up to date by contacting the GDC or by logging on to www.GDC-uk.org and searching the registers using their registration number.

There will be a number of abstracts and research sessions interspersed in the programme, providing delegates with opportunities to meet the authors of papers, on important topics and to discuss their research and conclusions.

In addition, there will be workshops at which delegates can gain hands-on experience of products, tools or materials relevant to oral healthcare.

The British Dental Trade Association (BDTA) is one of the main sponsors of the event being held 1-5 July.

BDTA executive director Tony Reed said: “The fact that the UK has been chosen to host the International Symposium is an accolade for the BDSHT and we are proud to be playing a part in making 2010 a conference to remember.”

Check your registered address is up to date

The General Dental Council is calling on all dental professionals to check that their registered address is up to date.

This is a requirement of registration and helps ensure that registrants don’t miss out on important General Dental Council (GDC) information, according to the GDC.

Registration projects manager, Sarah Arnold said: “When registrants move from their registered address, whether home or work, the GDC should be on the check-list of organisations they need to contact.

“We regularly send things out by post – such as Annual Retention Fee information, Annual Practising Certificates and the Gazette. If these haven’t been arriving, it’s worth making sure we have the right contact details. The registered address can be of a home, a practice or even a Post Office Box number as long as it is somewhere we can get in touch, but remember, the address you give will be published on our website.”

Dental professionals can check their details are up to date by logging on to www.GDC-uk.org and searching the registers using their registration number.

Members of the public can check any registrant’s details by contacting the GDC or by checking the Dentists Register or Dental Care Professional Register online at www.eGDC-uk.org.
Following the success of the UK’s first public live theatre at the Dentistry Show, DIO Implant continues to boldly progress with its mission to change the face of the UK implant market for the better of everyone. DIO’s Managing Director explains, “For most patients, dental implants are a necessity. At DIO, we aim to bring the benefits DIO provides in overseas markets to the UK.” He continues, “Dental implant treatment should be accessible by any patient who needs it, without compromising on quality of treatment or jeopardising the livelihoods of our valued UK implantologists.”

The next stage of their roadmap is to introduce a dedicated educational programme, designed especially for dentists wishing to provide the highest standard of care to their patients.

The format of the course addresses both the requirements of practitioners looking to start providing dental implants as well as those who are already placing implants from other manufacturers.

For non-implant dentists, the introduction days lead on to a one-year, hands-on and distance learning certified course, equivalent to approximately 120 hours of verifiable CPD. The course, directed by Sam Mohamed of Smile Lincs, aims to impart everything a qualified dentist needs to know in order to confidently provide dental implants to their patients.

Introductory two-day course

During an initial two-day course practitioners are given an overview of the evolution of dental implants and how they can be integrated into normal dentistry practice in the most cost-effective way. The course looks at the basics of dental implantology, discussing osteointegration, treatment planning principles, radiographic techniques and restorative techniques. It also covers more practical aspects of dental implantology such as practice setup and marketing and introduces patients to implantology to ensure a good return on investment.

Day 1 is aimed at providing non-implant dentists with an introduction to implant procedures. Practitioners will leave knowing whether dental implants are both right for them as an individual and a feasible business proposition for their practice. DIO is also welcoming existing implant practitioners on the introduction day, which DIO claim exposes them to a new perspective and allows for non-biased discussions and a healthy propagation of expertise to all attending.

Day 2 focuses on the clinical and restorative aspects of DIO Implants in more depth and is therefore applicable to both new an existing implantologists alike.

Once the introductory course is complete, practitioners can confidently decide whether to sign up for the year-long modular course to provide the highest standard of care to their patients.

Marketing Assistance

DIO is very much aware that it’s all very well for dentists to learn new skills and develop new products, but the effort is useless if their patients are not made aware of the services that are on offer. The company is providing advice and guidance on marketing techniques that dentists can employ to spread the word. These can include help with local PR, website design, brochure and leaflet design and production, Search Engine Optimisation, the use of social networking, etc.

For more information on DIO implants and their training programmes visit www.DIOUK.com or call 0845 125 5896.
University of Warwick welcomes ‘most influential’ academic

The most influential person in UK dentistry joins University of Warwick

Edward Lynch has joined the University of Warwick as Head of Dental Education and Research for Warwick Dentistry.

Edward Lynch, voted by his peers as this year’s most influential person in UK Dentistry, has joined Warwick Medical School from Queen’s University, Belfast, where he was Professor of Restorative Dentistry and Gerodontiology for the past ten years. During his career, Edward Lynch has been awarded 94 research grants totalling around £5 million and has more than 500 publications including chapters in books and refereed abstracts.

He is a specialist in three disciplines: Endodontics, Prosthodontics and Restorative Dentistry, as well as being a BUPA consultant in Oral Surgery. Edward is a Consultant to the American Dental Association, a spokesperson for the British Dental Association, and a scientific board member of the International Health Care Foundation.

Edward Lynch is also the Chairman of the European Experts group on Tooth Whitening and he is actively seeking to change EU legislation to legalise Home Bleaching. He has presented to the EU parliament two occasions on tooth whitening.

Edward Lynch said: “I am delighted to join the excellent team at Warwick Dentistry as the Head of Dental Education and Research. Warwick Dentistry aims to be a world-leading postgraduate unit, internationally renowned for the high quality and relevance of its education programmes and for the excellence and significance of its research. The University of Warwick is already one of the top 10 universities in the UK and I am very proud to be joining their team.”

Prof Jeremy Dale, Head of Warwick Dentistry at Warwick Medical School said he was delighted that Dr Lynch had accepted the position.

He said: “Warwick Dentistry is building a team of world-class academics to become a centre of excellence in dental education and research. Edward Lynch has an outstanding international reputation, and we are delighted and honoured that he has chosen to move to Warwick.”


In Safe Hands

An essential part of Dental Protection’s mutual ethos is reflected in the work done with members, through education, to prevent avoidable harm to patients. This concept provides the rationale for Dental Protection’s Annual Review for 2010 which is called ‘In Safe Hands’.

Over the next few weeks, 60,000 copies of the publication will be distributed to members in 70 countries and territories worldwide. Dental Protection has used its wide international experience to create a volume of stimulating articles contributed by some of the most popular dental writers in the UK. Alongside the case studies drawn from real-life episodes there are practical tools that can be adopted by dentists and dental care professionals everywhere to improve all aspects of the care and treatment that they provide.

Dental Protection is very much in the ‘safety and security’ business and has been for almost 120 years. ‘In Safe Hands’ now joins the growing library of risk management content that is available to members in a variety of media formats. As an additional benefit, readers of ‘In Safe Hands’ can also obtain three hours verifiable CPD online at www.dentalprotection.org.

Kevin Lewis, Director of Dental Protection said, “No health professional gets out of bed in the morning with the intention of harming a patient under their care. But sometimes the unthinkable happens, whether through an act or omission on the part of the clinical team, and despite their best efforts. If and when that situation arises, Dental Protection is there to help and support the member(s) involved, keeping them safe and providing security, so that they can continue their professional career without financial loss or undue damage from the stress associated with a legal challenge.”

BACD Belfast Study Club

The British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (BACD) is holding a Belfast Study Club in June.

Dr Ian Buckle will be presenting a lecture on “3D Treatment Planning: 10 Steps to Predictable Aesthetics and Function” giving attendees a structured method for effective diagnosis and treatment planning.

While photographs and radiographs provide information to visualise the position of the teeth in two dimensions, determining how the teeth fit in relation to each other and the patient’s face is a challenge for the practitioner.

With 20 years of experience, Dr Buckle will be showing members how to successfully realise optimal dentistry from an aesthetic, functional, biological and structural perspective.

Special emphasis will be placed on the four options of treatment (reshaping, repositioning, restoring and surgical correction), so that the correct options are chosen for each patient.

The event will be held on Thursday 17 June.

The lecture will also demonstrate how to segment large treatment plans to help patients with financial problems.

For more information or a booking form, please contact Suzy Rowlands on 020 8241 8526 or email suzy@bacd.com.

GDC announces new Chief Executive and Registrar

Evlynne Gilvarry has been named as the new Chief Executive and Registrar of the General Dental Council (GDC). She will take up the position later in the year.

Alison Lockyer, Chair of the Council of the GDC said: “I am delighted that Evlynne will be joining us. I know that she shares my vision of making the General Dental Council best in class as a healthcare regulator. We will be working closely together as we develop the strategy for the council and improve our performance in Fitness to Practise.”

Evlynne Gilvarry will join the GDC from the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC), the statutory regulator of osteopathy in the UK, where she is currently Chief Executive and Registrar. She has held this post since November 2007. Previously she worked in various senior policy and management roles at the Law Society, the regulator and professional body for solicitors in England and Wales. She is qualified as a lawyer and mediator.

Evlynne Gilvarry said: “I am very pleased to take up this appointment and look forward to working with the staff and the Council of the GDC to deliver an excellent performance.”

Interim Chief Executive and Registrar Alison White will complete her contract at the end of June.

Alison Lockyer said: “Alison has led the organisation through a complex and difficult re-budgeting process, and built the framework which will underpin future planned improvements in our regulatory processes. I would like to thank her for her commitment and hard work.”