Editorial comment

Lives in limbo

Well, the good news is I’m back from a fantastic and very humbling experience in Tanzania with Bridge2Aid. The bad news is, like the country at present, I feel a bit in limbo!

The team that went to Bumbib – Andrew, Andy, Jackie, Cornelius, Julie, Nicola (all from Schülke UK), Len (Henry Schein Minerva), Margaret (NHS Manchester), Mark, Jo (practice owners) and myself – spent a very intense and emotional two weeks renovating the community block and turning it from a dingy unsafe building to a clean, vibrant and usable space for all members of the community to enjoy. It has been hard to come back to the UK and to a life of comparative privilege and leave behind a community spirit that is strong in the face of poverty. All we experienced in Tanzania will live long with us, and hopefully over the next few issues I will be able to share some of this experience with you.

Big thanks to everyone who supported me, especially Smile-on, Practice Plan, Denplan, friends and family and an extra thank you to Mr Robert Naysmith for his support and kind words. It isn’t too late to support B2A’s work, go to www.justgiving.com/bukumbibound.

As I slowly come round to all things dental, I hope you’re geared up for National Smile Month, which launched last week and runs to June 16. Please get in touch with your stories and events you have run in your practices – I’d love to hear about them. Email me at Lisa@dentaltribuneuk.com.

And don’t forget to come over to Stand A12 at the BDA this week, say hello and celebrate with Smile-on and Dental Tribune as Smile-on turns 10 years old.

Dentist fraud

A dentist who defrauded a primary care trust of £85,000, has been sentenced to two years in jail.

Daljit Singh Jabal, ofListViewege in West Yorkshire, pleaded guilty to defrauding Bradford and Airedale Primary Care Trust (APCT) of £85,000 and paid back the full amount before he was sentenced.

The 56-year-old took sick leave at various times between November 2006 and December 2007 and was still paid his full contract allowance by the PCT. After discovering in 2008 that the NHS Dental Services Division were to carry out a routine check of his Units of Dental Activity, he confided to the chairman of his Local Dental Committee that he had submitted false UDA claims.

In summing up the Judge told Jabal: “It is sad that you have let yourself down so badly, but I consider the offending so serious, and over a two-and-a-half-year period, that I would be failing in my public duty not to give you an immediate custodial sentence.”

In 2008-2009, the NHS Counter Fraud Service (NHS CFS) was established to tackle fraud and corruption throughout the NHS and Department of Health.

In 2008-2009, the NHS CFS successfully prosecuted 69 criminal cases with a 96 per cent success rate.
NHS in Northern Ireland to charge for orthodontic treatment

The NHS in Northern Ireland is to start charging for orthodontic treatment, echoing the system currently in place in England and Wales.

The move has been criticised by Alex Easton (Democratic Unionist Party), a member of the Stormont Health Committee, as a ‘tax on children’s smiles’.

Under the new guidelines, nearly all cases will have to be paid for privately as everyone apart from the most severe cases will have to pay for their care.

Many children will be prevented from having orthodontic treatment as their parents won’t be able to afford treatment that can cost more than £2,000, according to Mr Easton.

The new guidelines which look set to become reality within the next two months, will save the NHS in Northern Ireland millions of pounds.

Under the guidelines, only those with a reported Index of Orthodontic Treatment Need (IOTN) rating of 3.6 or above will be paid for by the NHS in Northern Ireland.

The British Dental Association’s Northern Ireland Dental Practice Committee (NI DPC) called for the savings made as a result of the change to be ‘reinvested in dental services’.

It also wants the timescale of the change to be extended so dentists and orthodontists can undergo the necessary training and patients can become familiar with the changes.

A spokesperson for the BDAs NI DPC said: “All parties to this change, whether referring dentists, treating dentists, dental practices and patients and parents require time to plan accordingly. The proposed timescale of introducing the change in May 2010 does not enable the process to be managed at practices and planned for by parents. NI DPC would like to see this move delayed to allow time for proper planning on the part of Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to understand what the savings are and how that saving can be reinvested in dental services for the people of Northern Ireland.”

Figures from the Business Services Organisation reveal that in Northern Ireland between April 2009 and March 2010, the NHS fitted 19,405 orthodontic appliances, including fixed or removable appliances.

Brushing and flossing are vital, but don’t always get the attention they deserve.

References:
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The Clinical Innovations conference, held in conjunction with Smile-on, the AOG and The Dental Directory, celebrated its seventh year with a hugely successful event.

The Conference, held May 7-8 at the Royal College of Physicians in London, attracted more than 300 people, with some sessions seeing delegates standing to hear about the latest developments in the fields of whitening, medical emergencies, aesthetics and many more.

The event was also celebrated in style with a glitzy charity ball at the London Marriott Hotel in Grosvenor Square.

A spokesperson for the conference said: “This year’s Clinical Innovations Conference was extremely well received. Both delegate and speaker feedback has been very positive, with some delegates electing to stand to see the latest innovations in aesthetic and restorative techniques.

“A big thank you to all of our sponsors, speakers and delegates for making Clinical Innovations Conference 2010 a great success!”

Look out in the next issue of Dental Tribune for all the reaction news and reviews from Clinical Innovations Conference 2010.

Dental students from Peninsula Dental School have been spreading the message of good oral healthcare to children, through quizzes and art competitions.

The students have been working with children aged between five and nine at the Pembroke Youth Service at Mount Wise Neighbourhood Centre in Plymouth.

The students have been giving advice on how to keep teeth healthy, showing the children how to look after their teeth, and providing them with free books, toothbrushes and toothpaste.

They have done quizzes with the children and held art competitions.

Mandi Leaves, manager of the Pembroke Youth Service, said: “The dental students have been taking the kids through general well-being for teeth and it has been great.”

Bijal Sisodia, Year Two student and part of the team working with the children at Pembroke Youth Service, added: “We have really enjoyed working with the children and making a difference to their dental health. Getting the message out to the community is an important part of our training, so we are grateful to Mandi and her colleagues for the opportunity.”

Dr Gill Jones, director of Community Based Dentistry at the Peninsula Dental School, commented: “Our students spend a lot of time on Special Study Units in the community. It is great experience for them and also allows us to give something back to the communities in which we operate. I cannot stress enough the importance of this interaction to the development of our students and we are hugely indebted to organisations such as Pembroke Youth Service that allow us to work with them.”

Dental students at Peninsula Dental School are involved in a diverse range of community based projects such as a homeless refuge, a project that supports vulnerable teenage parents, community anchor organisations and the Public Health Development Unit.

They have been working on reducing mouth trauma in partnership with Plymouth Albion Rugby Club students and have devised a project which will result in players acting as ‘ambassadors’ to encourage young people to wear mouth guards during contact sports.

They have also carried out a Fluoride Varnish Programme, working with a Children’s Centre where more than 50 children received treatment with help, advice and support for families.

A full house listens to Julian Webber at Clinical Innovations Conference (CIC)