Dr Cockcroft backs e-learning

S mile-on’s new e-learning programme ‘complements’ the government’s guidance on improving oral health, said the chief dental officer.

Speaking about the learning resources provider’s two-hour programme, Delivering Better Oral Health, the ‘Prevention in Practice’ CD Rom, Barry Cockcroft said: ‘The learning resource that Smile on has produced should complement the documents we provide with support and a new contract that allows them to provide the kind of modern, preventive care that we are trained to do.

Dr Cockcroft revealed that the Department of Health has decided to update and send the hard copy document to all dentists with an NHS contract in June. The ‘Prevention in Practice’ CD Rom has been developed by Smile-on at the request of the Oxford Deanery.

It has had input from members of the team that produced the Department of Health toolkit.

The Deferring Better Oral Health toolkit, was sent to all NHS practices in England in 2007, by the Department of Health.

Dr Cockcroft said: ‘The learning resource that Smile on has produced should complement the documents we provide with support and a new contract that allows them to provide the kind of modern, preventive care that we are trained to do.

But the BDA also warned that the 800 dentists already working in Northern Ireland need more support and a new contract that allows them to provide the kind of modern, preventive care that they are trained to do.

Dr Claudette Christie, director for the British Dental Association (BDA) in Northern Ireland, called the new contract a ‘welcome step’, but said: ‘However, while this is welcome news, it is not the sole solution to the problems dentists and their patients face.

Alison McMillen, chair of the BDA Northern Ireland, said: ‘We are delighted that the BDA can now secure a new contract for dentists in Northern Ireland, and look forward to a successful conclusion to this process. However, there are access problems now that I have to address, and I am delighted that Oasis will work with us on this.

The British Dental Association (BDA) gave a broad welcome to the announcement of the award of a tender for 58 new dentists in Northern Ireland as part of the solution to the problems some patients face accessing care.

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The CD Rom looks at patient self-care and how practitioners can raise self-care issues with patients. This includes oral health messages as well as advising patients on healthy diets, sensible drinking, and smoking cessation.

Patients can see actual interviews from a dentist and a dental care professional who have successfully implemented the toolkit into their practice. The programme is for all dental professionals from dentists to orthodontists to hygienists. Each learning programme provides two hours of CPD.

For more information on the programme, call 020 7400 8989 or email info@smile-on.com.

Dr Cockcroft

Police renew murder appeal

Police investigating the alleged crimes of a Northern Ireland dentist accused of murder, have renewed their appeal asking for former patients to come forward.

Dr Colin Howell, is accused of murdering his wife and his ex lover’s husband. The 56-year-old, from Castlerock, is also charged with drugging and indecently assailing a number of women.

Two months ago, detectives wrote to former patients at practices in Ballymoney and Bangor as part of their enquiries. They have now issued a renewed appeal.

Detectives are investigating alleged serious crimes which may have occurred at the Causeway Dental Implant Clinic in Ballymoney over a number of years and at Bangor West Dental and Implant Clinic in Bangor between 2005 and 2008. The investigation does not involve any other member of staff at the clinics.

Officers are asking patients if they have any information that may assist the inquiry team or if they have concerns. Police have revealed that a number of patients have already come forward and this latest renewed appeal is to ensure that ‘every possible step has been taken to identify all victims in this part of the investigation’.

Police say any contact will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Howell, who has 10 children, is in custody charged with the murders of his wife Lesley, 50, and Trevor Buchanan. Their bodies were found in a car filled with carbon monoxide fumes in Castlerock in May 1991.

Ballymoney and Bangor, is seen as one of the foremost dental practitioners in Northern Ireland.

The police inquiry team can be contacted on 028 7055 8955 or 028 7055 9202.
Editorial comment

Seeing the light

A friend said last week that her permanently and happily unemployed friend and her children regularly fly out to Florida for holidays at Disneyland. ‘How she does it when she doesn’t have a job I just don’t know,’ she said. But when she added up her friend’s tax credits, council tax benefits, plus the rest of the frills, it all became crystal clear. Now don’t get me wrong – there are plenty of people out there struggling to scrape by on benefits and deserve every penny and some, but there are also others who are positively living the life of O’Riley. So who’s paying for it all?

High earning go-getters have always been penalised by Mr Brown to some degree, but introducing these new taxes is like saying ‘bring on the brain-drain now’. For getting taxed to the hilt is hardly going to motivate the nation to work hard and build better businesses. Earning £100k in the UK is really not a lot these days – the average family household needs at least this to pay the mortgage, meet spiralling bills and put food on the table. So is having a holiday so much to ask after grafting the hours away day in, and day out in the practice? Apparently so, according to the Chancellor. Ok so he hasn’t said as much but actions speak far louder than words don’t they.

Thatcher’s children were all geared up to work hard and think about earning money and lots of it. She may have taken the milk away, but it didn’t half motivate us to work hard to make sure we earned enough to buy our own pint. But now why bother? For the harder we work, the less we earn. What a wonderful way to kick-start an ailing economy.

Do you have an opinion or something to say on any Dental Tribune UK article? Or would you like to write your own opinion for our guest comment page?

House raffle is extended

A dental technician, who put his £490,000 house up for sale in a £25 raffle, has extended the competition for a further three months, following poor ticket sales.

Stephen and Caroline Sickelmore are hoping to sell their £490,000 four-bedroom home in Devon, through a raffle. Tickets cost £25 each and if the couple sell all their tickets, they will get £675,000.

The winner will also get other benefits including their stamp duty paid, legal fees and a contribution towards moving expenses, plus an up-front payment of 12 months’ council tax of £3,760 for the Band E property. The detached Summer Breeze in Dawlish, comes with sea views, split-level design and three bathrooms.

The couple have promised to donate 5.6 per cent of the prize fund, up to £25,000, to Force cancer charity in Exeter. However, the couple have only sold 1,523 of the tickets since the raffle began in January. They have now decided to extend the competition for a further three months to the 24 July ‘to ensure we give the competition the chance of selling all of the tickets’.

People can buy tickets from the couple’s website where they have to answer three questions correctly as part of their entry to the draw.

To find out more, visit website www.summerbreezecompetition.co.uk

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References: