**Chewing robot**

Researchers in Bristol have invented a Chewing Robot to study the wear and tear on dental fittings such as crowns.

**Smooth transaction**

Due diligence is a time-consuming subject, says Hewi Ma of Cohen Cramer solicitors, but what does it mean exactly?

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**Postcode lottery**

Scotland has seen a rise in the number of NHS dental patients, but they are still very much at the mercy of a postcode lottery.

The percentage of patients registered with an NHS dentist ranges from 44.5 per cent in Grampian to 78 per cent in Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

Throughout Scotland, the number of registrations has increased.

By the end of March more than 5.5m people in Scotland had an NHS dentist, up from 2.9m a year ago.

Health boards are also making improvements with the number of children on the books of NHS dentists.

However six health boards have still to meet a national target to register 80 per cent of three to five-year-olds by 2010-11.

Below the target were Western Isles (51.4 per cent), Orkney (62.1 per cent), Fife (68.4 per cent), Grampian (69 per cent), Fife (75.6 per cent) and Highland (78.9 per cent).

This compares to 94.2 per cent registered in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

Dr Richard Simpson MSP, Labour health spokesman, said the figures showed that an action plan set out by the previous Scottish Executive to increase the intake of dental students and improve NHS access was beginning to have an effect.

He said: ‘Things are improving. But the health boards that are far below the targets need to look at the situation very carefully and try to improve it.’

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**Anger management**

Anger wells up within us whenever we perceive that we have been wronged, so how do we deal with it?

While I recognise one of the factors behind this increase will be the extension of the registration period, there are other factors, such as the record number of dentists in Scotland offering NHS services.

Having said that, we know there are still problems with access to an NHS dentist in certain parts of Scotland and we are continuing to tackle this.

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**Forced resignation**

A dentist who had a nine-year affair with his dental nurse, forced her to resign from the practice when his wife found out, an employment tribunal was told.

Tarig Drabu, 44, was said to have lavished gifts, including a diamond ring, on Paula Jackson and rented a flat.

The 45-year-old was forced to resign from the practice in Middleton, Manchester, when his wife Suraya found out.

She said Dr Drabu had offered her £100,000 if she left the practice and dumped her husband.

Mrs Jackson claimed that Dr Drabu had told her she could have anything she wanted and eventually he would leave his wife.

Mrs Jackson, who had started at the practice as a trainee dental nurse, had during the nine-year affair, become practice manager at Langley Dental Group.

She claimed she was ‘bullied’ into quitting her job and sued for constructive dismissal, which Mr Drabu admitted.

The amount of compensation will be fixed later.

Dr Drabu has been suspended by the General Dental Council from working for four months.

It found his conduct was unprofessional, inappropriate and not in the best interests of patients.

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**Practice management**

**Agency death**

A dental insurance company is searching for the family of a dentist in Cheshire who died in the arms of a call girl.

An insurance policy held by David Hillary, from Alderley Edge, has produced a payout of about £5,000 for his next of kin. However Dentists’ Provident have been unable to find any of his relatives - and the lump sum remains unpaid.

Mr Hillary, 55, lived with his father, Jack, at a dental surgery in Trafford Road, where he had practised for nearly 20 years.

His father died from lung cancer just 10 days before Mr Hillary was found dead.

An inquest into the dentist’s death found he had been out drinking with a friend before calling the Select escort agency in Sale.

He then drank more alcohol and took morphine with the escort until they fell asleep to get him on his sofa.

When the escort awoke in the early hours of the next morning, she could not wake him up, Cheshire coroner Nicholas Rheinberg said that Mr Hillary died from a combination of ‘alcohol and opiate toxicity’ - the combined levels of alcohol and drugs in his blood.

He recorded a verdict of accidental death.

Anyone who can help trace Mr Hillary’s next of kin is asked to call Dentists’ Provident on 020 7222 2511.

**Charity fundraiser**

Staff at a dentist’s surgery in Wigan returned to the 1970s and donned afro wigs, platform boots and flowery shirts to raise money for the health charity Dentaid.

Dentists, dental nurses and a byeguise at Pemberton Dental Practice in Pemberton, raised more than £2,590 for the charity, which provides much needed dental and oral health care in the developing world.

Dr Phil Banks, from Pemberton Dental Practice, said: ‘It was a great day. All the staff and patients had a wonderful time. The patients loved it too.’

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**Amalgam U-turn**

The American drugs watchdog, the Food and Drug Administration has reversed its decision to ban women and children having mercury fillings.

It follows an announcement that following a review of around 200 scientific studies the levels released by dental amalgam fillings are ‘not high enough to cause harm in patients’.

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