News in brief

‘Comedy’ dentures

Americans think comic star, Ricky Gervais, has such bad teeth they must be comedy dentures. Gervais who plays a dentist in his new film ‘Ghost Town’ said he was ‘dismayed’ when an American journalist said his teeth were so awful they must be fake.

The star who found fame through the TV series The Of

fice said he told the journalist ‘These are my own teeth. Would I be wearing joke teeth to an interview? I also felt I had to point out, I’m not wearing a fat suit either. She was a bit en-
rassed.’

Eroding enamel

The use of low pH mouth-

washes erodes dental enamel causing the teeth to become more sensitive, according to recent study.

Researchers at the Division of Restorative Dentistry in Brit-

tol, found people with less enamel complained of much greater tooth sensitivity to hot and cold.

The study looked at three low pH mouthwashes.

Results showed that enamel loss in situ and in vitro was pro-
gressive over time with all three mouthwashes. As a result of the study, the re-

searchers recommended that low pH mouthwashes should not be considered for long term or continuous use and should never be used prior to brushing.

Pay rises

NHS Employers have called for pay rises for dentists in 2009/10 to be limited to two per cent. It argues that a balance has to be struck between fairness to staff and affordability.

In evidence submitted to the Doctors’ and Dentists’ Review Body, NHS Employers said it recognised that “inflationary pressures and efficiency ex-

pectations are putting pressure on services and any unfunded cost pressures from pay could threaten patient care”. Employers within the NHS be-

lieve an award of two per cent would be affordable for den-

tists who are employed by the NHS, providing there is a cor-

responding uplift in the fund-

ing allocation for 2009/10.

NHS Employers also argues that there should be no change to the General Dental Services (GDS) contract, in the light of increases in the 2008/09 award (recommended 5.4 per cent) against a backdrop of decreas-

ing expenses for dental prac-
tices.

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News and opinions

BACD: research foreign dentists

People thinking of travelling overseas for dental treatment are being urged to shop around in Britain before going abroad.

The British Academy of Cos-

metic Dentistry (BACD) has warned potential patients that they need to carefully research the dentist who may be carrying out the work.

This is because they will be away for a limited amount of time and as such any procedures may be done ‘a bit more quickly’ than they would be in the UK, said the BACD.

Til Qureshi, board member of the BACD recommends that people check out the foreign dentist’s portfolio.

The medical tourism industry is doing so well at the moment that London has just hosted the Health Tourism Show 2008, a new event covering practically every aspect of medical, dental, cosmetic and health treatment abroad.

The event which claims to be the first of its kind in the world, showcased clinics from about 20 countries, offering everything from cardiology to breast enlargement and dental work.

Organisers of the show, held at London’s Kensington Olympia, claim the credit crunch is making people more reluctant to shell out for expensive treatment in the UK and more adventurous about seeking a cheaper option abroad.

They also claim that the shortage of NHS dentists in Britain means dental treatment overseas is getting increasingly popular because it is cheaper than the UK.

One Portuguese clinic at the show offering dental holidays in the Algarve, Multiclinica Medefi-
dental, provides dental implants priced at 800 euro (£555) each.

However Britain’s leading oral health charity is warning people to be cautious over these ‘dental tourism bargains’.

British Dental Health Founda-
tion chief executive Dr Nigel Carter said: ‘The Foundation recommends patients thinking of travelling for their treatment to keep their eyes open to poten-
tial pitfalls. It is very much a case of ‘buyer beware’.

‘It is important that anyone considering travelling is aware of potential risks. If there are any complications after treatment abroad, there could be all sorts of questions arising. For example, are you willing to fly back? What are your legal rights as a foreign patient? Do you have the money required for corrective treat-
ment in this country, if required? Plus who will pay if things go wrong?’

The BDHF recommends pa-
tients shop around in the UK before considering travelling abroad.

Cash plans, maintenance schemes and capitation plans can all help make UK dental treatment more affordable.

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Money Matters

Amazing feats

An orthodontist wins a trophy at the BDS conference for turning a 14-year-old boy’s life around through exceptional work.

Legal practice

You have to know the rights and wrongs inside and out when it comes to employment law. David Seals paves the way forward.

Anxious talk

Dealing with anxious patients is a bit like waiting for a time bomb to go off, but if you handle them gently you can defuse the worry.

Oral links

So is there really a link between oral and systemic health? Dental Tribune reports back from a scrutinising conference on the subject.

Ex-dental chief tells lies

The former chairman of the British Dental Association (BDA) has been struck off by the General Dental Council for fraudulently claiming £51,000 in expenses from the BDA.

Trevor Mann, of Sutton in Surrey, claimed expenses for meetings at the BDA from October 2005 to July last year.

He said that he worked at a surgery in Byfleet, Surrey, but an investigation found there was no trace of the practice.

The professional conduct committee report said: ‘Mr Mann quite clearly lied to Mr Ward about the scope and status of his practice.’

It added: ‘From 6 October 2005 to 27 July 2007, Mr Mann inappropriately and dishonestly claimed from the BDA ses-

sional allowances stating that he had read the BDA expenses policy and was entitled to claim sessions for Monday to Friday. This too was misleading and dishonest.

Mr Mann’s dishonesty was compounded by the fact that the claims were made over a sus-
tained period of time and were not isolated incidents.’

The report concluded: ‘The Committee hereby directs the Registrar to erase the name of Trevor Irwin John Mann from the Dentist Register’.

A spokesman for the BDA said: ‘The British Dental Associa-
tion notes the conclusion of the case it referred to the General Dental Council. All of the money inappropriately claimed from the BDA has been repaid. The BDA now considers that the case is closed.’

Mr Mann did not attend the hearing at the GDC.

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