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 Cosmetic 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.

Tif 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 enlargment 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, Multiholmia Mededental, provides dental implants priced at 800 euro (£635) each.

However Britain’s leading oral health charity is warning people to be cautious over these ‘dental tourism bargains’, British Dental Health Foundation chief executive Dr Nigel Carter said: ‘The Foundation recommends patients thinking of travelling for their treatment to keep their eyes open to potential 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 treatment in this country, if required? Plus who will pay if things go wrong?’

The BDHF recommends patients 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.

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 Byfleets, 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 sessional 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 sustained period of time and were not isolated incidents.’

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

A spokesman for the BDA said: ‘The British Dental Association 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.

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 through the TV series 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.

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